

**NOMINATIONS OF THE 110TH
CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION**

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—
JANUARY 30 THROUGH DECEMBER 19, 2007
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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110TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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*Note: Reassigned to Committee on Finance January 24, 2008.

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110TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

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*Note: Appointed February 12, 2008.

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2007

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

Negroponete, John D., to be Deputy Secretary of State

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m., in room SD-216, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph Biden (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Corker, Obama, Menendez, Voinovich, Murkowski, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Isakson, and Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH BIDEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order, please. We're delighted this morning to have Ambassador Negroponete back before us. We're equally delighted to have Senator Stevens and Senator Lieberman. We're told by staff you folks have a full morning and a lot going on in your committees, so Senator Lugar and I will forego our opening statements and yield immediately to you, Senator Stevens, for your introduction and then to Senator Lieberman. Then we will make our opening statements and invite Ambassador Negroponete to make his, if that meets your needs.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That's very gracious of you.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you so much. Let me put my statement in full in the record and just summarize—

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it will be.

STATEMENT OF HON. TED STEVENS, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator STEVENS. Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar, I'm pleased to be back again before your committee. Ambassador Negroponete and I have been friends from at least 1977, when he was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and Fisheries. I'm delighted he's joined today by his wife, Diana, and Maria and George and Sophia behind us.

John came to Alaska in that capacity many times and he handled the fisheries agreements that were important to our young State. He negotiated in 1978, the landmark accord, which protected Alaska's salmon stocks from Japanese high sea fisheries and those benefits continue through today.

Over the years, I have worked with John in many positions. I'm sure you all know his background but he has been Ambassador to four countries: Honduras, Mexico, The Philippines, Iraq. He has been a permanent representative to the United Nations and Director of National Intelligence. I think—I don't know any man who has had more positions in my time here. He has been one who has had great success, particularly in his most recent assignment where he has brought together this massive intelligence concepts of our Federal Government and coordinated them and done an excellent job and I think everyone realizes what a great job he's done.

He now seeks to go back to the Department of State. As we all know, that is where his heart has been and he has stated himself that all his life, he has wanted to do this kind of this work and this position he's going to take now is extremely important to us and our country.

Winston Churchill once observed that the price of greatness is responsibility, and John has been willing to accept responsibility on many occasions. So I hope the committee will quickly recommend his confirmation as the Deputy Secretary of State and I know of no man who can do a better job.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Stevens. I do understand you may have to leave, and thank you for making the effort to be here.

Senator STEVENS. I'll turn it over to my colleague to finish his comments.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lieberman.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH LIEBERMAN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT**

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. Thanks Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, Senator Coleman, and other members of the committee.

I'm greatly honored to appear before you and to have been asked, along with Ted Stevens, to introduce John Negroponte to this committee and to ask you to confirm him for the high position of Deputy Secretary of State. He is enormously well qualified for this position.

Ted said he went back to 1977 in knowing John. I would like to say that we go back to the sixties. We were both at Yale. We may have crossed as he left in 1960 and I entered there by trying to subtly indicate that he is older than I am. I am much more distinguished. [Laughter.]

There, it struck me that we swore allegiance at the end of our alma mater to God, Country and Yale. I think John and I both thought that was in descending order of importance, God, Country and Yale and in fact, like so many at that time, he was committed to a life of public service and went right from college to the Foreign Service and has served our Nation with the highest honor and greatest positive effect in a number of posts that are part of his record, which I will not enumerate, since that time, including being Ambassador to Iraq during a very difficult period where he, I thought, was very effective and advanced the cause of both stability and freedom to the best of his ability.

When he was nominated for this post, John said, and I quote, "Whether in Baghdad, Kabul, Kosovo, or elsewhere, these dedicated

professionals, that is the—his fellow members of the Foreign Service are on the front line of advancing America's commitment to freedom.”

And I agree with that and I appreciate his commitment to those who with him, have served as Foreign Service officers, the cause of our Nation abroad and I think it gives him an extra measure of understanding of effectiveness as he comes to this high position.

I would add just one more experience that I've had with John that I think speaks well for his ability to take on what is not only a diplomatic assignment but also an administrative assignment.

As my colleagues know, the Senate asked our Senate Committee, then known as the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, now Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to take up the task of considering and recommending to the Senate the legislation recommended by the 9/11 Commission and then seeing it through the Senate and the House to passage.

Obviously, that Commission recommended and we in Congress created the new position of Director of National Intelligence, the DNI, to essentially bring together these disparate entities within our American Intelligence community, which had not been working well together. So to make a long story short, had not connected the dots, if you will.

This was a challenge that required not only a strong administrative hand, if I may say so, but all the diplomatic skills that John Negroponte learned in his many diplomatic assignments, which is negotiating among and coalescing the disparate groups within the American Intelligence community. He has done, I think, an extraordinarily good job at that.

The work goes on because it's enormous work but he has brought us, in a short period of time, to a point where we are quite simply, because of his work, better protecting the people of America and preventing a reoccurrence of the nightmare that we all experienced on 9/11.

I can think of no one who is better able, at this moment, to assist Secretary Rice, both in the management of the Department of State and in the implementation of its responsibilities throughout this challenging world.

So I'm honored to have been asked to introduce Ambassador Negroponte to you. I recommend him to you and I hope you'll be able to confirm him unanimously.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, thank you very much. Both of you being here speaks loudly for Ambassador Negroponte. I appreciate you being here.

As indicated earlier, I'll proceed now with a brief opening statement and Senator Lugar will have an opening statement, and we'll turn it over to the Ambassador with our hope and expectation that he'll introduce his family to us again and make his statement. Then we'll go to questions.

Today, as is obvious, the committee considers the nomination of John Negroponte to be the Deputy Secretary of State. It has been over 7 months since Deputy Secretary Zoellick announced he was leaving the Department, and in doing so, the administration has set a dubious record—the longest period without a Deputy Sec-

retary of State since the position was created in 1972. So we're happy, and the reason why we moved this as quickly as we could is to rectify that situation.

Ambassador Negroponte is well known to us all. I will not take the time of the committee nor the nominee to go through his long record of service, some of which has been referenced already. Senior officials must have good judgment, and they must be forthcoming with the Congress and the American people about the difficulties we face in Iraq and elsewhere. I would say respectfully, Mr. Secretary, that Deputy Secretary Armitage, from my position, was just such a person. I would urge you to take a look at him as a model, in my view, for dealing with the committee.

Last week, General Petraeus, the new military commander in Iraq, told the Committee on Armed Services that the situation in Iraq was "dire." The Iraq Study Group, whose leadership will appear before this committee this afternoon, called the situation "grave and deteriorating." Because it has been reported that you, Mr. Ambassador, will be taking a leading role in Iraqi policy, as I indicated to you in the ante room, I'm going to ask you to give your assessment of the situation in Iraq. How is Iraq different than when you served there? Do you believe the President's surge policy will succeed? What are the elements of a workable political solution that the President says is needed and we all say is needed, in order to end the sectarian violence? What are the elements of that solution?

If you are confirmed, I hope you will not confuse the Senate's endorsement of you as an endorsement of the policies of the administration that has nominated you. After 3 weeks of hearings in this committee, I am more convinced than ever that surging our forces into the midst of a civil war in Iraq is a tragic mistake. I'm equally convinced that our only chance to leave Iraq with our interest intact, rests on a political solution that ends the sectarian violence and the cycle of revenge. It seems to me that can only be accomplished by empowering strong regional governments, as the Iraqi constitution provides for, giving the Sunnis a fair share of the oil revenues, and bringing in the neighbors in support of such a political settlement.

If we do that, we still have a chance, at least a chance of avoiding having traded a dictator for chaos. If we're going to surge anywhere, Mr. Ambassador—you will probably hear from some of the committee beyond me but you'll clearly hear on the Senate floor—we think that surge should be Afghanistan, not Iraq, where the Taliban appears to be making a serious comeback. So there may be some questions about Afghanistan, as well.

Every Deputy Secretary takes on duties assigned to him by the Secretary of State, so I will ask you, Mr. Ambassador, to outline the areas of responsibility that you expect to have as Deputy Secretary and to give us your assessment of the major policy questions facing us in each of those areas.

I'd like to specifically request that you give your views on Darfur, which was a major responsibility undertaken by Deputy Secretary Zoellick, which seems to have fallen from the priority list.

The administration has rightly called Darfur genocide but those words have not matched our deeds thus far to stop it, and I'd like

your assessment as well on North Korea, which I understand will be part of your job description.

So let me now, again welcome you but turn this over to Senator Lugar for any remarks he may have. Then we'll hear from you, and I hope you'll introduce your family.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD LUGAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA**

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a pleasure to welcome John Negroponte again to this committee. As a result of his distinguished career in government, most recently as the Nation's first Director of National Intelligence and his earlier assignments as our Ambassador to Iraq and our Ambassador to the United Nations, he is well known to many of us.

We admire his accomplishments and we are thankful for the cooperation he has provided to our committee in the past. We know that you share the committee's view that the State Department has a leadership role to play in addressing the urgent international challenges facing our country. We need a diplomatic core that can shape complex bilateral relationships, repair and build alliances, and pursue United States policy through a labyrinth of foreign languages and cultures.

We need ambassadors who can lead our interagency teams overseas, negotiate successfully with host governments, and speak authoritatively as the President's personal representatives.

We need foreign aid programs run by professionals who know how to encourage democratic practices and boost economic development, even in the toughest environments—and we need communications experts who can get our message across to foreign audiences.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the challenges of North Korea and Iran, crises in Darfur and Somalia, consume both time and energy at the Department and of this committee. A host of other issues, including international energy security, the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases, the Arab/Israeli peace process, our developing relationships with emerging giants in China and India, and our outreach in our own hemisphere require daily attention.

But we must also strengthen the Department itself. The Deputy Secretary has traditionally handled key management problems before they reach the Secretary, refereeing internal squabbles, and overseeing the right mix of tools, people, and resources to address whatever crisis is brewing next. Thus, you must be concerned not only with the Department's direction but also with its capabilities.

This committee has worked enthusiastically to bolster these capabilities. In 2003, we embarked on an effort to improve the capacity of the Department to deal with stabilization and reconstruction emergencies. Last June, the Senate unanimously passed legislation that Senator Biden, Senator Hagel, and I sponsored to authorize a crisis response fund, the State Department's Reconstruction and Stabilization Office and a Rapid Response Corp. The President's call in his State of the Union speech for the creation for such a civilian corp is a breakthrough for this concept. We should work to translate the President's enthusiasm into funding personnel and responsibility.

This committee has been instrumental in efforts to boost the Department's capability in other ways. We have worked with our Senate colleagues to foster support for multiagency contributions to the building of safe embassies. We have worked to maintain the Department's primacy in determining which countries will receive the United States foreign assistance and how much they should receive. We are working to back up the authority of ambassadors as they oversee the United States' campaign against terrorism.

We continue to argue for a foreign policy budget that reflects the pivotal roles of the State Department, USAID, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. All of these efforts are works in progress and we need you as a partner in pursuing them.

One other area where I hope you can make improvements is in the timely filling of key policy positions. The position for which you have been nominated has been vacant since July 7, 2006. The Department is without a Counterterrorism Coordinator. The Under Secretary for Economic Affairs—a portfolio which includes critical international energy issues—is soon to depart for the World Food Program. The Stabilization and Reconstruction Office went without a permanent coordinator for some 8 months before John Herbst arrived. The Political Military Bureau is losing its leader, and there are a number of other top posts that are being vacated.

We should be seeking the best people to fill posts as attrition occurs. We're a Nation at war in two countries, and every gap in civilian leadership is felt.

With a Foreign Service career that has spanned decades, you have a unique understanding of the Department's shortcomings as well as the vital contributions its employees make to building a peaceful and prosperous world. I am grateful that you are undertaking this task and I look forward to working with you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator. Mr. Ambassador, the floor is yours. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN NEGROPONTE, NOMINEE TO BE
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE**

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Thank you very much, Chairman Biden and Senator Lugar and members of the committee. It is a privilege to appear before you as the President's nominee for the position of Deputy Secretary of State.

I am accompanied this morning by my wife, Diana, and to her right is my daughter, Sophia, and to her right is my daughter, Marina, and to her right is my son, George.

Chairman BIDEN. Welcome. This is getting to be an old habit for you guys. Welcome back. It's delightful to have you here.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Thank you, sir, and I also have a daughter, Alejandra, who may show up later in the hearing. She had an engagement that she had to attend earlier this morning.

Let me say at the outset how much I appreciate Senators Stevens and Lieberman taking time from their busy schedules to present me to the committee. Over the year, they have offered me a great deal of wise counsel, support, and not the least, warm friendship.

Mr. Chairman, as someone who started his career as a young Foreign Service officer on October 5, 1960, I welcome my nomination to be Deputy Secretary of State as an opportunity of a lifetime. During my tenure in the Foreign Service, I have been a Vice Consul, a Consul, a Consul General, an Assistant Secretary of State, and an Ambassador. These positions have enabled me to serve at a one-officer post in Hue, in South Vietnam, and as Chief of Mission of one of our largest embassies in Mexico City.

Both assignments were challenging and rewarding as were the many others in Asia, Latin America, Europe, and the Middle East and of course, here in Washington.

If I am confirmed by the Senate, the experience overseas and at home will help Secretary Rice promote the transformational diplomacy that is the cornerstone of her leadership of the Department of State.

Globalization is bringing many challenges to the world, empowering a host of new international actors. Nonetheless, constructive diplomatic relations between and among nations remains central to preserving international stability and security and expanding opportunities for economic and cultural interactions.

Diplomacy helps us pursue peaceful cooperation in regions threatened by conflict. It helps us bolster the international rule of law and ensure respect for human rights. It gives the opportunity to support weak and failing states and build coalitions to stabilize and strengthen them and it enables us to protect our citizens, advance our economic interests and promote our image as a Nation defined by its democratic values.

I have appeared before this committee for confirmation hearings seven times. The first occasion, 30 years ago, when my responsibilities focused on oceans, fisheries, and law of the sea, and most recently, when the President nominated me—

The CHAIRMAN. I don't mean to interrupt, but we're still looking for that treaty.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, that's why I stuck that in here, Mr. Chairman. I was hoping you might say that. [Laughter.]

And most recently, when the President nominated me to be United States Ambassador to the newly sovereign Iraq, I volunteered to go to Baghdad because I believed and still believe that it is possible for Iraq to make a successful transition to democracy. I believed and still believe that failure in Iraq would be a disaster for Iraqis, for our friends in the region, and for the United States. If confirmed, I expect to devote considerable time and effort to the implementation of our policies in Iraq.

Supporting our Nation's security on the frontlines of this new century, the men and women of the Department of State face great challenges. The United States must maintain a full-time diplomatic presence in many parts of the world where conditions are demanding, harsh, and often dangerous. It is a tribute to the courage and dedication of our Foreign Service that the Department already has filled 84 percent of its positions in Iraq for the summer of 2007, and 96 percent of the positions programmed for Afghanistan.

The Secretary's vision of transformational diplomacy goes beyond the special needs we must address in Afghanistan and Iraq, however. The Department of State is a critical component of national

security and I hope the Department will be viewed that way in terms of its mission and budget. We have well over 100 hardship posts around the world and 22 posts where restrictions limit or prohibit accompaniment by family members. The Department's senior leadership has a great responsibility to support and protect all its personnel abroad, just as it has an obligation to develop our future generations of diplomatic leaders.

If the Senate confirms me, I would hope that in addition to Iraq, I could make a strong contribution to our foreign policy in those parts of the world where I have spent the most time in my career: Asia and Latin America. As Deputy Secretary, I will face challenges in many other areas, too numerous to list in full, from promoting America's economic business and energy interests overseas to supporting our programs in public diplomacy.

Mr. Chairman, I have always consulted closely with this committee and any Members of Congress who have an interest in issues for which I am responsible. I will remain available to you and seek your counsel and again, I want to say that I regard this nomination as a great honor and I am grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence that they have placed in me.

I would welcome the committee's questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Negroponte follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN. D. NEGROPONTE,
NOMINEE TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

Chairman Biden, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you as the President's nominee for the position of Deputy Secretary of State.

Let me say at the outset how much I appreciate Senators Stevens and Lieberman taking the time from their busy schedules to present me to the committee. Over the years, they have offered me a great deal of wise counsel, support, and, not the least, warm friendship. Senator Stevens, Senator Lieberman, I am in your debt. Thank you very much.

As someone who started his career as a young Foreign Service officer on October 5, 1960, I welcome my nomination to become Deputy Secretary of State as an opportunity of a lifetime.

During my tenure in the Foreign Service, I have been a vice-consul, consul, consul general, assistant secretary of state, and ambassador. These positions have enabled me to serve at a one-officer post in Hue, South Vietnam, and as chief of mission of one of our largest embassies in Mexico City. Both assignments were challenging and rewarding, as were the many others in Asia, Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and of course, here in Washington. If I am confirmed by the Senate, my experience overseas and at home will help Secretary Rice promote the transformational diplomacy that is the cornerstone of her leadership of the Department of State.

Globalization is bringing many changes to the world, empowering a host of new international actors. Nonetheless, constructive diplomatic relations between and among nation states remain central to preserving international stability and security, and expanding opportunities for economic and cultural interactions.

- Diplomacy helps us pursue peaceful cooperation in regions threatened by conflict, bolster the international rule of law, and ensure respect for human rights;
- It gives us the opportunity to support weak and failing states and build coalitions to stabilize and strengthen them; and
- It enables us to protect our citizens, advance our economic interests, and promote our image as a nation defined by its democratic values.

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If the Senate confirms me, I would hope that, in addition to Iraq, I could make a strong contribution to our foreign policy in those parts of the world where I have spent the most time in my career—Asia and Latin America. But as Deputy Secretary I will face challenges in many other areas too numerous to list in full from promoting America's economic, business, and energy interests overseas to supporting our programs in public diplomacy.

Mr. Chairman, I have always consulted closely with this committee, and any Member of Congress who has an interest in issues for which I am responsible. I will remain available to you and seek your counsel.

Again, I regard this nomination as a great honor, and I am grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence they have placed in me.

I welcome the committee's questions. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Your experience is so broad and your recent assignments have been so significant, I suspect all of us have an awful lot of questions.

I will take you at your word that you will make yourself available to the committee so we won't have to pursue every one of them today. And again, I welcome your family. With the permission of the Chairman, I'd like to suggest 8-minute rounds. Let me begin by asking you, Mr. Secretary, do you support or oppose a dialog with Iran and Syria now, regarding Iraq?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I believe that both Syria and Iran have not been doing what they could do to support a peaceful course of events in Iraq and I think that they know what they need to do. As far as dialog is concerned—and I refer specifically with regard to Syria, to allowing 40 to 70 foreign fighters to flow into Iraq through Syria every month. That's the intelligence communities' estimate and Iran's support amongst other things, for extremist Shia elements in Iraq.

As far as dialog is concerned, as you know, Senator, we have an embassy in Syria so there has been no lack of opportunity to exchange views if the Syrians had chosen to dialog with us constructively and that door is always open to them.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, we're waiting to hear from them.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. There's a channel, I would say.

The CHAIRMAN. But they must initiate the channel. That's what your saying?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I don't think that our people in our embassy in Damascus are adverse to initiating a discussion with the Government of Syria.

The CHAIRMAN. But have they?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I haven't reviewed all the diplomatic traffic of late but my point is that that diplomatic channel exists at the Charge d'Affaires——

The CHAIRMAN. I'm not trying to be confrontational. I'm trying to make sure I understand. We've haven't had an ambassador in there since last summer, and I'm trying to get a straight sense of what the administration's position is. They point out, accurately, that they know what our concerns are, quote unquote. But my specific question is, do you believe that at your level, the level of the Secretary of State, do you think there should be an initiation of discussions with Syria and with Iran relating to Iraq? Not whether they can come to us. Should we initiate discussions?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think the view at this time, Mr. Chairman, is that they know what they need to do. I would never want to say never with respect to initiating a high-level dialog with either of these two countries but that's the position as I understand it at this time. The one other point I'd like to make with respect to Iran is that we have, I think, made what I would consider at least, to be a very interesting and attractive offer to them in exchange for suspension of their nuclear enrichment program, which is now something that has been demanded unanimously by the Security Council, that would open the door to a dialog with us and that as Secretary Rice has said on a number of occasions, if they were to do that, she would be more than prepared to have discussions with the Government of Iran.

The CHAIRMAN. In the jargon of ordinary Americans, that's a precondition, correct?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. A precondition but it is not a unilateral precondition, Mr. Chairman. It's one that, in fact, is demanded by the international community through a unanimously adopted Security Council resolution.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that's correct but it might be misleading. Our European friends, as I talk to them, think we should be having dialog, separate and apart. So it's misleading to suggest that there is a unilateral view among our allies in the United Nations, that they should cease and desist. That view is separate and distinct from what leaders at our level in European capitals are saying to me, why aren't you? We have urged the administration, on a separate track, to have direct dialog relative to Iraq. Is that not true?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I'm sure there are European countries that would urge us.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I'm sure you know that, right? I mean, you know that to be a fact. You head up the entire intelligence community. Is there any doubt about what I just said?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I just can't name for you——

The CHAIRMAN. No, I'm not asking you to name——

Mr. NEGROPONTE [continuing]. At the moment, which countries——

The CHAIRMAN. But you don't doubt that at all?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. No, I don't doubt it whatsoever.

The CHAIRMAN. So it's just slightly misleading to suggest that there is a uniform view from Europeans and the Security Council. Let me move on.

What is the administration's view or your view about the development that appears to have taken hold that Saudi Arabia and Iran are really brokering Lebanon now? Is that a good development or a bad development?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I think it is a reflection of the fact that countries in the region have a strong interest in what is happening in Lebanon. Iran, of course, has been a significant player in that country, indirectly at least, for a number of years through its support for Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia, I think, is a little bit concerned, if I might characterize it that way, at the upsurge or the rising influence of Shia Islam in the Middle East and since they have a number of Sunni friends in Lebanon and that they have provided a certain amount of economic assistance. In fact, after us, I think they were the second—made the second largest pledge at the recent assistance conference.

The CHAIRMAN. I believe that's correct.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Right. So I think both of those countries have—I believe they have some role to play in the situation in Lebanon.

The CHAIRMAN. Are the newspaper accounts accurate, that the Saudis and the Iranians are talking with one another as well as the parties in Lebanon?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I believe that there is some recently initiated dialog between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The CHAIRMAN. The only point I'm making is I know of no country that has a greater concern about the rise of Iran, with the possible exception of Israel, than Saudi Arabia, and the Saudis have concluded that they have a mutual interest, it appears, in making sure that Lebanon doesn't evolve into a civil war again. So they're talking, which really makes it even more confusing to me why we're not initiating discussions on a single track or with no preconditions, with those two countries.

I have 30 seconds left, so I'll yield to my friend from Indiana. Thank you.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'm heartened by your initial testimony, Secretary Negroponte, that you favor a Law of the Sea Treaty. We've been working on this, as you know, for a while and it hasn't happened yet but I would be hopeful that the chairman would initiate work on the situation. Would you just affirm again the administration's position?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I'm grateful that you asked the question and I put the reference to Law of the Sea in my opening statement because I spent a number of years working on related questions and there must be literally hundreds of individuals in this town and throughout the United States who at one point or another, over the past 30 or 35 years, have worked on the Law of the Sea and you will recall, Senator, back in the 1970s, this was considered one of the defining issues in negotiations between us and the Third World. I think it is a treaty that is very much in the national interest and in the national security interest. I understand it has been voted out of the committee one time and sent to the floor. I've also been advised that given the time that has elapsed, it may be desirable—but this would be at your own—this would be up to the Sen-

ate and your committee to have another hearing on the issue of the Law of the Sea before sending it back.

But I do think that a very strong case can be made that this is a treaty that is in the national interest. It protects our economic and national security interests.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you for that affirmation. It was interesting, Senator Stevens was here to introduce you this morning, and he related your long association on issues related to the Law of the Sea and that, of course, enthused Senator Stevens as they do us.

I want to use this hearing to inquire, not that you're able to solve these problems, but perhaps you can alleviate them. I'm just concerned after briefings we've had with Chris Hill, our ambassador to talks with the North Koreans, 6-party talks, that for example, just the other day, before the meeting in Berlin with Ambassador Hill and representatives of North Korea. There was a meeting involving administration officials, including State Department officials, to discuss proliferation finance with some of our major allies. On the margin of the meeting, some American officials reportedly raised the prospect of imposing a travel ban on key North Korean leaders as provided under a United Nations resolution that gives them that ability. Unhappily, of course, this came just as Ambassador Hill was preparing to try to get North Korean leaders to meet with him in Berlin. So he was able to allay that but it's startling that our administration people were even making that suggestion. Now the State Department has raised that all the time, sort of month after month but nevertheless, right on the threshold of having the potential for six-power talks again, why we want to censure the North Koreans and maybe properly so. We're not doing enough to account for their funds. This could have been done in July, August, September, and October, but right before we come once again to the threshold—all I'm asking, and this will be an internal problem, I suspect, for you and Secretary Rice, to find who in the administration is orchestrating these countervailing situations. They are not helpful and without gaining any assent from you because you've not been involved, I would just say that we take it seriously in the committee as you do. This is a very, very important set of negotiations.

Let me just ask affirmatively, however, on January 11, President Bush signed legislation that Senator Obama and I had authored on proliferation interdiction assistance. This deals with weapons that are other than weapons of mass destruction. In one tour, we discovered large stashes of weapons. We discovered Europeans were working in Ukraine, for example, to try to get MAN-PAD missiles under control and various other weapons of terror. So the law has been passed, but will you work to try to make certain that there is some funding and planning and effective administration of our participation with Europeans and others who could be involved in attempting to control these weapons?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I certainly intend to look into that, Senator. I hope you'll indulge me. I still have a day job and I continue to be the Director of National Intelligence so I haven't been able to master every one of these subject matters as well as I would have liked.

Senator LUGAR. I appreciate that but I'm just highlighting it on the screen.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. But I will certainly put that on my radar screen.

Senator LUGAR. And on the same subject, present interdiction efforts—including the Proliferation Security Initiative—are moving ahead but how are these effectively coordinated within the State Department? And if you have not researched that, please do so. It seems to me this is another area in which a number of our authorities are trying to do a lot of good but it's not evident that everybody is on the same page and it's important that they get there. The State Department does have quite a role in this and we've had Bob Joseph and others testifying from time to time but I'm hopeful that all these proliferation efforts succeed because currently, there is a great deal of accounting in the press for what seemed to be failures or holes in the system. The Department of Defense has a role here, too, and the National Security people, but clearly, your coordination of this, your mastery of many parts, would be extremely important.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think Under Secretary Joseph has done some excellent work in this regard and the intelligence community has been very supportive, of course, of the Proliferation Security Initiative and I think there have been some interesting and significant successes over the past couple of years in that regard.

Senator LUGAR. Perhaps at some point later we'll have a chance to review with you as you survey the situation, how we can be effective.

Finally, let me just say that I sent a number of our staff members to 20 embassies to look at coordination between the State and the Defense Departments in the campaign against terror. They've written a very good report. It's been widely commented on in the press as well as the official circles. I don't know whether you've had a chance to review the study but I hope that you'll do so. We had direct testimony as to various embassies in which the ambassador was not necessarily completely clueless with regard to what the Defense Department was doing, but very frequently not wholly informed, and it offends people. We're a bit lax in cluing our ambassador in.

Now, having all of these activities going on in a country—you've served as an ambassador to various countries—can be rather unnerving, if you're the ambassador and you do not really know what other parts of your government are doing, particularly as conspicuous as the Department of Defense. Now without getting into interagency warfare here, let me just say, this is a serious problem, and we tried in a tactful way by visiting 20 embassies, to try to bring testimony of specifics. I hope that you will study that and work to coordinate those problems.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I will, indeed, Senator, and I do want to say here I think it is important to state for the record that I'm a strong believer in the country team system. I'm a strong believer that our ambassadors abroad are the coordinators of the entire United States Government effort in particular countries except in the case of military commands, and I believe that it is the responsibility of

ambassadors to be intimately familiar with the activities of all agencies operating in their country of assignment.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Negroponte. It's nice to have you before the committee. I particularly want to thank you for your years of public service. I had the opportunity to be with you in Iraq when you were our ambassador and I must tell the committee, I was very much impressed by the manner in which you gave us access to information during that period of time, and your frank assessments during that period that I was there. So I applaud you for your years of public service.

I want to ask, if I might, just a couple questions that perhaps you're prepared to answer now. If not, I'm sure we'll have a chance later to talk about these. As I visit embassies around the world, U.S. Embassies, I'm always concerned about the support that we give—budget support to the various missions. There always seems to be not enough dollars available, which is true in all agencies, but it's particularly concerning to me because of the increased expectations we have about our embassies' work around the world.

I'm just wondering what your budget priorities would be in the agency, to help in our field missions around the world, as to whether you—you know there are going to be tight budgets. You know you're not going to get all the dollars you need. But whether you have a game plan so that we can better meet our needs around the world.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think that I'd have to defer, Senator, in terms of giving you any specifics with respect to budget priorities at this time, particularly since the budgets have just been submitted and we're really not—I'm not in a position at this point, I don't think, at any time soon, to be helping shape the 2008 or 2007 supplemental budgets.

Senator CARDIN. But you have served as ambassador at several posts.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Yes, sir.

Senator CARDIN. You know the frustrations that are out there in the field.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I do and I think that as somebody who has been a career Foreign Service officer all my life, I tend to put, in my own mind, the highest priority on providing recruiting and supporting the best qualified possible personnel so I think human resource issues are going to be a very high priority for me and then of course, supporting these people adequately in the field. I think that one large part of that budget you're talking about, Senator, is of course the security requirements, which have risen. I won't say astronomically but they've risen very significantly over the years in terms of the kinds of monies that have to be spent to be able to protect our embassies and consulates overseas.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I want to go to an area that I consider the highest priority on the short-term and that's the Sudan and Darfur. I have been—this Nation has played a critical role in bringing world attention to the problems in the Sudan. We have not gotten the type of help internationally to stop the genocide.

There have been conversations about a Plan B although I'm not certain what a Plan B is. I'm just interested in your assessment of what we need to do in Darfur and your commitment to make sure this receives the highest priority within the Department of State.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I'm certainly conscious, Senator, of the importance of Darfur. I had an opportunity to work on that issue some when I was the Ambassador to the United Nations. I also think it is important that the President selected Mr. Andrew Natsios to be the Special Negotiator, the Special Envoy for Darfur, and I think that has been a very positive development. I think he brings a lot of energy to that issue and as Director of National Intelligence, we have quite significantly increased the priority we attached to collecting intelligence and information on what is happening in the Darfur region. But as you quite, I think, correctly suggest in your question, we're not there yet. The rebel groups still have not been brought into—a number of them have not been brought into the agreement. There are still problems with the government not wanting to allow a U.N. force into the country and I think that Darfur is going to require continued or continue to require a sustained effort on the part of our Government.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that. I agree with that and I think we need to look at effective ways to bring an end to the genocide.

I'm just curious, as Director of National Intelligence, you've played a critical role in trying to coordinate intelligence gathering and analysis among the different agencies, particularly concerns that we've had within the Department of State and Department of Defense. Is your position going to change now that you're moving from the Director to the State Department?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I'd like to think not, Senator. I think that in my experience during these almost 2 years as Director of National Intelligence, what we've really worked toward is to try to integrate the intelligence community as much as possible so that you have a sort of seamlessness among all the different agencies and I think we've built up a much greater degree of collegiality and integration than existed previously.

Senator CARDIN. Well, we'll see whether your position stays consistent now that you're changing roles. Let me just touch upon an issue that is going to be critical and that is how we're dealing with Iran and how we're dealing with Syria, under what conditions should we engage in direct talks with those countries and what role they play in trying to resolve what's happening in Iraq and in the region. I just welcome your thoughts as to how we are going to be effective in policies in Iran and also in Syria.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. First, I'd like to say, Senator, that I think Iran has—its behavior has been emboldened in the past couple of years. I think back in 2003, their behavior was not as bold as it has been recently in terms of their assertiveness in Iraq, where I mentioned earlier, they've been providing this lethal equipment to Shia extremists in Lebanon, in the Palestinian territories. I think that just generally speaking, Iran has played a more assertive role than it did previously. I think Syria also has not played a constructive role. The situation in Lebanon, the assassination of President Hariri. We still haven't got to the bottom of that and there are con-

cerns in that regard and their failure to take adequate measures to stop the flow of foreign fighters across their border and into Iraq. I was mentioning earlier—I don't know if you were here—to Senator Biden that we have diplomatic relations with Syria and we have an avenue for dialog although we have not initiated high-level talks with them and we have been discussing the Iran issue with our European friends and the Security Council and in the context of the nuclear issue, there has been a dialog with Iran, albeit indirectly. But the view at the moment is that we are reluctant to initiate a high-level diplomatic dialog with Iran until there has been some progress on this nuclear issue.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you and welcome, Mr. Ambassador. As you know, you have many admirers and supporters here in the Congress that is a result of the respect that you have achieved over many years of service to this country. I believe—and I have told you this—that in my opinion, you are one of the pre-eminent diplomats of our time and we are grateful that you and your family have agreed to take on another challenging assignment. We'll miss you as Director of National Intelligence and you and I have had an opportunity to work closely on that issue. But the experience that you will bring, in addition to your other experiences, to the new job at State will be important and they will relate directly as you know better than almost all of us—it will relate directly to what you will be dealing with. And to your family, thank you, for your continued sacrifices. I know you are very proud of your father and your husband, as you should be.

I want to pursue the diplomatic course since that's what you are and that's what you will be working on in the portfolio that you will take responsibility for and in your testimony, you note and I quote, "Diplomacy helps us pursue peaceful cooperation in regions threatened by conflict, bolster the international rule of law, and ensure respect for human rights," and I think there is rather wide agreement on that point up here.

The two primary authors of the Baker-Hamilton Commission, the Iraqi Study Group Commission, will appear before this committee this afternoon and we will get into some detail on their 79 recommendations, some of them very much focused on what we have talked about this morning to some extent, Iran and Syria. And if you recall, one of the most significant contributions, I believe, recommendations surely, that was made by that Commission of 10 individuals of various political philosophies, all I think qualified to study a critical issue. But one of their most important recommendations, at least in my mind, was their focus on a regional diplomatic strategy on Iraq that includes engagement with Iran and Syria.

Now, judging from your testimony and what your life has been about, the Baker-Hamilton Commission focused on diplomatic engagement and I think most of us have some general agreement that the future of Iraq will be determined by some diplomatic framework, some political accommodation, resulting in a political resolution. It won't be decided by the military—nothing ever is.

Now, we heard what you said in response to direct questions about Iran and Syria and I first would ask you, do you agree with the Baker-Hamilton Commission report? That again, there must be a regional diplomatic strategy and focus on Iraq that includes engagement with Iran and Syria—without going into the specifics but would you agree with that general concept?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I would agree that the regional actors have a role to play in the stability and security of Iraq. I would depart from that proposition and that, of course, would include Syria and Iran. But then if you go to the next question as to where would you concentrate your diplomatic activity as a matter of priority and initially, then I think opinions might differ as to exactly how you would focus that but certainly one area where I think everybody is comfortable advocating diplomacy is in trying to shore up support for the Government and the country of Iraq by its neighbors and we've certainly approached other countries in the region—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and so forth, but you've heard my answer on the Iran and Syria question.

Senator HAGEL. But if diplomacy is important as you have noted here and I believe in your words, you talk about peaceful cooperation in regions—regions—your words—and it was noted regions in the Baker-Hamilton report, then wouldn't it follow that some framework is going to have to be presented, built, that would include the regional powers. I mean, that's my comprehension of what you said and what the Baker-Hamilton report—

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Right.

Senator HAGEL. Again, understanding that there are differences in how you do that. But my question to you is, do you think that regional framework is important to solve or start to resolve the chaos, the problem that we have in Iraq?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think it—first of all, I think it is important that there be an understanding by the different countries of the region, including Syria and Iran, for example, as to what kind of behavior is expected from them and what kind of behavior could help contribute to stability in Iraq. I would not say that as a matter of priority, one would have to go right to a regional-type conference or regional-type diplomatic scenario although I don't think that that should be ruled out. It was used with respect to Afghanistan with all the neighbors of Afghanistan. You may remember the six-plus-two formula.

Senator HAGEL. As you know, you were there and of course, with your intelligence assignment the last year and a half, you know, of course, that the Iraqi Government, the Prime Minister, the President have made trips to Tehran. The Iraqi Government is dealing with the Iranian Government, directly, at the highest level, between the President and the Prime Minister. Is there some contradiction there? Do you believe that we won't deal with those countries? But yet our Iraqi allies, who we are supporting with our blood and our treasure and our reputation, we are not on the same page there? Is there some conflict to that in your mind?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I wouldn't want to suggest that we're not aware of what Iran thinks on various subjects. I wouldn't want to suggest that we're completely cut off from understanding what their positions are because certainly in the negotiations at the

United Nations with respect to the nuclear program, we've learned through the Europeans in some detail, we're in contact with the many different friendly countries to us that have diplomatic representation in Iran. We learn a lot. We have our own interest section, the Swiss Embassy in Tehran handles our interests in Tehran. So we're not devoid of diplomatic possibilities although I would be the first to concede that it's not the same thing as having full-blown direct diplomatic contact.

Senator HAGEL. Do you think we are drifting toward a military confrontation with Iran?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I don't think that has to be, Senator. I think we would strongly prefer that the issues between us and Iran be resolved peacefully.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to join the chorus of voices that have spoken about your outstanding service to our country and admire and appreciate it. I enjoyed our conversation about several different aspects and looking forward, I want to say, Ambassador, that in that context, however, if at the end of the day, I support your nomination, which I likely will, unless you answer questions today in a way that confounds me, which I doubt—that doesn't, however, express a support for the President's policies because I believe the President is headed in the wrong direction. So having said that, let me just ask you a couple of questions.

Do you agree with the assessment of the situation on the ground in Iraq that the Iraq Study Group put out at the time of its report?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I was anticipating questions on Iraq, Senator. I prepared a few remarks here that I think are responsive to that, because I expect it will be transmitting the national intelligence estimate on Iraq to Congress the first thing next week, by Monday at the latest. Of course, I want the NIE to speak for itself, but what I would like to say is that my belief that success in Iraq remains possible is based on my experience in dealing with Iraq as United States Ambassador to the U.N. and Ambassador to Iraq and as Director of National Intelligence, and I don't think I'm at variance with the intelligence community in my judgments and here's what I would say.

Iraq is at a precarious juncture. That means the situation could deteriorate, that there are prospects for increasing stability in Iraq and achieving increased stability will depend on several factors. Among them, the extent to which the Iraq Government and political leaders can establish effective national institutions that transcend sectarian or ethnic interests and within this context, the willingness of Iraqi security forces to pursue extremist elements of all kinds.

It will also depend on the extent to which extremists, most notably al-Qaeda in Iraq can be defeated in their attempts to foment intersectarian struggle between Shia and Sunnis and lastly, the extent to which Iraq's neighbors stop the flow of militants and ammunitions across their borders. So I think that progress is possible in these dimensions, laying the foundations for success.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that answer but let me be more specific. Let me read some excerpts and tell me whether you agree or disagree: violence is increasing in scope, complexity, and lethality.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think over the past year, that's been true.

Senator MENENDEZ. That, in fact, in the political context, the national government does not act as a national government but looks at it in its own sectarian interests.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think that's been a challenge. I think that has been difficult for the Prime Minister but I do think that there are some encouraging indicators in that regard, that there has been very little effort to promote national reconciliation as a result of those sectarian viewpoints. Again, I think that—I'm hopeful of some progress in that area, that corruption is pervasive within the existing Iraqi Government. Corruption is a serious problem.

Senator MENENDEZ. My concern, Ambassador, is that while we have focused on the escalation of the war the President promotes, a whole host of things critical to the very success in Iraq that you say in your opening statement that is so important to the Nation, to our Nation, are not about an escalation of the war but are about a whole host of diplomatic efforts to achieve the Iraqis moving forward and it seems to me that without benchmarks that have a real consequence to them, which I have seen the administration reject so far; certainly when the Secretary was here, I asked her those questions and she largely rejected them. Without benchmarks to have a real sense that we are moving forward on all of these different categories, among others: oil, distribution of resources for the nation. It seems to me that all of that is a much more monumental challenge at the end of the day and that's the very essence of what the State Department should be at the forefront of and I think largely we have failed to see significant progress in that respect and my question is, therefore—I heard your statement but my question is therefore what is it? Give the outline of when you're confirmed, what you'll be doing with the Secretary to change the very essence of moving the Iraqis in a much different direction that they have been recalcitrant to move. Because before sending 20,000 more of our sons and daughters on the roll of a dice and the hope that some of these things would move in a different direction, it seems to me we have to know what your plan is to actually accelerate the pace and the surge of diplomacy that will move the Iraqis to a better place than they are now because without that, none of this is going to succeed.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. First of all, Senator, I think there is an enormous amount of diplomacy that already goes on with the Government of Iraq, starting with frequent conversations between the President of the United States and the Prime Minister and then of course, the Secretary and our ambassador out there. I think you're right to say that we are very challenged but I do think that there are benchmarks, if you will, that ought to be pursued and I think you've alluded to a couple of them. One is certainly the national reconciliation process and the passage of a law regarding de-Baathification. Another has to do with oil revenues—and these are all issues that are being worked in the Iraqi National Assembly at the moment. Then I think another important one is that we hope

that local elections and regional elections will be carried in the country of Iraq during the course of 2007, where hopefully some of the different groups that have been underrepresented, such as in the Sunni areas, can regain some of their representation in those elections that take place during the coming years.

Senator MENENDEZ. So those are examples of some of the kinds of benchmarks that we'll be looking at—I hope we'll consider consequences to benchmarks and last, since my time is about to expire—this is on a different topic—I do hope that with your experience in Latin America, that while you're obviously going to be spending a great deal of your time on Iraq, that we look to expand what is our view of United States policy in Latin America. Trade is important and narcotics interdiction is important but when half of the people in the hemisphere live below the poverty level, it creates a whole host of challenges for us here, domestically. The things we debate about often relate to that and when we have—the only place in the world that we have, for the last 3 years, cut development assistance to under the budget of the administration is Latin America and the Caribbean—not in the national interests of the United States, not in the national security interests of the United States—and I hope we can have a more robust policy because it's in the vacuum of having a more robust policy that the Chavez's of the world get to play a bigger role than they should be playing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. With permission of the committee, I'd read on page 60 of the Iraq Study Group report—there's a line—"It should be unambiguous that continued U.S. political, military, and economic support for Iraq depends on the Iraqi Government demonstrating political will and making substantial progress toward the achievement of milestones on national reconciliation, security, and governance."

Senator.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I appreciate it. Ambassador, it is great to have you here with your family. I know your son and daughters have probably had a most unique life not without sacrifice. I'm sure they're thinking about a lot of things right now other than our questions and are looking for this to end, and thank you to your wife for being here and supporting you in this way.

I know that your role as Deputy will be to really generally supervise the Department of State, and that you, in your opening comments, talked about transformational diplomacy. I was with Secretary Rice earlier today and I know that came up. Could you articulate for us, since you will be making that, if you will, work throughout the Department, exactly what transformational diplomacy is in your mind?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I think the principle feature of it, Senator, is to redeploy if you will, adjust the deployment of our diplomatic efforts and our diplomatic establishments around the world, more toward some of the hot spots and the more challenging geographic areas of the world. I think that there has been a tendency, over the years, to be overrepresented, if you will, diplomatically in the highly developed countries of the world and less represented in

the less developed parts. There is the additional fact that you have a lot of new states in the world, particularly on the periphery of the Soviet Union. So I think that the main notion of Secretary is to get our people out into these difficult hot spots. In addition to that, to try to increase our representation through having these so-called presence posts, which would be very small, maybe one officer in some locations of interest around the world. And I think the Secretary felt that my type of Foreign Service career, where I spent virtually all of it serving in less developed parts of the world, in the Third World, if you will, was one of the qualifications that interested her in my background.

Senator CORKER. What exactly does that mean to the Department as far as upheaval, change—when you talk about transformational—what does that really mean throughout the entire State Department?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I haven't looked at the details of what it would mean. What I do know is that at the present time, there is the thought of moving a couple of hundred positions from Western Europe, for example, to other diplomatic posts in the farther reaches of the world but I haven't had an opportunity to study in detail all the implications that these moves would have.

Senator CORKER. You were in intelligence, obviously are still today, as a matter of fact. You've been in the State Department, have been around the world, and I think are very qualified to address an issue that has come before this committee and that is, in looking at the things that have occurred over the last 4 or 5 years and some of the breakdowns that have occurred that have caused judgments to be made based on information, based on things that may or may not have been the case. There tends to be a concern about just our country's readiness, if you will, to deal with the world as it is today—the State Department, the Department of Defense, Intelligence. I know that this has really maybe not so much to do with your confirmation but you are in a unique position to assess that and I'm just wondering what you might say as it relates to our country's readiness to really deal with the world that really is transforming, that does no longer—we're no longer in the cold war and obviously, the types of challenges that we have are most unique. How do you assess our readiness in general?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. If you were asking me that question from a point of view of intelligence and whether we're prepared sufficiently with regard to the threats that are out there, Senator, I would say that there have been substantial improvements since 9/11 in terms of our preparedness, in terms of having increased our intelligence capabilities, of having integrated our efforts better and of having improved information sharing between the different agencies. If you ask me the question, is our diplomatic establishment as well prepared as it can be, with the greater variety of problems that we have to deal with in this world, when you think about the fact that we no longer face just one monolithic threat, if you will, as we did during the cold war, that we face a wide range and diversity of problems on this planet, I think there is still a lot of work to be done.

Senator CORKER. It seems to me that as it relates to actually a number of comments, that the activities that we have on the

ground through civilians, through the State Department, are equally important to what we're doing, maybe more so, to what we doing militarily in Iraq right now. It seems to me that one of the big issues we've had is a real lack of working together, of communicating, of having a coherence there on the ground. I'm wondering if you can address that and how you think that might be changing with what is occurring at present in Iraq—the ability to get money out, the ability to really coordinate efforts in an appropriate manner, to lessen our need for military involvement down the road.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I mean, I do think our efforts are fairly well coordinated in terms of ambassadors and military commanders working well in the field. I think there is an issue of resources. It is, as a general rule, it's probably easier to obtain resources that are directly supportive of our military, whereas sometimes investment in foreign assistance or support for the security forces of another country, for example, could be a more cost effective way of going about things. So I guess what I would say in reply to you, Senator, is that as we carry out our policies in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan, we need to be mindful of the important contribution that the civilian component of our national security effort can make.

Senator CORKER. You've had an extensive background in the Western Hemisphere and South America and we see a lot of developments taking place there. I know our country fixates a great deal on the Middle East, just in reference to oil and energy supplies and how that affects the world but in many ways, South America is equally or more important to us in that regard. I'm wondering if you can just give a general assessment of the developments you see taking place, socialism, anti-Americanism that is there and the type of efforts you think need to be undertaken in the State Department to make sure that our economic security down the road as it relates to energy supplies and trade, stay intact.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Thank you, Senator. I think Latin America has been a mixed picture in the past couple of years. There have been a lot of elections, I think, in a number of places—democratic regimes have been elected. I think that in Mexico, in Peru, they were recently elections—Ecuador and Nicaragua and so forth. I think that one of the trends that we need to be concerned about is kind of a frustration among some of the populations of Latin America that democracy is not necessarily delivering the kinds of results that people had hoped for and that has, in turn, given rise to a certain amount of populism. I guess that is most clearly symbolized by Mr. Hugo Chavez, the president of Venezuela and I do not think he has been a constructive force in the hemisphere so I think countries like Bolivia, among others, have been under the influence of Mr. Chavez, who has been trying to export his kind of radical populism and I think that his behavior is threatening to democracies in the region but by and large, I think that democracy is doing quite well in the hemisphere and I guess the last point I would make is that the situation in Columbia is a critical one to our interests and I think it is very, very important that we continue to support the Government of Columbia and its efforts to bring that country under control and to finally put an end to the guerilla activity that is taking place in that country.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Obama.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, thank you. I look forward to your continued service and I suspect, more time before this committee over the next couple of years. I've got two very different sets of questions.

The first relates to Iran. There has been a lot of speculation in the press lately with regard to United States policy toward Iran. Administration sources, although unnamed, have been fairly explicit in indicating that the administration is attempting to send some shots across the bow with respect to Iran, both regarding its interference in Iraq but also its nuclear program. You've got carrier groups being amassed in the region. You've got a policy that appears to be purposely somewhat ambiguous in terms of how the administration is going to pursue Iranians who are on Iraqi soil.

This has led to grave concern on the part of many observers that we are stumbling into a more aggressive posture with respect to Iran. I would like to get some sense from you as to what exactly our Iran policy is right now and are we coupling the issue of Iraq with the very legitimate concerns with respect to Iran's nuclear program—do we see those as related? Do we see those as separate? Because I know the chairman has talked about this. I think it's very important from this committee's perspective that there is clarity and transparency in terms of U.S. policy so that we don't repeat some of the mistakes that have been made in the past with respect to our Middle Eastern policies. So do you want to address that very briefly?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think first I would start from the premise I mentioned earlier that Iran has been emboldened in its behavior during the past couple of years and has played a more assertive role and that certainly manifests in Iraq where we have increasing evidence that they have been providing lethal assistance to extremist Shia groups in that country and that's destabilizing behavior as far as Iraq is concerned. With respect to their nuclear program, of course, they have been adamant, it seems, in their desire to pursue an enrichment program and the intelligence community's assessment is—continues to be and it has been for a couple of years, that Iran is determined to acquire nuclear weapons. I would characterize our policy as desirous of resolving any issues we have with Iran by peaceful means, but at the same time we don't believe that their behavior, such as supporting Shia extremists in Iraq, should go unchallenged. So it's a balance, if you will, but if they feel that they can continue with this kind of activity with impunity, that will be harmful to the security of Iraq and to our interests in that country.

Senator OBAMA. Let me just be clear. I think it is entirely appropriate for United States forces to do whatever we need to do to protect United States troops and if there are Iranian aggressors inside Iraq that are aiding in attacks on United States troops or making our troops more vulnerable, then within Iraq, I think, action is appropriate. I also think that with respect to the nuclear program, I don't know anybody on this panel who does not believe that that would create great danger for the region and the world and that we should take every step possible to make sure that they don't ob-

tain nuclear weapon capability and that we should keep all options on the table in pursuing that. What I think many of us are concerned about is that we stumble into active hostilities with Iran without having aggressively pursued diplomatic approaches, without the American people understanding exactly what is taking place and so, I just want to suggest that in your important role as Deputy Secretary of State that you, Secretary Rice, and others are mindful that this committee is going to be paying attention and that we do not want to see precipitous actions that have not been thought through, have not been discussed, have not been authorized.

Let me just change the subject real quick in the time that I have remaining. This is an issue that actually seems somewhat parochial but I think, as you'll see, is of concern across the world. About a year ago, the Chicago Tribune ran a three-part investigative series on mercury contamination in the fish that we eat and the Tribune series found a stunning level of mercury in fish, not just in saltwater fish like tuna or swordfish but in fresh water fish that our constituents, particularly around the Great Lakes region, might catch in their favorite local lakes. As I'm sure you know, mercury is a potent neurotoxin, particularly for pregnant women and children. The problem is that with respect to mercury, it doesn't matter where on the globe it is used because while half of it dissipates locally, the other half can deposit itself on the other side of the world. So no matter how vigilant we are in the United States about mercury use, we need to monitor what's happening abroad. Currently, the U.S. sells large quantities of mercury to the developing world where tracking and environmental laws are lax and where mercury is still used in thermometers and thermostats and gold mining, although there are plenty of affordable substitutes for mercury. There is no real reason for developing countries to switch as long as we keep selling our mercury overseas, which brings me to the matter I want to raise with you.

Next week, the State Department representatives will attend a U.N. meeting in Kenya to decide the next steps in worldwide mercury reduction strategies. The European Union has already committed itself to stop selling mercury overseas by 2012. Secretary Lugar and I—Senator Lugar and I—I'm giving you a promotion there, Senator Lugar.

The CHAIRMAN. From a legislative standpoint, that doesn't sound like a promotion.

Senator OBAMA. Senator Lugar and I sent a letter last month to Secretary Rice asking about the U.S. strategy for this important meeting. Yesterday, I received a letter. Senator Lugar may have received the same letter that said the State Department still hasn't decided what to do at the meeting. Now these meetings occur every 2 years. The next one is next week. So I was a little stunned that the State Department didn't yet have a plan on this issue. The State Department letter did suggest that it had a preference for using nonbinding voluntary partnerships with other countries instead of binding treaties and agreements to reduce mercury around the world. Now, obviously, the State Department has got a lot on its plate between Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and so on. This is an issue of importance to my constituents though, and I wanted to

find out, No. 1, given the importance of this issue, why the State Department isn't advocating a tougher approach to the problem and second, the European Union has committed itself to stop selling mercury by 2012. Would you support the United States adopting a similar ban on mercury sales abroad? I know you may not have prepared for this question but I'm wondering if you have some thoughts on it and if not, then I'd like to get a formal response from the State Department to follow up on the letter that we've already received.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. We'll certainly arrange for that. I'm not personally familiar with that issue, although I was once a representative on the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission.

Senator OBAMA. So you know a little bit about it.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. And I was Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans Environments so I am certainly familiar with dealing with that type of issue. I'd be pleased to look into it.

Senator OBAMA. Good. I would like you to.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I'd like to thank you very much for your willingness to continue to serve our country at what I consider to be one of the most critical times in our Nation's history in dealing with our national security and in terms of world peace. And I want to thank your wife and your children for the sacrifice that they've made so that your husband and father could serve his country. It's very much appreciated and I'm sure you were all worried when he went into Iraq. I know when he came to the office to talk about it, I said he was taking his life in his hands going in there. Thank you so much.

As you know, Mr. Negroponte, I've been interested in a couple of areas—No. 1, anti-Semitism and Muslim-phobia and we've been trying for 4 years to get the OSCE to fund out of their core budget, the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Resources, which is a part of the OSC in terms of dealing with human rights and religious things.

I would just like to underscore how important I think that decision in putting it in the core budget is, because if you look at the long-term war on terror—and it's going to be with us a long time—how we deal with the human relations infrastructure in the various countries in terms of anti-Semitism and in terms of the Muslim world, particularly Muslims and dealing with modernity, are going to have a big impact on whether or not we're successful or not in the long run on this war on terror.

The second one deals with Serbia and Kosovo. Again, I want to congratulate the State Department in terms of not setting an artificial date for the finishing of those negotiations. I appreciate the outreach to Serbia. They've been—if we're successful, the forces of democracy won but the issue between how—the final status in Kosovo is still something that is up in the air and I would hope that as it moves to the Security Council that we stay on top of it so we don't end up having another conflict in that part of the world.

When you were in the office, we talked about management and I have another hat that I wear, now Ranking Member of the Over-

sight of Government Management and the Federal Workforce, and the fact of the matter is that we have been receiving, and I think Senator Lugar made reference to it in his opening statement, we've got some tremendous management problems today in the State Department, and for the record I would like to have the record of the last 2 years in terms of retirement, in terms of key positions that are open and not filled. I remember when Colin Powell took over. He talked about the team. He really instilled some new esprit de corps in the Department and from what I understand right now, it has sagged quite a bit. And I'd just like to know from you in terms of the role that you've been asked to play, what you are going to do about trying to get a handle on that and see if we can't quiet things down, stabilize it and bring back the feeling in the Department so that we just don't keep hemorrhaging as we have in the past.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, we'll certainly provide the information about the key positions and the vacancies and I think some of this is simply part of a normal rotational cycle that will happen during the course of any 8-year administration, Senator. But as far as how I visualize my own role in the Department, I think I can be of assistance to the Secretary in helping lead the Department, both here in Washington and abroad, the Foreign Service. I would like to think that one particular strength I can bring to the Department is my knowledge of how the Foreign Service works and my relationships with many Foreign Service officers, so I would like to build on that and strengthen the sense of satisfaction and enthusiasm for the work that they are doing. I want to be supportive to the Secretary and her efforts to carry out this transformational diplomacy that we were talking about earlier.

Senator VOINOVICH. Well, you are a career Foreign Service person. I suspect that everybody is kind of excited that you're coming back to the State Department. I really think you ought to talk to Secretary Rice about maybe spending a little time there in the Department, bucking people up and letting them know that there is going to be some fresh wind, new water coming into the State Department because the whole operation really depends on the motivation of the people that work in the Department and I think it is really important that it be paid attention to at this time.

[Disruption in background.]

The CHAIRMAN. Would you please cease? I'd ask the police to escort our visitor from the room. I would suggest that proves the acoustics in the room are good. I thank the Capital Police. We're going to have to clear the room. We can talk about this later. I would ask you to please leave the room and let the witness testify.

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman, will you add a minute and a half to my time?

The CHAIRMAN. No. Yes, I will. Add a minute and a half to your time. So we'll just let you go over a minute and a half. Don't reset the clock.

Senator VOINOVICH. This gets to Iraq. Many of us feel and the Iraq Study Task report came back and talked about engaging people in the region to try and get them to help provide a political solution to the situation. The question I have is, should we be convening a group of people and you've mentioned Saudis, the Syr-

ians—not the Syrians necessarily but the Egyptians and the Jordanians to come together and basically say to them, if we ultimately move out of here and this place blows up, it's going to have a very detrimental impact on the region and you ought to be interested in helping us stabilize the area or stabilize Iraq. The question I have is, why haven't we done that or in the alternative, why hasn't Maliki reached out to these people and called them together and said, hey guys, things are pretty bad here. Some of you are meddling in this situation. If this thing blows up, what impact is it going to have in terms of refugees? Saudis, if Sunnis start to be massacred, you're going to be probably asked to get involved in this and we could have a real blow-up. Where are we with this and why aren't we moving in that direction right now? Or at least, why isn't Maliki moving in that direction?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, first of all, Senator, I would agree with you that the role that countries in the region could play could be positive, although I think in the past, at least, and certainly in the time I was there and in my observation, there has been a reluctance on the part of a number of countries to be proactive with respect to Iraq and certainly been reluctant to establish a diplomatic presence in that country because of the security situation so I think that they've been a bit hesitant. I think today, you're starting to see a shift in that situation and countries like Saudi Arabia and Jordan, maybe also Egypt—more concerned than they were previously. So I think that could lead to some positive outcomes.

With regard to the Government of Iraq, I think they try. They try quite hard. Both Prime Minister Maliki and President Talabani, and particularly President Talabani, have traveled quite extensively throughout the region and I think that needs to be encouraged.

They've probably not gotten as far as they would like in terms of interest and acceptance and recognition in the region as they would have preferred but they have to continue trying to do that. For example, there are countries that could provide debt relief to Iraq that haven't done so yet. I would say Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as examples of that, but that would be just one example of the kind of contribution they could make to helping the situation in that country.

Senator VOINOVICH. Well, I'll just finish up that I hope that they understand that there is some real concern in this country about what we're doing and if they look at the tea leaves, we're going to be out of there over a period of time—how much we're still not sure. They'll be some presence and I would hope that somebody underscores to them how necessary it is for them to get involved in the situation. I think it is also very important that the American people know that some attempt has been made at that because from our perspective, it really hasn't been made. I know the Secretary has moved around and talked to this group and that group, but in other instances we've brought together countries that had strategic interests. We did that in North Korea. We've done that, to a certain extent, with Iran. We've done that to a certain extent in Lebanon—you know, bring all the folks together and talk about it. I would really urge you and the Secretary to give serious

thought to formalizing this—maybe not. Maybe we ought not to do it. Okay? But somebody should do it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Mr. Ambassador, thank you as well and I want to reiterate what a number of my colleagues said about your public service and your contribution and obviously the commitment of your family, which is a big part of what you've done and we're grateful.

I'm going to try to cover maybe four areas, if I can. I'll try to do them rather quickly, starting with, of course, Iraq and Iran. I want to pick up on some of what Senator Voinovich spoke to a moment ago about the region. One of the points the Iraq Study Group made, among others, and I think this is pertinent to this afternoon's hearing but I know of your experience in the region and in particular, with regard to Iraq.

At one point, the Iraq Study Group made the following assertion. It said, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, for the most part, have been passive and disengaged. And I wanted to get your perspective on that. A, whether you agree with that assessment and B, if you do agree, how you think this country and this State Department, under your leadership and Secretary Rice's leadership, can change that dynamic, if you believe that to be true, on being passive and disengaged.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think that I perhaps would state it slightly differently. I think they've not been as engaged as we would like them to be. I think the possibility of them being more engaged is increasing as they watch developments in the region, namely both the situation in Iraq and also the emboldened behavior of Iran that we've been talking about, which I think is a cause of concern for them. And if I could just add one point, I think, in reply to both Senator Voinovich's and your question, I think regional diplomacy and regional efforts can play an important part—there's no doubt about it—but I do think we need to be clear that the large—the preponderance of the problems that Iraq faces are internal in nature.

Senator CASEY. With regard to Iran, we've heard a lot today and you spoke to it directly. I guess I want to focus on two areas. One is, I'll deal with the press question first. There was a story today in the New York Times about the concerns about the European Union—the European Nations not working with our Government with regard to Iran, and concerns about whether or not they'll agree to any kind of restrictions or policies that will impact economically on how we deal with Iran. What can you tell us about the thrust of that story, A, and B, if the premise of that story is correct in your judgment, what do you think you must do and the Department must do?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I read the story and I haven't had a chance to check back with the office and look at it in depth, but what struck me about the story is that it sounded a little bit premature to me because we're just—we're waiting for a report from the International Atomic Energy Agency. If I'm not mistaken, it's supposed to come sometime during February and it is after that re-

port that then the countries will have to decide what else to do before the Security Council in light of Iran's decision to press ahead with its centrifuge program. So I think it may be a little bit early to talk about what kind of actions countries are prepared to take. Having said that, countries have had differing views on what types of sanctions should be applied. I think the important point is that the last Security Council resolution on Iran was adopted unanimously and I think that from an intelligence community point of view, our assessment is that that resolution had some impact on the internal dynamics in Iran and the dynamics of the debate that is being carried out in the political elite in that country, and some of the people in Iran may now be beginning to wonder what kind of difficulties and what kind of complications is the pursuit of their enrichment program bringing to that country.

Senator CASEY. And just a broader question with regard to Iran, I think what you see today around the country—I certainly hear it in Pennsylvania. We've lost over 140 lives in Iraq. There is a lot of discussion about and speculation about the Bush administration taking steps with regard to Iran that reminds people about mistakes made with regard to Iraq. I realize you can't compare the two, necessarily, but what I think a lot of people need to hear from this administration, and certainly from the State Department, is that when this administration approaches the gravity of the question of Iran, a much bigger country, much bigger threat militarily, obviously than Iraq has been, with all the problems we've had in Iraq, what I need to hear and I think what a lot of people need to hear is what is the—set aside the military strategy—what is the diplomatic strategy in the next 6 months, say. Let's limit it to that—from what you can gather, of this administration and certainly by way of the State Department, to deal just diplomatically with Iran, because I think people need some assurance. It seems to me, this may be only a perception that is not accurate but it always seems to me and to many others, I believe, around the country, that even as the administration says that it has every option on the table, it seems that the military option always is put forth first and seems most of the time the administration spends considering options, most of the time and effort and focus is on a military option instead of discharging or considering every possible other option, including one of sustained and robust diplomacy, but I'd just like to have your thoughts on that.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I guess the first thought I would offer, Senator, is that of course, diplomacy and other elements of national strategy just have to work hand in hand. They don't operate in an isolated fashion, so that for diplomacy to be effective, it is also important that we have a robust national security posture. I don't think there is any doubt about that. But with respect to Iran, first of all, I'd reiterate what I said earlier, which is that we would like to resolve the issues that confront us with respect to Iran by peaceful means. I would state that there are two main concerns. There are others as well but the two principle ones are the enrichment program and there is actually a substantial diplomatic effort underway through both the United Nations and working with the European Union, vis-a-vis Iran, and we've also indicated that we would be prepared to broaden our diplomatic activity with Iran if

they were to take that first step of stopping their enrichment program. And the other main concern is, of course, Iraq and the support that they provide to Shia extremists in that country and they certainly know our position on that score.

Senator CASEY. I have many more but I'm out of time. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Ambassador, for your willingness to continue to serve, and to your family for their support so that you can do just that. We greatly appreciate it.

Most of the questions this morning certainly and fairly have been focused on the situation in Iraq, a fair amount on Iran, as well, but as we discussed when I had the opportunity to sit down with you for a few moments, your portfolio is quite broad and we had a chance to talk a little bit about the task that you will have in the Far East—China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan—certainly areas that I have been very involved with on the subcommittee that I had chaired and now ranking, on this committee.

Let me ask you about the situation in North Korea, the dual track that is proceeding. I understand that today, in fact, we are resuming the second round of talks on the financial restrictions that the United States has imposed against Pyongyang. Can you just very briefly give me your assessment as to where we are and how you see us proceeding with North Korea in view of the six-party talks?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think the key thing, Senator, is we're of course concerned by the fact that they tested their Taepodong missile last summer and that they also had this—more recently, this nuclear explosion. And our main objective is to achieve a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and we are pursuing that objective along with the other parties to the six-party talks. So our main focus is to try to get North Korea committed to putting a freeze on its nuclear program, which would mean freezing their nuclear reactor and their reprocessing facility and subjecting those activities to international inspection. So that's the main purpose of these diplomatic efforts that are underway at this time.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And in view of the effort that we all agree on, which is a Korean Peninsula free of a nuclear threat there, but also recognizing that we have the United States sanctions issue, the financial sanctions that from North Korea's perspective is saying, that's a different matter, that's a different issue. There are some who have suggested that that is forwarding the efforts for the six-party talks to be successful. I guess my question to you is, in your opinion? Are we making the progress necessary to get to the final goal, which is to see the Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, it's a very difficult issue and I wouldn't want to raise false hopes here but I do think there are some grounds for optimism that we can move that issue forward. And as far as the sanctions are concerned, while some might argue that it's a disruptive factor, I think others might make the case and perhaps even equally or more plausibly that those kinds of sanctions can provide a bit of leverage in these discussions. But I think there

are a number of factors at work—that must be at work on the thinking of the North Koreans. There again, I think the United Nations has played a role. The fact that the Security Council adopted a unanimous resolution, which placed North Korea, for the first time, at odds with their traditional friend, China. It must have given them pause about the situation that they have created for themselves. So I suspect there are a number of different facts that are influencing their thinking at this time.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Do you support or would you support sending Chris Hill to Pyongyang for the discussions? Do you think that would be helpful?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I think that would have to be a tactical decision that the Secretary would have to make in the context of whatever diplomatic development is taking place at that particular time. I certainly wouldn't rule it out.

Senator MURKOWSKI. In several conversations that I have had with some of our friends over in Japan on a multitude of issues, I'm reminded that Japan has been our firm and constant ally for many years and that some feel that relationship can almost be taken for granted. They're not a trouble maker in that corner of the world and there's almost a sense that sometimes, unless you're in a hot spot, you don't get the attention from the United States that they would hope to receive and when issues come up that are perhaps their priority but not a priority of the United States, there can be some issues, there can be some friction there. Recognizing that your portfolio is going to include most of Northeast Asia, do you anticipate that you're going to be spending some time over there? What kind of message do you anticipate that you will bring as you reach out to some of our friends and neighbors over there?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, first, yes I do expect to spend time working on Northeast Asia, including the whole question of the longer-term structures for peace in that region. I think that's a subject that we need to be giving some thought to, although obviously within the time frame of this administration, there is not enough time to bring that to some kind of an end state. But second, also, I would expect to devote an important amount of time to our relationship with Japan and for me, as someone who started my career in East Asia more than 45 years ago, our relationship with Japan has always been a cornerstone of our policy toward East Asia. I don't think we should take the relationship for granted. I think it needs to be nurtured and Japan remains one of our most important allies in the world.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, I appreciate the lengthy relationship you have built over there and I think that will only help us in our efforts.

One more question about the region there. Over the weekend, Taiwan President Chen Shui-Bian called for a new constitution for Taiwan. Do you—what is the State Department's view on President Chen's remarks or comments?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. The State Department view is that we support a one-China policy and the foundation documents that three different communiques with regard to the unity of China and we believe that it would be unwise to do anything that might be in cross purposes with those three communiques.

Senator MURKOWSKI. So do you think that a new constitution would be at cross-purposes?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I would want to study the implications but it certainly strikes me that that would be a distinct possibility.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I've got time for one more quick one. Last week at the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I heard some testimony about the structure in the world in terms of our oil and gas resources and at that hearing, it was reported that 75 percent of the world's oil and natural gas resources are now controlled by state-owned oil companies. As we recognize our increased dependence on foreign sources of energy, how does this—the fact that we're dealing with state-controlled entities—how does this impact our policy choices, really our relationship with our allies? We're dealing with the countries for an energy source that we deem absolutely critical. What does this mean?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Well, I think it makes access to energy more challenging, particularly for those parts of our private sector that are interested in exploration and exploration because they have to deal with these state-owned corporations who very frequently—more often than not, I think, are not willing to let out exploitation contracts to private investment.

On the other hand, I have noted, certainly in countries that I've served in, such as Mexico, among others, which do have large state-owned oil corporations, that they also confront a challenge, which is how as a state-owned oil corporation, can you mobilize sufficient investment to do the necessary exploration and exploitation. So I think that sooner or later, a number of these state-owned oil corporations around the world are going to have to face up to the reality that private investment from investors around the world can be a very, very helpful factor to them in increasing their production. So there is the basis for some kind of a bargain there, it would seem to me.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Mr. Ambassador, I have to take a phone call. I expect to be back before the committee finishes but since, at this moment, we only have two more Senators to question, I'm going to ask the chairman, if I am not back by then, to adjourn the hearing. We've consulted very briefly, and it is my hope and intention that we will move to a rapid consideration and executive session of your nomination. I expect that it will be favorable. and I would expect that we'll try to get this to the floor as soon as possible. Seven months is a long time to have this post vacant, so we'll do our best to accommodate that.

I hope to be back before it finishes, but I must take this call so I recognize Senator Webb.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to have to leave because I've got some people who have been waiting on me so I would like to state for the record that I am very supportive of the nomination of Mr. Negroponte to this position.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, okay, thank you.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. It may be shorter than I thought.

Senator WEBB. Ambassador Negroponte, I'm sorry I missed a good portion of your hearing. We've got two confirmation hearings going on at the same time, one up in the Armed Services Committee, where I also serve. I have a great regard for the contributions that you've made to our country over the years.

[Senator Webb speaks a Vietnamese phrase.]

You don't have to translate that. That was a little bit of Vietnamese. Ambassador Negroponte is quite proficient in Vietnamese.

During this committee's hearing with Secretary of State Rice on January 11, I asked her a very straightforward question on the administration's policy regarding military action against Iran and this is a quote: I asked, is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to take unilateral action against Iran in the absence of a direct threat, without Congressional approval? It has been nearly 3 weeks since I asked that question and I followed up with a letter and this is basically a yes or no question regarding an urgent matter affecting our Nation's foreign policy and particularly as we watch some of these incidents that have been occurring over the past couple of weeks. I would pose the same question to you today. Is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to take unilateral action against Iran in the absence of a direct threat without Congressional approval?

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Senator, I think you put me in a bit of a difficult position. If the Secretary hasn't sent a reply back to you, I think I'd be reluctant to substitute mine for hers. But let me just reiterate what I said earlier in reply to a number of questions that we wish to resolve any differences we have with Iran by peaceful means. We don't rule out other possibilities but our focus at the moment is on resolving these issues by peaceful means.

Senator WEBB. Would you pass on to the Secretary my request that the written question be replied to in a reasonably rapid manner, like soon. I appreciate that.

I caught the tail end of your response with respect to our relations with Japan and I, like a number of people, including you, I think, have a long relationship with Japan and view Japan as probably our greatest long-term ally in the region with all the things that are going on. I have a pretty strong concern about our relations with China. And I'm concerned principally that because of the attention on the Middle East, we have not paid sufficient attention to China, other than the economic side. There is a whole laundry list that I won't go through in terms of where I believe, as a Nation, we are becoming disadvantaged in our relationships. But specifically, I'm curious as to your thoughts on this relationship, particularly when we see the economic disadvantage on the one hand and, clearly, on the other, an increased build-up to the expansion, which some would say inevitable, of Chinese interests in this hemisphere and also in Africa.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. Senator, China is a very important country and it is going to be for the century ahead of us. I think it is in our interests to engage China. I was involved in the first outreach to China, back in the early 1970s. I went with Dr. Kissinger there in 1972, shortly after President Nixon's historic visit there. I think we need to engage China. I think we—on all levels and I think that ought to be our approach to that country, not one of confrontation

but engagement, and Deputy Secretary Zoellick had conducted a senior dialog with them on political matters, which I expect to be able to resume at the level of Deputy Secretary of State. And I look forward to doing that and I look forward to consulting with you about our approach and how we go about that.

Senator WEBB. Would you agree that there is something of a parallel in the sense in the early opening up to China that you participated in. We had a situation rather similar to Iran's today, not a direct parallel but certainly a similar situation where China was a rogue nation with nukes, had an American war on its border, was known to have been providing supplies to people who we were fighting on the battlefield, and yet we did aggressively engage them, diplomatically, and arguably over a period of decades, we have been very instrumental in bringing them into the international community.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. I see what you're driving at. The one major difference, of course, is that China is just such a larger factor. It's so much larger a country and it's more than a billion people whereas Iran is 70 or 80 million people so we're not talking exactly about the same kind of dimensions here. But I see your point.

Senator WEBB. But in terms of potential impact, when we look at the emergence of Iran and the difficulties that we're going to be having with Iran in that region, it would seem to me that without giving up any of the deterrent issues that we have and without giving up our position on such issues as recognition of Israel or Iran's nuclear program, that an aggressive engagement with Iran over the long-term could be beneficial in the same way that this relationship with China has been beneficial.

Mr. NEGROPONTE. We've had some discussion earlier about the question of engagement with Tehran and that doesn't seem to be in the cards at this particular point in time, but one other pretty significant difference I think I want to highlight is that Iran, if anything, I'd say is more of a rogue nation. If you think of their support for international terrorism and their effort to prevent reconciliation between the Arabs and Israelis at all costs, and their state sponsorship for terrorism, which they, I think, quite brazenly use as a tool in their national security policy.

Senator WEBB. Well, I certainly wouldn't disagree with you on the nature of the rhetoric and some of the actions that have come out of Iran. At the same time, they did cooperate with respect to Afghanistan, after the 2001 invasion. It just would seem to me that we need to be looking at both ends of the diplomatic scale and I look forward to having further discussions about that and I thank you for your time.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Senator Webb. Do you have any further questions?

[No response.]

Senator LUGAR. Let me just thank you on behalf of the chairman and the committee. We appreciate you being here, your responses to our questions. Let me just say as a matter of business here, all questions for the record should be submitted before the close of business tomorrow and the record will be kept open for that purpose. There have been some questions raised and so we want to complete the record. As the chairman has pointed out, it is his in-

tent and I agree to that, to try to have an Executive Session to take action upon your nomination at the earliest possible moment. We realize the urgency of filling the post and having an Under Secretary on the job.

We thank you very much for your appearance and that of your family and the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:42 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. In last week's hearing, Dr. Ed Luttwak emphasized the differences between Iraqi Shiites who are Arab and Iranian Shiites who are Persian. He also said, "The United States is a great power. The Iranians are a puny power. Their importance in that area is temporary based on the fact that the people of that area, the leaders, don't see a coherent policy from the United States of America." Do the Iranians hope eventually to dominate Iraq? Could they prevail, given the natural rivalries?

Answer. Tehran has legitimate national interests related to its neighbor, Iraq. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, the Iranians, not surprisingly, have attempted to play a role in Iraq's political process. They developed ties with many current Iraqi Government officials who, during their years of opposition to Saddam, lived in Iran.

Iran can and should play a constructive role in supporting Baghdad's efforts to establish security. Unfortunately Tehran's activities have been detrimental to the internal democratic development and security of the Iraqi people. The provision of material support and training to Shia militias and other groups has resulted in the deaths of United States troops, coalition forces, and Iraqi citizens. Iran's motivations in carrying out these actions are not clear, but our experience with similar Iranian involvement with Shia Arab groups elsewhere in the region, especially Lebanon, suggests that the Iranians use local surrogates to advance Iranian agendas at the expense of legitimate local interests.

The United States remains committed to a stable and democratic Iraq, and the Iraqi leadership has affirmed its commitment to discouraging Iranian interference in its internal affairs. The United States has confidence that our partnership with the Iraqi Government, coupled with assistance from friends and allies in the region, will prevail against harmful Iranian meddling.

Question. What is your reaction to another comment of Dr. Luttwak's: "When generals say we don't need more troops in Iraq, it's not that they were patsies or playing along with the administration policy at the time, it's that you don't know how to employ them, because you cannot patrol without intelligence. And, unfortunately, Central Intelligence doesn't provide it. We have raiding forces in Iraq, which are tremendously effective. They're hardly ever used because, to make a raid, you need intelligence. . . . That's why, even if you knew nothing of the politics or the strategy or the theater strategy, purely at the tactical level you would say: Don't send me troops. Reduce them."

Answer. I respectfully disagree with the assertion that our military "don't know how to employ" their forces in Iraq because the United States intelligence community does not provide adequate intelligence. The United States intelligence effort in Iraq is robust, and I have devoted considerable attention to this issue as Director of National Intelligence. There is strong civilian-military interagency coordination and cooperation to provide our forces with the best information possible to support their operations. Tactical level civilian-military cooperation has been particularly effective against al-Qaeda in Iraq, as demonstrated by the successful effort against Abu Musab Al Zargawi last summer, among other operations. I would be pleased to arrange a classified briefing through appropriate channels to provide further details.

Question. How long do you anticipate that the surge of troops will need to be sustained? Many have suggested that the Iraqi military will not be able to do what we expect them to do in the near future. How soon will we have a clearer picture as to Iraqi capabilities and political will?

Answer. The President noted in his January 10 address to the Nation that the Iraqi Government plans to take responsibility for security in all of Iraq's provinces by November of this year.

The transfer of particular provinces to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) and transfer of the Iraqi army to the command and control of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command (IGFC) are expected to occur once Iraqi forces and command relationships have developed sufficiently to allow the Iraqis to be in the lead as opposed to a supporting role. To date, three provinces have PIC'ed and five Iraqi army divisions are under IGFC control.

As MNF-I and Iraqi forces achieve success in establishing security for the Iraqi population, a primary goal of the surge, in addition to building their forces and command relationship, the United States would then be in a position to reevaluate its force structure in Iraq.

General Petraeus stated in his Senate testimony that by late summer we expect to have an assessment of the success of the Baghdad Security Plan.

Question. Can a surge in civilian reconstruction and stabilization take place when the security situation is so dire?

Answer. The security situation in Baghdad and other parts of Iraq is serious, and does complicate our efforts to implement programs. We are addressing this concern in two ways.

First, in places like Baghdad and Anbar where security is currently a challenge, Iraqi forces, supported by and embedded with American forces, are working to secure parts of those provinces so that reconstruction and civilian life can resume. The areas that are secured will be expanded and the population protected. This is why it is important to have resources in the Department's budget for civilian programs in order to carry out the programs needed to show Iraqis that they have a stake in their neighborhoods being peaceful and secure.

Second, there are areas that are secure enough for civilian programs addressing long-term political stability to be carried out. These areas include locations in which support for moderates over extremists demonstrates the benefits of working out their disputes through a peaceful political process rather than through fighting. A core objective of the President's new strategy is to empower moderates, defined as those Iraqis who renounce violence and pursue their interests peacefully, politically, and under the rule of law. This will be an important role for our Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

Question. State has met its staffing needs in Iraq, but only through the Secretary's involvement and that of other senior officers, including yourself when you were an ambassador there. Other agencies and departments have not been as successful.

(A) Challenges in meeting staffing targets stem from both budgetary (no international emergency line items in their budgets) as well as legal restrictions (the President cannot order civilians to war, they must volunteer, adding to the time it takes to deploy). Is the President seeking changes to these authorities? Will State begin directed assignments?

(B) What is the Department's vision for adding 300 new personnel to the Iraq mission? Will these be contractors, grantees, NGO operatives?

(C) Will the U.N. or other international organizations ramp up? What is the contractor and NGO presence in Iraq today?

Answer. (A) Fully staffing our most critical posts, including Baghdad and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq, is one of the State Department's highest priorities. The Department has made changes to its bidding and assignments process and offered a generous incentive package to entice bidders to volunteer for service in Iraq. I am proud to report that State Department employees have willingly responded to these calls for service and have volunteered to serve at even the most difficult and dangerous posts abroad.

In the current assignments cycle, we have already filled 89 percent (156 positions out of 176) of Foreign Service positions in Iraq for summer 2007. For Embassy Baghdad, we have committed candidates for 117 out of 128 jobs. For the Iraq PRTs, we have 39 committed candidates for 48 jobs. The Bureau of Human Resources, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, and other senior leaders in the Department are reaching out to potential candidates to fill the remaining positions. We also are looking at qualified civil service employees or eligible family members to fill some positions in Iraq on limited noncareer appointments. I am confident that these positions will be filled.

To date, the Secretary has not had to utilize directed assignments to meet our staffing needs in Iraq. We are prepared to direct the assignment of Foreign Service

members should that become necessary. Our goal, however, is to fill the positions in Iraq and in all of our missions around the world with qualified, willing employees who can carry out our crucial United States foreign policy objectives overseas.

At this time, the Department is not seeking any additional authorities related to assignments. The administration has sought various legislative changes to improve the incentives for overseas service. A number of these incentives were included in H.R. 4939 and passed by the 109th Congress, but others, such as the Foreign Service Modernization provisions in H.R. 6060, were not approved in 2006. The Department will continue to pursue Foreign Service modernization to reduce the 18.6 percent pay gap for overseas service. Indeed, I was amazed to learn that an officer can be paid more for serving in Washington than in many hardship and danger posts. Other proposals may also be forthcoming, as we reevaluate the existing incentives for hardship service and determine if other legislative changes are needed to support and compensate our employees who serve in the most difficult posts overseas.

(B) The Department is identifying an additional 10 senior officers to lead new PRTs in Iraq. These teams will work directly with military brigade combat teams (six in Baghdad, three in Anbar, and one in North Babil). We intend to use a mixture of personnel from DoD, USAID, other civilian agencies, and State, in addition to contractors, to fully staff the PRTs. These civilian specialists will provide the kind of professional knowledge not normally found in diplomatic missions, such as expertise in animal husbandry, small business formation, medical administration, and cooperative marketing.

(C) As of January 16, 2007, there were 320 United Nations staff on the ground in Iraq, including approximately 221 U.N. security guards. Due to security concerns, the U.N. has redeployed international staff from Baghdad to Amman, Jordan, and to Kuwait. We believe that the U.N. has a vital role to play in Iraq's development and want the U.N. to maintain a strong staff and geographic presence to assist the Iraqi people.

The World Bank has two international staff in Baghdad's International Zone and is in the process of strengthening its presence there to enhance the policy dialog with the Iraqi Government and improve donor coordination.

The International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) are the primary recipients of United States funding for NGOs in Iraq. Through staff based in Iraq, both NGOs support political party development and outreach on constitutional issues. Other international NGOs present in Iraq include Community Habitat and Finance (CHF) International, Mercy Corps, the International Organization of Migration (IOM), the International Medical Corps (IMC), International Relief and Development (IRD), Counterpart, ACDI/VOCA (Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance), and the International Red Cross.

Question. Provincial Reconstruction Teams:

- Some PRTs have been very effective, while others have had significant challenges primarily stemming from security and staffing. What is the plan going forward?
- What are the political trends outside Baghdad? Have the PRTs been effective in empowering moderate parties? Is that a part of the mandate?
- There is no PRT in Najaf now, a key location for its prominence in Shia politics. Will one of the new PRTs be placed there?

Answer. Under the expanded PRT program, launched by the President in the "New Way Forward," we will double the number of PRTs from 10 to 20, through a three-phase roll-out program. Nine new PRTs—the immediate priority—will be collocated with Brigade Combat Teams engaged in security operations in Baghdad and Anbar Province.

In the next two phases, we will add a new PRT in North Babil and augment existing PRTs with specialized civilian technical personnel. Security for the PRTs in Basrah, Dhi Qar, Irbil, and Babil will continue to be provided by diplomatic security. Staffing the expansion will be an interagency, fullcourt-press effort. Within the next 3 months, State, DoD, and USAID will deploy nine, four-person core-teams to the new PRTs in Baghdad and Anbar, each including a senior-level State Department team leader. We have identified 10 candidates for these positions. After deployment of the core teams, we will also send specialists to augment the effort. Staffing for the other PRTs is an ongoing process. Most will be specialists in fields such as rule of law, economic development, engineering, and agribusiness and, therefore, may be contractors and temporary excepted civil service direct hire employees with targeted expertise.

The President has decided to expand the size and reach of the PRTs due to their success in building Iraqi capacity and self-sufficiency to-date. Since 2005, PRTs have:

- Conducted extensive training in governance and municipal planning for provincial, district, and subdistrict offices;
- Served as a focal point for coordinating international assistance;
- Worked with Provincial Reconstruction Development committees to improve the provincial governments' ability to systematically identify and prioritize the reconstruction and development needs of their provinces and to improve the delivery of essential services;
- Facilitated better working relationships between provincial leaders and their counterparts in the central government, improving their ability to secure funds from the center to pay for provincial projects; and
- Reached out to local and provincial leaders (including grass-roots groups) who want to make a difference in making Iraq's democracy work.

A core objective of the President's new strategy is to empower moderates, defined as those Iraqis who renounce violence and pursue their interests peacefully, politically, and under the rule of law. The expanded PRT program will be central to that effort. PRTs will support local, moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted assistance, such as microloans and grants to foster new businesses, create jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective, sustainable manner.

Political trends outside of Baghdad vary from province to province. Parts of Iraq, such as the Kurdistan region, enjoy relative security and prosperity. Ninewa, Tamim (Kirkuk), and Salah al-Din have occasional acts of terrorism, but political life continues despite such acts. In Anbar and Diyala, acts of violence are disrupting political life. In south-central Iraq, sectarian violence is negligible, but there have been sporadic episodes of Shia-on-Shia violence between Badr Organization and Jaysh al-Mandi elements, or involving fringe groups such as the Soldiers of Heaven just outside of Najaf. In Basrah, militias and political disputes have a negative impact on the political development of that province.

I agree that Najaf is a key location. In 2006, the State Department established a Provincial Support Team for Najaf, which is housed with PRT Babil in Hillah. The State Department and the Department of Defense are exploring the possibility of a full PRT based close to Najaf.

Question. What assurance can we have that the \$10 billion in Iraqi funds pledged for reconstruction in the coming year will be forthcoming? How much of it will be spent by the central government versus by the provinces?

Answer. The Government of Iraq (GOI) included \$10 billion in investment expenditure in its draft budget for 2007. This planned level of funding is therefore an Iraqi initiative and reflects the policy goals of the GOI. Over the last 2 years, some Iraqi ministries have had difficulty expending their capital budgets.

The GOI is tackling this problem of budget execution with strong support from an Embassy Baghdad task force that provides technical assistance to Iraqi ministries. As President Bush indicated on January 10, helping Iraq resolve these issues will be one of our top priorities this year. Ambassador Tim Carney, the new Coordinator for Economic Transition in Iraq, will focus in this challenge.

Iraq has already taken some steps. New rules in the Iraqi budget law, if passed, would call for the reallocation of money from underspending ministries per a mid-year review, thereby enhancing near-term incentives to spend. The Ministry of Finance also plans to send a budget execution status update detailing capital expenditure rates of each ministry to the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister, and the media, starting in March 2007. These measures will help ensure that the \$10 billion in reconstruction funding is forthcoming.

Although the 2007 Iraqi budget is still being considered by the Council of Representatives, current versions of the budget allocate \$2.4 billion to Provincial Councils for investment projects. In addition, of the \$4.7 billion allocated to Kurdistan region for government functions and investment, \$1.6 is provisionally destined for investment. Therefore, approximately \$4 billion of the \$10 billion in Iraqi funds for reconstruction will be spent by the provinces, subject to caveat that the Iraqi budget is still being formulated.

Question. The Iraq Study Group and many of our witnesses have emphasized reinvigorated regional diplomacy. Other than statements of concern, what concrete actions steps have we seen from regional actors indicating that they understand what is at stake? What can we expect from Iraqi outreach to its neighbors, especially those the administration is reticent to engage?

Answer. We have urged the Iraqi Government to reach out to its neighbors. While progress has been made in terms of regional engagement over the past year, more efforts need to be made. With respect to Syria and Iran, we support Iraqi direct dialog with Damascus and Teheran—focused on building relationships based on the principle of full respect for Iraqi sovereignty and support for a peaceful, stable Iraq.

Iraq's neighbors have been involved significantly with the United Nations-Iraq sponsored International Compact with Iraq (ICI) from its inception. Under the ICI, Iraq commits to a series of primarily economic reforms that will allow it to become self-sufficient over the next 5 years. In exchange, its international partners will support Iraq through new assistance, debt forgiveness, and investments. The compact provides a framework for Iraq's economic transformation and integration into the regional and global economy.

As members of the Preparatory Group to the ICI, countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE have helped shape the ICI. Both Kuwait and the UAE have hosted Preparatory Group meetings.

We have pressed Iraq's neighbors, especially the Gulf Cooperation Council states along with Egypt and Jordan (GCC+2), to enhance the level of their representation in Baghdad and to take further steps to support the Iraqi Government. In particular, Secretary Rice recently traveled to Cairo, Riyadh, and Kuwait, where she met with the GCC and Egyptian and Jordanian foreign ministers. Nevertheless, we need to do more work with Arab states to win their complete endorsement of the ICI and the Maliki government, through such steps as debt reduction and delivering on their assistance pledges. This is a major focus of both the Secretary's monthly engagement with the GCC+2 ministers and with Deputy Secretary of Treasury Kimmitt's work in the region.

Question. As one of the most experienced diplomats in the United States, you know that diplomacy is often about talking with adversaries. There are many things to be gained through such talks even if all points are not resolved in one's favor and full agreement cannot be reached. To what extent does the administration's decision not to bring Syria and Iran into discussions about Iraq reflect a lack of confidence in diplomatic endeavors, in general, and in the Department, in specific?

Answer. We encourage all of Iraq's neighbors to be responsible partners in supporting and assisting the Iraqi Government. Unfortunately, we have seen no evidence that the Iranian and Syrian regimes are willing to abandon their destabilizing policies in Iraq.

Syria continues to harbor former regime elements and has made insufficient progress in dealing with the transit of foreign fighters across the Syrian-Iraqi border. Syria knows what it needs to do to support Iraq, based upon extensive dialog earlier in this administration. The Iraqis recognize this threat, which is why they are trying to implement with Syria a memorandum of understanding to deal with terrorism and border control. Time will tell whether the Syrians will be able to live up to their pledge to the Iraqis.

Likewise, Iran continues its destabilizing activities in Iraq—and indeed, across the Middle East. The Iranian regime remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, and there are no indications the regime seeks to abandon its support for extremist actors in Iraq, or elsewhere.

We are not opposed to a wide-ranging dialog with Iran. In fact, the Secretary has stated she would lead such an effort. Our only requirement is that Iran suspend its nuclear enrichment and related efforts, which the international community, IAEA, and U.N. Security Council all fear may be aimed at developing nuclear weapons, during that dialog.

Question. State's Iraq team has been hampered by unfilled vacancies. There has not been a Deputy Assistant Secretary for some months. Where DoD and the military leans forward and provides information for oversight purposes and to inform our opinions, State has taken months to respond to QFRs. When testifying, State officials are not cleared to speak freely on important issues involving judgment and opinions. What can be done to rectify this situation?

Answer. I respectfully disagree that the State Department's Iraq team is hampered by unfilled vacancies. For example, State has filled at present 96 percent of the positions it has in Iraq, with 98 percent of the positions filled for PRTs—all volunteers. In fact, State's job assignment policy in the present assignments cycle was to emphasize filling unaccompanied and limited accompanied posts, including Iraq and Afghanistan, and then turn to assignments to other non-hardship posts overseas. And while we still have some positions to fill for summer 2007, we are well ahead of schedule in making summer 2007 assignments compared to where we were

this time last year. We believe that this policy has been very successful at meeting our staffing goals for Iraq.

Ambassador Lawrence Butler assumed the Deputy Assistant Secretary position this month. In the Department's view, tolerating a vacancy for a limited time in order to assign the best and most qualified person for the job is preferable to simply filling the slot. However, delays in filling key positions are not unprecedented nor are they always unavoidable, particularly given the unique assignment rules of the Foreign Service.

I understand that sometimes our responses to QFRs are not as swift as they should be. On many occasions, the Department must coordinate responses with our embassy and other entities in order to provide Congress with the most accurate account of facts on the ground, which sometimes delays the Department's ability to respond as quickly as it would like. I understand that State has taken internal steps in order to improve its response times.

In the Department's view, our officials do speak their minds and offer their opinions when testifying on the Hill. Most recently, Secretary Rice, as well as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Coordinator for Iraq, Ambassador David Satterfield, and Ambassador Khalilzad, provided frank, candid testimony and briefings, and they will continue to do so.

Question. A robust FMS program should be put in place to equip Iraqi forces. This would replace NSPD 36 authorities given to CENTCOM and give full advantage of the services available under FMS and the expertise and capabilities of DoD logistic organizations (and U.S. contractors). Such a change would provide a sound legal framework for the program as well as important Congressional oversight mechanisms. Will State be implementing such a program for Iraq this year? If not, why not? How can the information flow about training and equipping be improved?

Answer. The Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) is working with the Government of Iraq to move toward a traditional bilateral security assistance relationship. A critical part of this transition is Iraqi participation in the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) system. Their participation began in earnest in 2006 when the Iraqis committed over \$2.34 billion of Iraqi national funds to support procurement of equipment for the Iraqi armed forces. As the Iraqi armed forces develop into a professional and modern military, we will consider the appropriate funding and support for its continued long-term development. The State Department fully supports transition of the Government of Iraq to a normalized security assistance relationship when ministerial capacity permits transitioning MNSTC-I responsibilities to an Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq.

Question. While United States-South Korean Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations are ongoing, South Korean officials have not engaged in meaningful negotiations for the full resumption of exporting United States beef products to that country. The major issues to be resolved include: (1) Establishing a tolerance for bone fragments in boneless product; (2) advancing market access for bone-in products; and (3) market access for products from animals regardless of age.

It has been almost a year since the United States and Korean health officials agreed on initial conditions to resume trade. Unless restoration of the beef trade occurs prior to the conclusion of FTA talks, some in the Congress will likely object to a free trade agreement. Many are hoping that resumption of the beef trade is at the forefront of any economic discussion with Korea. What are the prospects for having this problem resolved in a timely way?

Answer. Resumption of normalized trade in United States beef is one of our highest priorities in our economic discussions with Korea. United States beef is safe, and we have made it clear to Korea that while our beef discussions are not technically a part of the Korea-United States Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) negotiations, if the beef issue has not been adequately addressed by the time the agreement is considered by Congress, it will be hard to gain sufficient stakeholder and legislative support and could jeopardize the agreement's passage.

USSTR and USDA are actively working to find a commercially viable solution to the difficulties our exporters have experienced in trying to get United States beef back in the Korean market. Upcoming technical talks, scheduled for early February, are a positive step toward the normalization of the beef trade with Korea.

Question. During the past 6 years, strongly competing views over North Korea policy within the State Department, and throughout the administration, have contributed to inconsistent actions and mixed messages from United States officials.

As one example, a few days before Assistant Secretary Hill's recent Berlin meeting with North Korean officials, United States administration and other State Department officials were in Paris to discuss proliferation finance with some our major

allies. On the margins of this meeting, some American officials reportedly raised the prospect of imposing a travel ban on key North Korean leaders, as provided under a United Nations resolution condemning Pyongyang's nuclear test. Please review this report to verify accuracy, determine who was involved, and also, who authorized this issue being raised only a few days before Assistant Secretary Hill was meeting with North Korean leaders?

Separately, State Department officials informed the committee last week that the United States was calling for the suspension of all UNDP programs in North Korea, until an outside audit has been conducted on those programs.

Apparently some in the administration believe that North Korean leaders may be redirecting UNDP funding to other than intended projects, and that the UNDP is not doing enough to account for their funds. Administration officials contend they have to force the issue at this time because the UNDP is in the process of a once-every-3-years review of its programs in North Korea. However, this has reportedly been a matter of long-standing interest to the Department, and a recent letter expressing United States' concern with the UNDP publicly appeared the same week that Mr. Hill was meeting with North Korean officials in Berlin.

Although the President and Secretary Rice have repeatedly affirmed their decision that Assistant Secretary Hill should pursue a negotiated solution with North Korea, actions have been taken that on the surface, appear intended to subvert that process.

What will you do, as Deputy Secretary, to ensure conformity with the President's approach to North Korea on the part of all State Department officials?

Answer. As the President and the Secretary have noted clearly and repeatedly, we seek a peaceful, negotiated resolution to the North Korea nuclear issue, and we believe that the Six-Party Talks are the best vehicle for getting us to such a resolution. At the same time, the President and Secretary Rice have been clear that UNSCR 1718 should be implemented fully and effectively.

Our policy on North Korea involves a dual-track approach in which our efforts at the negotiating table are accompanied and enhanced by defensive measures. These defensive measures, which target the DPRK's proliferation and other illicit activities, are intended, primarily, to defend the United States against the very real threats posed by these activities. Our defensive measures are also intended to make clear to the DPRK the cost of its dangerous and illicit activities in contrast to the benefits it stands to gain through a negotiated end to its nuclear programs.

A dual-track approach, such as the one we have been employing with respect to North Korea, requires the strongest of interagency cooperation and coordination. I intend to ensure that all concerned participants understand and meet the policy goals set by the President and the Secretary.

The Paris meeting appears to be a reference to G-7 meetings the previous week. During a bilateral working-level meeting, United States and French officials discussed developing a common list of individuals for travel ban to submit to the UNSCR 1718 Committee in New York. At that meeting, U.S. officials did not pass any proposed list of names for travel ban under 1718. The United States is not seeking to impose a travel ban on the DPRK's diplomatic officials. United States efforts to implement UNSCR 1718's requirements in reference to travel bans will center on individuals associated with North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and entities previously designated under E.O. 13382.

Regarding UNDP, we welcome UNDP's recent decision to audit its operations in North Korea. Management reform, in particular the establishment of credible and effective systems of internal controls and accountability, is a primary goal of our policy toward the U.N. system. We have repeatedly urged the management of UNDP to improve its internal controls and accountability in development programs worldwide, to include providing greater transparency to member states. We are working with UNDP and executive board members to improve monitoring and management controls to ensure funds for all UNDP programs, not just in the DPRK, are used for their intended purpose.

Question. In view of the recent announcement of a \$10.6 billion supplemental emergency appropriation request for Afghanistan, of which \$2 billion is intended for reconstruction, it is important to understand fully the expectations being set for such a significant request. It is also extremely important that the American people understand why, more than 5 years since our direct engagement following 9/11, the United States is still committed to the purpose of rebuilding the region.

Can you put this supplemental request in context with your efforts to date in Afghanistan and the expectations for our continued engagement there? What are the primary areas of U.S. engagement? What are the expectations of our international partners and the Government of Afghanistan?

Answer: "Rebuilding" is really the wrong word; the right word would be "building." In 2001, there was no Government of Afghanistan. There were no institutions, and there was no physical infrastructure upon which to build. Our challenge has been helping the Government of Afghanistan to stand up its institutions, build its security forces, and develop the infrastructure it needs to extend its control throughout the country.

Remarkable progress has been achieved in Afghanistan since 2001. For example, 6 million students are now in school, including 2 million girls, and 83 percent of the population has access to healthcare, compared to only 8 percent in 2001. We must now consolidate our gains. Continued security challenges in 2006 demonstrated that the new Afghanistan is still fragile and that the threat of the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other extremist groups has not disappeared. Much more remains to be done to make Afghanistan a stable, democratic, prosperous country that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists. Last year, we conducted a strategic review of our policy which concluded that the international community, including the United States, needs to increase its level of support in the political, economic, and military spheres to defeat the revitalized Taliban insurgency and al-Qaeda terrorism.

As a result, Secretary Rice announced that the administration will request \$10.6 billion in new assistance over the next 2 years: \$2 billion for reconstruction and \$8.6 billion for the Afghan National Security Forces. This significant funding request comes on top of the over \$14.2 billion the United States has already provided in reconstruction and security assistance since 2001. The new United States commitments—financial, military, and political—do not signal a change in our goals for Afghanistan. Building on the results of our previous efforts they will enable us, through a comprehensive approach, to secure our successes for the long run.

Should Congress appropriate the new funds requested by the President, our primary areas of engagement for stabilizing the country, supporting the economy, and extending the reach of the Afghan Government will be: the Afghan National Security Forces; roads; electric power; rural development; counternarcotics; and governance.

Afghan National Security Forces: In the past 5 years, we have trained and equipped an Afghan National Army which is now about 30,000 strong. We expect the total number of military personnel to eventually reach 70,000. The army has proved its capabilities fighting alongside Operation Enduring Freedom and International Security and Assistance Force troops. The new funding of \$8.6 billion will help us significantly accelerate the military training effort. Police training will also continue to be a priority. Over 49,000 police have been trained and equipped so far by the United States and Germany, expanding toward a ceiling of 82,000. More work remains to be done to improve performance and retention. Developing and sustaining capable Afghan security forces is critical to our success and is essential to eventually relieving the burden on our own forces.

Roads: In the past 5 years, about 75 percent of Afghanistan's national ring road—1,400 miles long—has been completed by the United States and our allies, and the remainder will be finished by 2010. The United States has also completed over 900 kilometers of secondary and district roads. A United States-constructed two-lane bridge connecting Afghanistan to Tajikistan over the Pyanj River will be completed in 2007. With new funds, we would support further construction on strategic provincial and district secondary roads, particularly in the south and east.

Power: Several multinational projects are underway to build Afghanistan's hydro and electrical power systems. These include the multidonor Northern Electrical Power System. With new funds, the Northern Electrical Power System is scheduled to be finished in 2009, and is expected to provide Kabul and northern cities with electricity imported from Central Asia. We also intend to push ahead with construction at the Kajaki hydropower dam site and the Southern Electrical Power System to bring more electricity to Kandahar and other areas in the south.

Rural Development: Over the past 5 years, about 5 million boys and girls have returned to school, and hundreds of schools and health clinics have been built or rehabilitated. With new funds, we would invest in rural development through rural roads, credit, improved seeds, basic health services, primary education, irrigation systems, and alternative crops. Continuing efforts to deliver quality basic education would be complemented by programs that will increase the technical and managerial capacity of Afghans in both the public and private sectors.

Counternarcotics: We will expand our efforts to reduce the amount of poppy cultivation and trafficking. After a decrease in poppy cultivation in 2005, Afghanistan produced a record poppy crop in 2006. To fight back, we have started to implement a comprehensive five-pillar strategy that includes: a counternarcotics public information campaign; an alternative livelihoods program; poppy elimination and eradi-

cation efforts coordinated with governors and local officials; law enforcement and interdiction efforts; and reform of the law enforcement and justice systems. This strategy must be pursued rigorously and be given time to work.

Governance: We plan to continue strengthening national, provincial, and local governance through training, construction of district administrative centers, and assistance with drafting and implementing needed commercial and criminal legislation. We intend to work to strengthen the justice sector through training programs for judges and prosecutors, construction of courthouses, and other programs to expand the rule of law.

Our international partners and the Government of Afghanistan expect the United States to lead the way in the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan. The strong, long-term United States commitment that we display is having a significant effect on the morale of our allies and of the Government of Afghanistan. Critical to our efforts, this commitment also creates trust within the Afghan population.

Question. There have been three attempts to rebuild and reform the police sector in Afghanistan. The first was a German program under the multi-pillared international partnership. The second effort, led by State, was designed to train police by the hundreds rather than by the dozens, but was still considered too slow. A third effort by Department of Defense came subsequent to a waiver permitting Department of Defense to run police training as an element of larger security sector reform. This third effort was declared a "failure" by the current commander who revamped it after his arrival early in 2006. The supplemental request of \$8.6 billion contains a sizable sum for security reform: What is the role of the State Department in the latest Department of Defense effort to train police?

Answer. Police training is a coordinated effort with the Department of Defense. Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan helps execute police training programs with State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, but all police training efforts fall under the policy guidance and general oversight of the Ambassador.

The senior embassy and military leaders have excellent relations and work together to administer and improve the police program. In fact, contracted Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs trainers and the military often work jointly in the field on police training.

Question. How can we be assured that this effort will meet with greater success than previous programs? Are there unique difficulties to training police in Afghanistan? Do you believe they are finally able to be overcome?

Answer. The program to train and equip the Afghan National Police is generally well-conceived and well-executed, but it is important to recognize that the training is a work in progress. We are building a 62,000-member force and increased Taliban activity in 2006 has made the job even more difficult. Unlike the Afghan army, the police must be dismantled and then rebuilt from the top down in order to extract corrupt leaders and unravel structures based on tribal and ethnic ties, rather than professional criteria. It will take a sustained effort over several years to institutionalize the police force and establish a self-sustaining program, let alone adequately assess the program.

The interagency security effort has adapted to meet the changing security and relative funding needs to ensure the success of the Afghan security forces. We will further improve that situation with the allocation of \$2.5 billion in new funds for training and equipping the Afghan National Police. This is not just a question of funding training, which remains flat at about \$325 million, but also of ensuring that recruits are equipped with the tools to carry out their mission, which is where the remaining \$2.2 billion in police funds would largely go. Training and equipping efforts augment and enforce each other. Training will not help a recruit who is outmanned, outgunned, and underpaid. We must look comprehensively at all the factors that will lead to success for the Afghan police and move forward on all fronts.

The difficulties establishing the Afghan police are similar to the difficulties in any post-conflict environment with a total breakdown of institutions, law, and economy. We encounter many of the same problems in other countries, such as Haiti, Bosnia, and Iraq: corruption, illiteracy, low pay, and an insecure environment. These difficulties have developed over many years and will require a sustained effort over many years to resolve.

Question. How will this program be monitored? Are there measurements other than number of trainees successfully graduated? Is the professionalism of trainees tracked after they graduate?

Answer. The graduation of trainees is only the first step in the establishment of a professional, competent police force. After that initial training, we use our nearly

400 U.S. police officer mentors on the ground to monitor the police at both the unit and individual level to determine if they are using the skills they have been taught. When deficiencies are found, the mentors act to correct them, whether this means additional training, correcting substandard behavior, or, in extreme situations, changing personnel.

Question. When the NATO International Security Assistance Force assumed control of security throughout Afghanistan they made clear their intent to increase the reconstruction effort as a key to progress.

Is there political support within NATO countries to increase support for reconstruction? What will that mean for NATO forces deployed throughout the country? What percentage of international assistance flowing to Afghanistan is non-United States and what recent new commitments have been made?

Answer. At both the Riga Summit in November 2006 and at the informal NATO Foreign Ministerial in January 2007, NATO International Security Assistance Forces allies reaffirmed their strong commitment to the mission in Afghanistan and to the reconstruction and development of that country. All allies have embraced the concept of a "comprehensive approach," where security operations are coordinated with reconstruction and development. Due to International Security Assistance Forces allies' support for this comprehensive approach, NATO forces deployed throughout Afghanistan are encouraged to coordinate with the U.N. and Government of Afghanistan-chaired Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board to ensure that security efforts are followed-up with reconstruction and development initiatives.

Since 2001, the United States has provided over \$14.2 billion in aid: nearly \$9 billion in security assistance and \$5.2 billion in reconstruction, humanitarian, and governance assistance. This is approximately 45 percent of total donor assistance to Afghanistan. With our request for an additional \$10.6 billion for the next 2 years, we will continue to be the largest contributor to infrastructure reconstruction and the development of the Afghan National Security Forces.

At the informal NATO Foreign Ministerial, several allies announced new donor assistance commitments. To provide a few examples: Canada pledged \$8.5 million for victims assistance, and \$10 million for police salaries (Afghanistan is Canada's No. 1 aid recipient); Norway has pledged to increase its assistance by 50 percent in 2007 (making Afghanistan the No. 2 recipient of Norwegian aid); and the European Union has pledged €150 million annually over the next 5 years.

Question. A significant amount of information from a variety of sources indicates that continued instability in Afghanistan, especially in the south and east, is due to the unconstrained flow of persons and resources across the Afghan-Pakistan border.

How can the State Department and the supplemental appropriation improve the essential Afghan-Pakistan relationship? Are there new efforts to enlist Pakistani help in engaging and capturing the Taliban? Do the Pakistanis themselves have new ideas that should be pursued?

Answer. To meet the challenge of violent extremism, the administration is advancing a three-pronged strategy that leverages political, military, and economic tools. The administration supports the Pakistan Government's new Frontier Initiative, a developmental, security, and governance strategy to deny safe haven to the Taliban and al-Qaeda along Pakistan's Afghan border—including in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and parts of Balochistan. The Pakistani Government has already planned and allocated resources to this effort and has asked the United States for additional support for the security, services, and development sectors required to transform this region. Immediate United States technical assistance and training for the Tribal Area Development Authority and the Tribal Areas Secretariat would greatly increase Pakistani capacity to design, plan, manage, and monitor programs in the tribal areas, and would bring immediate benefits in the form of nonterrorist alternatives for employment to the population at risk for recruitment by al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

The State Department is exploring ways to support two initiatives designed to strengthen Pakistan's capability to eliminate terrorist safe havens and strengthen control of the border with Afghanistan. The first initiative will enhance the capacity of local security forces such as the Frontier Corps, the Frontier Constabulary, and tribal levies. The second initiative, Pakistan's Sustainable Development Plan for the tribal areas, is a program of economic and social development and governance reform intended to meet the needs of the local population and render them more resistant to the appeal of violent extremists such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Robust support for these two initiatives is expected to improve the security environment in

the frontier areas, whose Pashtun population spans the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and to contribute greatly to creating an environment inhospitable to violent extremism.

The United States has strongly encouraged Pakistan and Afghanistan to strengthen their bilateral relationship. We have actively facilitated cross-border communication through military and civilian channels. Military communications are facilitated through radio communications and face-to-face meetings by tactical commanders along the border, as well as Tripartite Commission (Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the International Security Assistance Force/U.S. military) working groups and meetings at both the operational and strategic levels. On the civilian side, we have encouraged Pakistan to host talks on border security management and a conference for civilian law enforcement agencies of both countries. U.S. diplomats are also facilitating initiatives to establish institutionalized parliamentary exchanges and to promote media exchanges.

To facilitate economic development in Afghanistan and the border areas of Pakistan, President Bush announced his intention to seek Congressional approval for the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones program. The Reconstruction Opportunity Zones are a critical economic component of our development strategy and offer a vital opportunity to improve livelihoods, promote good governance, and extend and strengthen the writ of the Afghan and Pakistani Governments. Establishment of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones will help to kick-start industrial production and bring benefits to these targeted economies along with greater cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Consultations with Congressional staff and industry as well as the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan are currently on-going and the State Department and United States Trade Representative will present an outline of legislation to Congress soon.

The International Security Assistance Force-led military coalition in Afghanistan works closely with the Pakistani military through the Tripartite Commission. On their side of the border, Pakistani security forces are engaged in denying al-Qaeda, Taliban, and other militants safe haven on Pakistani territory. Raids by Pakistani security forces on hideouts and training areas have disrupted the insurgents' operations, prompting retaliatory strikes that have killed and wounded Pakistani forces, government officials, and civilians. The Government of Pakistan currently maintains more than 900 monitoring posts along the 2,300 km border with Afghanistan. The Pakistani Government recently announced stringent new measures to tighten security along the border. Pakistan has also announced plans to close several lawless refugee camps in the border region, repatriating the residents to Afghanistan.

Question. How has the justice sector been incorporated into a coherent reconstruction and reform plan to improve basic governance across Afghanistan from the ministry to the local police?

Answer. Justice benchmarks were incorporated into the Afghanistan Compact agreed to in London in January 2006. Reforming the justice sector—in the context of competing formal and informal systems, widespread corruption, and an active insurgency—is a formidable challenge. By creating a Rule of Law Coordinator on the U.S. Embassy staff, we plan to intensify and focus our engagement on justice sector issues with Afghan officials and the international community (led by Italy) on meeting these benchmarks.

President Karzai's appointments of an activist Attorney General and a reformist Chief Justice of the Supreme Court offer a window of opportunity for United States and international efforts to bear fruit in improving the delivery of real justice to the Afghan people.

Our ongoing commitment to support justice, governance, and the rule of law in Afghanistan is reflected by the \$2 billion administration request in new assistance announced January 26. Those funds will help strengthen governance at all levels (national, provincial, and local) through a comprehensive and coordinated web of U.S.-supported programs. Some examples include construction of district administrative centers, assistance with drafting and implementing commercial and criminal legislation, training and mentoring of judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys, police-prosecutor training programs, nationwide corrections training and infrastructure support, and other programs to expand the rule of law. Provincial reconstruction teams will provide training, infrastructure, and equipment required to improve provincial and district governance. Parliamentarians will be trained in legislative research, drafting, and constituent outreach. Civil society groups, including the media, will receive training and other support.

Police training is a coordinated effort with the Department of Defense, so there are no separate efforts. Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan helps execute police training programs with the Department of State's Bureau of Inter-

national Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, but all police training efforts fall under the policy guidance and general oversight of the ambassador. Senior embassy and U.S. military leaders work together to administer and improve the police program and Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-contracted trainers and the military often work jointly in the field on police training.

The interagency effort has been underfunded relative to the challenge. The allocation of \$2.5 billion in new funds for training and equipping the Afghan National Police will improve the situation. This is not just a question of funding training, which remains flat at about \$325 million. The remaining \$2.2 billion in police funds would largely ensure that recruits are equipped with the tools to carry out their mission. Training and equipping efforts augment and enforce each other. Training will not help a recruit who is outmanned, outgunned, and underpaid. We must look comprehensively at all the factors that will lead to success for the Afghan police and move forward on all fronts.

Question. The United States has provided significant resources to Pakistan as a partner in countering terrorism. This assistance has included economic, development, and security assistance. The embassy is a hardship post and under great pressure from a security standpoint, as seen on Friday by the terror bomb attack at a hotel in Islamabad and the rough treatment of a New York Times reporter in the Frontier Territories.

Due to the high level of security for United States officials and the necessity for extreme care in the conduct of business, what measures is State taking to ensure that such a significant level of assistance to Pakistan is being effectively managed and monitored? How is the impact of this assistance being measured given limited access to parts of the country where it is being carried out?

Answer. Embassy officials take exceptionally strict security measures in Pakistan, particularly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; they are able to access most, but not all, projects and sites. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement's Narcotics Affairs Section programs are regularly visited and monitored in the border areas by the Narcotics Affairs Section team, which includes Foreign Service officers, Foreign Service nationals, as well as international and domestic contractors. Ambassador Crocker and Assistant Secretary Patterson have also visited border outposts.

Projects monitored directly by the section team include road construction projects and the construction of border outposts. Embassy officials have not been able to monitor programs firsthand in North and South Waziristan and parts of Khyber Agency in the tribal areas, but have established reliable alternate verification procedures to continue a limited number of programs. Narcotics Affairs Section programs, for example, are very successful in the tribal areas.

In addition to programmatic visits to the tribal areas and Balochistan, there is a Narcotics Affairs Section team dedicated to monitoring the use of the millions of dollars of commodities provided to Pakistani agencies. The agencies have been grateful for these commodities and are meticulous in monitoring their use. Each agency provides quarterly reports that list the condition of each set of night-vision goggles, Motorola radios, and vehicles, and also provides specific examples where this equipment was used. For example, the night vision goggles have been used in investigating drug syndicates and tracking Taliban fighters in the tribal areas. Through interagency ground monitoring and aerial surveys, Pakistan and the United States Government confirmed that Pakistan's poppy cultivation levels continue to decline. It is expected that Pakistan will achieve poppy-free status in the next few years.

Agreements applicable to the transfer or sale of defense articles to Pakistan allow for United States officials to access such articles whereby the officials may check both inventory controls and technical security measures. Despite the difficult security environment, the embassy's Office of Defense Representative-Pakistan is able to monitor the use and storage of all such defense articles transferred to Pakistan. The Office of Defense Representative-Pakistan also monitors and validates expenses reimbursed by Coalition Support Funds.

With respect to economic and development assistance, the USAID mission employs a variety of approaches to ensure accountability. USAID works closely with approximately 40 partner organizations that have direct responsibility for implementing USAID-funded programs in the field, including regular office visits and periodic site visits. While security constraints are sometimes formidable, United States and local staff can travel to many parts of Pakistan where activities are underway. Access is most limited in parts of Balochistan and the Northwest Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan. To a large extent, the monitoring of projects in Balochistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas is done with the help of

USAID's Pakistani counterparts. In contrast, access is very good across the entire earthquake-affected region, where USAID makes frequent helicopter visits even to the most remote construction sites.

As is typically the case at USAID missions across the world, monitoring and evaluation concerns are addressed through a variety of mechanisms, including annual reports to Washington, periodic (usually quarterly) contractor and grantee reports, and site visits. A highly skilled national staff makes an important contribution toward managing and monitoring programs in the field. USAID's staff of 10 Foreign Service officers and 5 other long-term American employees is occasionally supplemented by short-term expatriate staff. At least one-third of the long-term United States staff presently stationed in Islamabad speak Urdu, providing an important level of knowledge and understanding of the local situation.

Disbursement of annual budget support (2005–2009) is guided by the Shared Objectives, a set of goals mutually agreed between Pakistan and the United States, focusing on Growth and Macroeconomic Stability, Investing in Human Capital and Private Sector Development, and Earthquake Relief and Reconstruction (including ensuring transparency of funding). Providing Pakistan with balance of payments, budget, and policy reform support has been critical to Pakistan's stability in a time of increasing demands on Pakistan for cooperation in the war on terror and in support of coalition activity in Afghanistan. Pakistan provides the United States embassy a summary of the relevant portions of its current overall budget for the fiscal year, and states how its spending will be modified with the addition of the Pakistani rupee equivalent of \$200 million. USAID in Pakistan monitors these funds at the national budget level to help verify United States Government contributions are used in accordance with the contract agreements. The United States Government meets annually with the Pakistani Ministry of Finance to review Pakistan's progress on the Shared Objectives.

Question. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, is a 5-year program that faces reauthorization next year. What is your assessment of the program's successes and challenges thus far? How is the administration working with other governments and multilateral efforts to maximize our ability to fight the AIDS pandemic?

Answer. The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR) is a \$15 billion, multifaceted initiative to combat HIV/AIDS around the world. Established in 2003, PEPFAR is the largest commitment ever by any nation towards an international health initiative dedicated to a single disease.

The emergency plan's 5-year global strategy focuses on implementing bilateral programs in 15 of the most affected countries (Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Viet Nam, and Zambia), which together comprise 50 percent of the global pandemic. PEPFAR also consolidates and coordinates initiatives in more than 100 countries where the United States has bilateral programs, and amplifies the effects of other global interventions by partnering with and contributing to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (the Global Fund). Additional international partners include the World Bank, the United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), other national governments, and a growing number of businesses and foundations in the private sector.

All U.S. Government bilateral HIV/AIDS programs therefore are developed and implemented within the context of multisectoral national HIV/AIDS strategies, under the host country's national authority. Programming is designed to reflect the comparative advantage of the United States Government within the host government national strategy, and it also leverages other resources, including both other international partner and private sector resources. For example, given the magnitude of the United States Government investment in the Global Fund (in the first 3 years of PEPFAR, the United States contributed \$1.9 billion to the Global Fund or approximately 30 percent of all Global Fund resources) and the commitment of the United States Government to working collaboratively with other international partners and multilateral institutions, bilateral programs provide support to Global Fund grantees; help to leverage Global Fund resources, when necessary; and bring successful programs to scale.

Recognizing that country ownership is key, PEPFAR works closely with host governments, program partners, and people living with HIV/AIDS in the local communities, to implement evidence-based HIV interventions that meet locally identified needs and conform to each country's national priorities. PEPFAR also focuses upon the needs of women and families, including orphans and vulnerable children. Through an expanding network of integrated, multisectoral programs, the emergency plan has positioned itself to reach its goals of supporting treatment for 2 mil-

lion HIV-positive people, preventing 7 million new infections, and supporting care for 10 million people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

When President Bush unveiled the emergency plan in 2003, only an estimated 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were receiving treatment for HIV/AIDS. Through September 2006, 822,000 people in PEPFAR's 15 focus countries were receiving treatment supported by United States Government bilateral programs.

Treatment services are being scaled up at a carefully monitored but rapid rate. In 2006, across PEPFAR's 15 focus countries, on average 93 new antiretroviral therapy (ART) sites came online and the number of sites providing treatment has increased from 800 in fiscal year 2005 to 1,912 in fiscal year 2006. By the end of fiscal year 2006, 50,000 more people were put on life-saving ART every month. In order to ensure that treatment is being provided for children and women, PEPFAR tracks ART clients by age and gender. These records indicate that approximately 61 percent of those receiving PEPFAR-supported treatment in fiscal year 2006 were women and almost 9 percent were children.

Through fiscal year 2006, PEPFAR provided care for nearly 4.5 million HIV-positive people around the world, including approximately 2 million HIV orphans and vulnerable children. This is a good start—but countless more HIV-positive people are not receiving the treatment and care they need, in part because they do not know they are HIV-positive. One major barrier to identifying HIV status is the absence of routine testing in medical settings; to address this problem, PEPFAR supports provider-initiated "opt-out" testing in selected health care settings. In pilot studies, implementing the opt-out policy raised HIV testing rates dramatically.

HIV/AIDS also places a growing strain on already stressed health care systems and workers in PEPFAR countries where systemic weaknesses in areas such as health networks and infrastructure are persistent obstacles to building human resource capacity and expanding health systems. In response, in fiscal year 2006, at least 25 percent of PEPFAR's total resources were devoted to capacity-building in the public and private health sectors—such as supporting physical infrastructure, healthcare systems, and workforce development. Eighty-three percent of PEPFAR partners were indigenous organizations, and the emergency plan supported training or retraining for more than 842,600 service providers (with individuals being trained in multiple areas in certain cases) and supported approximately 25,100 service sites in the focus countries.

Moreover, the emergency plan and its host country partners support national strategies with innovative approaches to training and retention; broadening of policies to allow for task-shifting from physicians and nurses to clinical officers, health extension workers, and community health workers; and the use of volunteers and twinning relationships to rapidly expand the number of local service providers required to respond to this disease. This focus on strengthening networks provides a base from which to build institutional and human resource capacity, in order to rapidly expand prevention, treatment, and care services.

In order for comprehensive HIV/AIDS programs to be sustained, a continuous inflow of high-quality medicines and supplies is needed. In concert with in-country partners, the United States Government is supporting host nations' efforts to build the necessary supply chain systems. In 2005, the emergency plan partnered with leaders in the international supply chain management field, including four African organizations, to establish PEPFAR's Supply Chain Management System (SCMS). The mission of SCMS is to strengthen supply chain systems to deliver an uninterrupted supply of high-quality, low-cost drugs, lab equipment, testing kits, and other essential medical materials that will flow through a transparent and accountable system.

While PEPFAR's focus is and will remain HIV/AIDS, program implementers coordinate with a number of international partners with related global health programs, including global TB and malaria initiatives. In addition, PEPFAR's capacity-building initiatives have positive spillover effects: Upgrading health systems and strengthening the health workforce serve to improve healthcare delivery overall. In addition to strengthening infrastructure, expanding health services, and stimulating economic growth, such improvements also enable developing countries to cultivate good governance and build freer and more stable societies. It is a mistake to think of HIV/AIDS in terms of health alone. It is among the most serious economic development and security threats of our time—precisely why the President and PEPFAR host nations have made addressing it such a high priority.

Question. In September 2005, President Bush announced the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, and the Department of State has hosted international conferences with representatives of foreign governments on avian flu. Can you please tell us about the latest activities of the international partnership?

How many countries have joined this initiative? In addition, how much money has the United States pledged to combat avian flu and prepare for a possible pandemic? On what programs is this money being spent?

Answer. The International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza met in Washington, DC, on October 6–7, 2005, and again in Vienna, Austria, on June 6–7, 2006. Representatives from 93 country delegations, 20 international organizations, and some nongovernmental organizations attended the Vienna meeting. The Government of India will host the next meeting of the international partnership in the last quarter of 2007.

President Bush's initiative, which emphasizes core principles such as transparency and sharing of flu samples, has served to raise high-level political awareness, to galvanize nations both to combat the spread of avian influenza and to prepare for a possible human pandemic, and to help coordinate donor spending plans.

At international pledging conferences in Beijing, China (January 2006) and Bamako, Mali (December 2006), the United States Government led all bilateral donors with pledges totaling \$434 million in international assistance for avian and pandemic influenza. Funds pledged by the United States are going to a variety of activities to prevent and respond to avian and pandemic influenza threats, including the following:

- Nearly \$138 million for bilateral assistance activities;
- Almost \$64.5 million for regional programs including regional disease detection sites;
- Close to \$44.5 million for support to international organizations;
- \$66.6 million for stockpiles of non-pharmaceutical supplies;
- More than \$40 million for international technical and humanitarian assistance and international coordination;
- Over \$9 million for wild bird surveillance and international research (including vaccines and modeling of influenza outbreaks);
- \$8.6 million for global communications and outreach;
- \$5.7 million for global contingencies, including emergency response; and
- \$10 million for building vaccine production capacity.

The collective efforts of the U.S. Government, foreign governments, and international organizations have reaped results. For example, the United States has helped train 15,000 animal health workers, 3,000 human health workers, and nearly 500 veterinarians in outbreak response. These workers will strengthen the emergency response capabilities of many nations and will enable the world to have better information on animal outbreaks and an actual pandemic, should it occur.

Question. The wars in Afghanistan and especially Iraq have diverted State Department and USAID resources and personnel from the rest of the world. Does the Department have a means of measuring the impact of what is being called in the Foreign Service "the Iraq tax?" Is it having a negative effect on the Secretary's "transformational diplomacy" initiative? Is this a problem that you see as one of your responsibilities to address?

Answer. To meet our staffing needs in Iraq, the Department used many positions originally intended to fund language proficiency training as part of our Diplomatic Readiness Initiative. These positions would have created a "training float" to allow for long-term training, without creating staffing gaps overseas. Our fiscal year 2008 budget submission includes 104 positions to help close the training gap due to positions that were diverted to Iraq. In addition, in order to fully staff the positions in Iraq, we have removed some lower priority positions from the bid list. Approximately 140 domestic and overseas positions were affected in the current assignments cycle.

While some lower-priority positions have not been filled and some training has been deferred, our efforts to shift internal resources and positions to quickly ramp up our operations in Iraq have not had a negative impact on the Secretary's Transformational Diplomacy Initiative and the related global repositioning of State Department personnel. As Deputy Secretary, I would certainly take an active interest in strategic decisions related to the positioning of State Department personnel, be it to support our goals in Iraq or Afghanistan or to implement the Secretary's vision of transformational diplomacy.

Question. The current Foreign Service compensation system provides mid- and entry-level officers stationed in the United States with annual "locality pay" increases that are not given to similarly-ranked officers stationed abroad. Over the years, this has had the unintended consequence of compensating officers at a higher salary when they are stationed in the United States than when they are stationed overseas. Before the 109th Congress adjourned, a bill that addressed this inequity

and, at the same time, instituted a pay for performance system in the Foreign Service, was in the process of final completion. What will be the Department's view on that bill? Will it press for passage in the new Congress?

Answer. Foreign Service modernization for the nonsenior ranks continues to be a top legislative priority in the management area. We look forward to continuing discussions this year with Congress, OMB, the other Foreign Affairs agencies and our colleagues at the American Foreign Service Association to amend the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and modernize the Foreign Service pay system.

The purpose of Foreign Service modernization is to close the overseas pay gap for FS-01s and below and bring all Foreign Service members under a pay-for-performance system similar to the one that exists for the Senior Foreign Service. A crucial component of a pay-for-performance system for personnel who are recruited in one central location and who rotate frequently between overseas and domestic locations is a worldwide pay scale ensuring that performance overseas is not valued less than in Washington. The 18.6 percent difference in base salary when serving abroad undercuts post differentials and allowances, especially those for hardship and danger, and remains a significant financial deterrent to service overseas.

Foreign Service modernization would cover all foreign affairs agencies that are governed by the Foreign Service Act, including Agriculture, Commerce, AID, Peace Corps, BBG, and State. Other agencies that regularly send employees overseas for extended missions, such as the CIA and the Department of Defense, have already dealt with the locality pay disparity and do not face the same pay gap for overseas service. The CIA pays equal overseas and domestic base salaries, and the military never used locality pay at all, awarding their members the full annual pay adjustment without a portion being devoted to locality pay. As we ask our employees to take on more challenging and dangerous assignments overseas, the Department needs Foreign Service modernization to effectively compete with other Government agencies and the private sector and to fully compensate our employees for their service abroad.

Question. We understand that over a million dollars has been collected privately in response to the State Department's request for financial assistance to create a diplomacy center including a museum of the history of American diplomacy. Can you tell us what progress is being made on this project? What is your view of the effort?

Answer. We acknowledge your long-standing support for a U.S. Diplomacy Center (USDC) and museum, one that will be devoted not only to the history of U.S. diplomacy, but also to the immense contributions that current diplomacy makes to our security, prosperity, and freedom.

FUNDRAISING

The Department of State's non-profit partner for the U.S. Diplomacy Center, the Foreign Affairs Museum Council (FAMC), has raised over \$1.3 million toward the museum. Senator Mathias is the chairman and Ambassador Steve Low is President.

SUPPORT

All major Foreign Service organizations including the Council of American Ambassadors and American Foreign Service Association have signed a letter of support.

PROGRESS ON THE MUSEUM

In late 2005, a design team was selected through GSA's Design Excellence program to work with the Department. Throughout 2006, the design team worked to develop a concept plan which was presented to Secretary Rice last September. The next step is to begin a capital campaign.

I share Secretary Rice's enthusiasm for what she termed a "smart" project for the Department.

Question. On January 11, President Bush signed legislation containing provisions that Senator Obama and I authored relating to proliferation interdiction assistance and the safeguarding or elimination of dangerous stockpiles of conventional arms.

Will you work to ensure that funding, consistent planning, and effective implementation are provided to carry out these provisions of Public Law 109-472, the State Department Authorities Act of 2006?

Answer. Yes. The State Department appreciated the cooperative efforts of the Foreign Relations Committee to develop this legislation and take our concerns into account. The new law will support our efforts to develop international cooperation to detect and interdict WMD-related shipments through the Proliferation Security Ini-

tiative (PSI) and other means. Coordinating the variety of U.S. technical assistance programs that help international partners develop relevant interdiction capabilities will be an important aspect of our international capacity building.

The aspects of the bill relating to the elimination of dangerous stockpiles of conventional weapons will advance the Department's efforts in support of humanitarian demining, unexploded ordnance clearance, removal of abandoned weapons, and destruction of excess and obsolete munitions, small arms, and light weapons.

The Department looks forward to cooperating with the committee on these important issues.

Question. Do you believe that all present U.S. interdiction efforts, including through the Proliferation Security Initiative, are effectively coordinated within the interagency? Do our interdiction partners have the necessary equipment and training or access to U.S. assistance to effectively carry out interdiction activities?

Answer. The PSI has been an important organizing principle, not only for the United States, but also for our international partners. All PSI activities are conducted via an extensive interagency coordination process under the overall direction of a policy coordination committee chaired by National Security Council (NSC) staff, with clearly defined strategy documents that describe agency roles, responsibilities, and common goals.

The Department of State is responsible for conducting diplomatic activities relating to the PSI, including interfacing with foreign governments as appropriate to undertake an interdiction. The Department of Defense is responsible for developing operational capacity among PSI states and undertaking interdictions that involve military assets. Interagency communications are well established and continuous. The agencies involved include the Departments of State, Defense, Energy, Treasury, Commerce, and Justice, multiple components of the Department of Homeland Security, and the Intelligence community. Such broad interagency cooperation allows the United States to leverage the capabilities and resources of these agencies effectively.

Capacity building and assisting states in developing the political will, legal basis, and capability to undertake interdiction and prevention actions is a key goal of the PSI. The Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program is an important tool in assisting governments to develop capacity to undertake a PSI interdiction. EXBS funds U.S. efforts to work with states to strengthen export controls, improve legal and regulatory frameworks and licensing processes, develop border control and investigative capabilities, improve outreach to industry, and enhance interagency coordination.

In addition, the Preventing Nuclear Smuggling Program (PNSP) coordinates the U.S. Government response to nuclear smuggling events worldwide and addresses priority antinuclear smuggling needs through a combination of international and U.S. financing and assistance programs, including proliferation detection and interdiction activities.

Question. I sent a number of our staff to some 20 embassies to look at the coordination between the State and Defense Departments in the campaign against terror and report back to me their observations and recommendations. One of the recommendations is that the Secretaries of State and Defense sign a global memorandum of understanding that makes explicit the role of the ambassador in overseeing military activities in-country. Is this something that you agree should be pursued?

Answer. I have reviewed your staff's report and found it quite useful. The report highlights a number of very important issues regarding our embassies' operations and the relationship between the State Department and the Defense Department overseas. I agree with the report's emphasis on the need for ambassadors to exercise strong leadership and oversight of all activities in their country that fall under chief of mission authority.

Our ambassadors overseas generally have a very good working relationship with the combatant commanders in their area in dealing with these issues as they arise. As Deputy Secretary of State, I will support efforts to ensure that chiefs of mission and combatant commanders work effectively together.

As I understand it, the possibility of developing a global MOU between State and Defense to cover in-country military activities has been under consideration but no decisions have yet been made on this issue. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I plan to examine this issue in greater detail. But, in the first instance, I will place emphasis on the importance of chiefs of mission fully exercising their authorities and oversight responsibilities.

Question. Last year, this committee approved the nomination of Ambassador Randall Tobias to be the Administrator of USAID and to serve simultaneously as the

first Director of Foreign Assistance, a newly created position within the Department of State. In this capacity, Ambassador Tobias is charged with managing and coordinating U.S. foreign assistance programs. What is your assessment of the progress of the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance in achieving these objectives? Are further adjustments needed? Will Secretary Rice continue to make this a priority for the Department, as part of her "transformational diplomacy" strategy?

Answer. The Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance is making good progress. In the time since it was stood up, the office has launched fiscal year 2007 operational planning, a fiscal year 2007 supplemental, and has prepared the fiscal year 2008 budget. The fiscal year 2008 budget is transparent, accountable, and justified. I believe that the Secretary will continue to make this a priority for the Department as a part of "transformational diplomacy." To ensure transformational diplomacy objectives are met, it is essential that we ensure that foreign assistance is used as effectively as possible to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states. If confirmed, one of my priorities will be to become more familiar with the activities of the Director of Foreign Assistance, so as to better enable me to personally evaluate the effectiveness of this new office.

Question. I have opposed the granting of authority to the Department of Defense to organize and implement its own foreign assistance programs. Nonetheless, the Department of Defense has received authority from Congress to pursue its section 1206 train and equip program, albeit with the "concurrence" of the Secretary of State. Do you agree that it is preferable that the Secretary of State maintain primacy in all foreign assistance programs, even in cases where Department of Defense funding is involved?

Answer. The State Department appreciates the need for select new DoD authorities as an essential means of addressing rapidly evolving security challenges posed by, among other things, the global war on terror. This is particularly true in environments where U.S. forces are present. The Secretary has expressed support for such authorities in many cases, contingent upon the explicit preservation of her statutory role with respect to foreign assistance, through DoD's exercise of these authorities "with the concurrence of the Secretary of State," and in some cases through joint development procedures. In sum, any new authorities should be tailored toward the common goal of providing for closer integration of the administration's foreign assistance efforts, consistent with the Secretary's responsibility for the overall supervision and general direction of U.S. foreign assistance.

Question. With the Director of Foreign Assistance, Randy Tobias, reporting directly to the Secretary, what role will you play in foreign assistance planning in countries other than Iraq and Afghanistan?

Answer. The Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance, who serves concurrently as Administrator of USAID, has authority over all Department of State and USAID foreign assistance funding and programs in all countries and is charged with developing a coordinated U.S. Government foreign assistance strategy and directing consolidated foreign assistance policy, planning, budget, and implementation mechanisms. The consolidation of these foreign assistance authorities under a single umbrella has heightened accountability and the alignment of activities within countries and across regions, and will ultimately make us better stewards of public resources.

If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I will have the opportunity to work closely with Ambassador Tobias. I am impressed with the work that Ambassador Tobias has done with the fiscal year 2008 budget, and, if confirmed, I do look forward to our close collaboration.

Question. Last fall, Secretary Rice created the new position of International Energy Coordinator at the State Department. It is an action similar to that which Senator Biden and I are calling for in legislation, specifically in the Energy Diplomacy and Security Act.

What authorities in the budget have been given to the new Energy Coordinator? The Energy Coordinator has been placed below the Under Secretary for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs, yet energy and environmental programs are also undertaken through the Under Secretaries for Political Affairs, Democracy and Global Affairs, and Arms Control and International Security. Do you believe that placement of the coordinator within EB is sufficient for formulating policy and effectively coordinating the programs spread among the jurisdiction of these four Under Secretaries?

Does the Department support passage of the Energy Diplomacy and Security Act? If not, why not?

Answer. The creation of the position of Special Advisor to the Secretary and International Energy Coordinator did not impact the structure of reporting responsibilities of offices in the Department involved in energy policy, and required no new authorities. Resources for the Special Advisor to the Secretary and International Energy Coordinator are provided by the office of the Under Secretary for Economic, Energy and Agricultural Affairs.

The coordinator reports to the Secretary through the Under Secretary for Economic, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs, who is the senior State Department official responsible for energy issues. The placement of the position is not within EB (now EEB—Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs). The coordinator provides strategic oversight, develops new policy approaches and initiatives, and integrates energy issues into the decision making process at senior levels of the Department. Toward that end, the coordinator works closely with the Department's regional and functional bureaus, and with the offices of the other Under Secretaries, to address the multitude of foreign policy-related energy challenges we face.

The administration shares your concerns over energy security and also recognizes it to be a priority for U.S. diplomacy and national security. The Department appreciates Congressional input into this critical area of foreign policy, and we want to continue to work with you to accomplish this goal. Though the administration does not yet have a formal position on the Energy Diplomacy and Security Act, we note that it lays out thoughtful and useful ideas on how to bolster energy security, and the Department is already pursuing many of these. In addition to the creation of the position of Special Advisor to the Secretary and International Energy Coordinator, through the Department's efforts the International Energy Agency has provided China and India access to its meetings to expose them to greater market-based energy security mechanisms. The Department has chosen to combat the recent wave of resource nationalism in the Western Hemisphere indirectly by supporting, *inter alia*, Mexico's Mesoamerica energy initiative, which seeks to harmonize Central American electricity grids and promote regional economic and energy integration. The Department has also increased its public diplomacy efforts in the region.

Question. What are the State Department's priorities for international energy activities? Are those priorities shared throughout the Department? How do they differ from priorities pursued by other agencies in the Federal Government?

Answer. State's energy priorities rest on three pillars designed to further the President's energy agenda: (1) increase and diversify production, sources, types, and security of energy supply and infrastructure; (2) manage energy demand growth; and (3) accelerate the development and deployment of energy technology. Our approach focuses U.S. Government resources, leverages—wherever possible—the capital and management talent of the private sector, and targets those geo-strategic opportunities that will yield the greatest benefit. We are engaged in regional efforts to increase cooperation on biofuels production and technology in Latin America, Europe, and Asia. We continue to diversify and increase global oil and natural gas supplies in West Africa, North America, and the Caspian. We are pursuing an ambitious United States-European Union agenda to accelerate the development and deployment of alternative energy technology across the Atlantic and into the developing world. We continue to engage bilaterally and multilaterally with China and India to improve their energy efficiency, accelerate their adoption of renewable energy technology, and expand their use of civilian nuclear power. We also continue to make progress through the International Energy Agency (IEA) toward a cooperative relationship with China on emergency response and market-based energy strategies. In addition, we have planned nearly 100 collaborative activities with China, India, Japan, Korea, and Australia through the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate.

Our efforts are coordinated within the Department, and we work closely with other agencies, especially the Department of Energy, on these initiatives. Our energy priorities are coordinated with and consistent with those of other agencies. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I will ensure that this remains the case and devote further senior-level attention to international energy issues.

Question. Do you believe that current global energy trends pose a threat to U.S. national security? If so, do you believe that current U.S. programs are sufficient to meet that threat? As Deputy Secretary, what would you do to enhance programs related to energy security?

Answer. From 2003 to 2006, we witnessed unprecedented growth in world demand for oil, which, coupled with a lack of world excess production capacity, resulted in an increase in the world price of oil over the same period. We are starting to see

some relief given demand growth levels in the OECD. However, high revenues associated with high prices have emboldened some producing countries to pursue foreign policies that conflict with our national security interests. The physical security of critical energy infrastructures is also of concern.

I do believe that current U.S. programs are sufficient to meet these concerns. The Secretary has taken important steps to increase the Department's focus on energy policy and capacity to address energy security concerns. Last October, the Secretary established a new position of International Energy Coordinator and Special Advisor to the Secretary, reporting through the Under Secretary for Economics, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs. The coordinator is working to provide strategic oversight, to develop and promote new policy approaches and initiatives, and to better integrate energy policy considerations at the highest levels of Department decision-making. He is working closely with the Department's regional and functional bureaus and other agencies involved with energy policy. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I would maintain the Secretary's emphasis on this issue and seek further initiatives to enhance the security of supply as well as the investment climate and transparency of oil producers.

Question. Do you believe the prospect of global climate change poses a threat to U.S. national security? If so, do you believe that current U.S. programs are sufficient to meet the threat? As Deputy Secretary, what would you do to enhance programs related to climate change?

Answer. I believe it is critical that our efforts to address climate change are undertaken in the context of overall national interests, including promoting economic growth and increasing energy security, as well as reducing pollution and providing access to energy. These objectives affect the security of our people and all nations.

The United States has a comprehensive set of policies and programs in place that generate tangible results in both the short and the long term to address climate change at home and abroad, and the United States is collaborating with countries around the world in that effort. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I would work to strengthen that cooperation.

A core element of President Bush's international engagement on climate has been an emphasis on the creation and commercialization of transformational technologies that will help countries address climate change while maintaining economic growth. An example of this is our Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP). APP is one of our most important programs because it generates results where they matter most—in the countries that are the world's major emitters of greenhouse gases. In each APP country, governments and the private sector have forged partnerships to develop and deploy clean, efficient energy technologies.

The APP is just one of the many international partnerships that the United States has initiated since 2002 to promote development and deployment of new, cleaner technologies. They include partnerships to collect and reuse methane—a powerful greenhouse gas; to capture and safely store carbon dioxide; to develop and deploy clean, safe nuclear energy technologies; and to develop cost-effective hydrogen and fuel cell technologies.

In addition, we have launched 15 bilateral climate change partnerships with countries and regional organizations that, together with us, represent over 80 percent of the world's emissions.

The United States is also addressing climate change at home. In 2002, the President set an ambitious goal to reduce the greenhouse gas intensity of the U.S. economy by 18 percent by 2012. We have a diverse portfolio of policy measures—and results to show for them. Our emissions performance since 2001 has been among the best in the OECD.

Question. Please describe the division of responsibility between the Departments of State and Energy in formulating and implementing international energy policy. How does the need to reduce our dependence on foreign oil for national security reasons get factored into interagency discussions on energy? Should the role of the State Department in interagency discussions be strengthened?

Answer. The Department of State is responsible for the foreign policy aspects of U.S. energy security. Energy security is inextricably linked to foreign policy and State ensures that these aspects are fully reflected in the policy making process and in our overseas diplomacy. State cooperates very closely in this with the Department of Energy, which brings great technical resources and expertise to help formulate and implement international energy policy, as well as with other agencies on related issues of climate change and sustainable development. State is the face of energy policy interaction with the governments of most countries through U.S. embassies around the world. The Department of Energy works with State in representing

United States positions in multilateral bodies including the International Energy Agency, Asia Pacific Economic Community, Asia Pacific Partnership for Clean Development and Climate, and the International Energy Forum, among others.

Interagency discussions of ways to reduce domestic U.S. dependence on foreign oil include scientific research and technical and regulatory issues, which are largely the purview of the Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture, and a number of other domestic agencies. The Department of State provides guidance on the international aspects of these discussions. The impact of oil imports on U.S. national security also depends significantly on reducing oil dependence in other major oil consuming countries, as well as on cooperative relations with major oil producing countries. These international relationships are areas of State lead in close cooperation with the Department of Energy and others.

Question. Do you believe that all present U.S. international energy and environment efforts are effectively coordinated within the Department of State?

Answer. Yes. Energy and environmental policies and programs are largely managed by the Bureaus of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs (EEB) and Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs with support from the Department's Special Advisor to the Secretary and International Energy Coordinator. These actors work together closely, permitting the Department to carry out a wide array of activities designed to fuel the engine for global development and prosperity that is the U.S. economy, while at the same time promoting environmental protection and the sustainable use of the world's natural resources.

Question. Do you believe that all present U.S. international energy and environment efforts are effectively coordinated within the interagency?

Answer. The interagency community is working more closely together than ever in executing the President's energy and environmental policies and programs. From the working level to the most senior decision makers, representatives of the Departments of State, Energy, Treasury, Defense, Transportation, Commerce, Agriculture as well as the EPA, USAID, NSC, CIA, Council for Environmental Quality and other agencies meet and communicate regularly to coordinate their efforts in addressing complex international energy and environmental issues.

Question. Will the President's call in his State of the Union speech for the creation of a civilian response corps be reflected in the President's budget for the Office of the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization at the State Department?

Answer. We are requesting 57 positions in the fiscal year 2008 budget for the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization to help regularize current temporary, detailed, and contracted staff, and to augment them. This is critical to improve State's civilian surge capacity.

In the State of the Union, the President also called for the development of a Civilian Reserve Corps. The corps would provide the country with a vital resource—trained civilian experts with skills the U.S. Government does not currently have in adequate numbers for reconstruction and stabilization efforts, such as police trainers, prosecutors, economists, health practitioners, and urban planners—and in a way that is more cost-effective and flexible than bringing on full-time government employees. How this corps would be designed, established, and funded needs to be determined, following close consultation with Congress and with key interagency partners.

Question. The President did not mention the State Department's lead role in this effort (the civilian reserve corps)—are alternatives being considered?

Answer. We believe that it is key for the State Department to have the lead role in developing this effort, which would follow the December 2005 Presidential Directive empowering the Secretary of State to improve U.S. Government preparation of, planning for, and conduct of post-conflict operations. The State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization has made progress strengthening civilian response capacity, including laying the groundwork for a civilian reserve. That said, the administration would like to consult closely with Congress on this issue, and welcomes your ideas on how to most effectively move this initiative forward.

Question. Describe the diplomatic efforts taken by the United States to prevent an escalation of tension between Turkey and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq over Kirkuk and the PKK. Has the United States made any inquiries or statements to Turkey about these issues? What role is General Ralston playing? How is this being coordinated? Is he reporting through the ambassador, or through the CENTCOM Commander?

Answer. General (Ret.) Joseph Ralston, appointed as the Secretary of State's Special Envoy for Countering the PKK last August, is leading the State Department's diplomatic efforts to fight the terrorist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). The General is working closely with his Turkish counterpart, General Baser, and Iraqi counterpart, Minister al-Waeli. Since his appointment as Special Envoy, General Ralston has traveled repeatedly to the region and has engaged productively with both sides.

General Ralston reports directly to Secretary Rice, but he has also coordinated each step of the initiative with officials at the Department of Defense, National Security Council, and other Washington agencies, as well as our embassies in Baghdad and Ankara. He has kept in close touch with both the U.S. European and Central Commands.

General Ralston has engaged the Turkish and Iraqi Governments as well as officials of the Kurdistan Regional Government. His conversations have focused on building confidence between Turkey and Iraq and obtaining cooperation to fight against the PKK, which is using northern Iraq as a base of operations for attacks against Turkey. He has not addressed the status of Kirkuk in his conversations. The status of Kirkuk is an issue for the sovereign Government of Iraq, and the process for resolving the status of Kirkuk is codified in the Iraqi Constitution. That being said, we support all efforts that will lead to a peaceful resolution of Kirkuk's future.

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Your response to my question on how long the surge will need to be sustained included an assertion made by President Bush that the Iraqi Government plans to take responsibility for security in all of Iraq's provinces by November of this year. This runs contrary to an assessment of the intelligence community, which stated: "Iraqi society's growing polarization, the persistent weakness of the security forces and the state in general, and all sides' ready recourse to violence are collectively driving an increase in communal and insurgent violence and political extremism. Unless efforts to reverse these conditions show measurable progress during the term of this estimate, the coming 12 to 18 months, we assess that the overall security situation will continue to deteriorate at rates comparable to the latter part of 2006."

In light of the NIE, how long do you estimate that surge level reinforcements are going to be needed in Iraq? How does this affect your civilian manning estimates?

Answer. There are four major factors that the Multinational Forces-Iraq (MNF-I)—Iraqi Joint Committee for Transfer of Security Responsibility (JCTSR) takes into consideration when recommending whether or not a province/city transfers to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC)—the security situation is one of these factors, but there are other factors as well, such as the capacity of provincial governments to deliver services. All must be viewed together and weighted according to the situation in that province. The final decision on transfer is made by the Iraqi Prime Minister via the Ministerial Committee for National Security.

The four factors are: (1) Provincial threat assessment; (2) Iraqi Security Forces capability assessment; (3) Iraqi Provincial Governance assessment; and (4) MNF-I capability to support the ISF and respond to requests for assistance.

This is the process that has led to the transition of three provinces (Muthanna, DhiQar, and Najaf) from MNF-I control to Provincial Iraqi Control over security. We expect other provinces will follow this same process.

The end date for the surge is dependent upon the security situation on the ground in Iraq and will be determined by the President in consultation with General Petraeus and his military commanders. Civilian manning is only partly driven by the surge; we continue to plan for a civilian presence in Provincial Reconstruction Teams for as long as there is a demonstrated need, cooperation from the Iraqi Government, and funding from Congress.

Question. Is part of a PRT's function to empower moderate political forces in the provinces? As we look to possible provincial elections in 2007, do we have a sense of what political sea changes will be solidified? While they are provided for under the Iraqi constitution, is this something we are advocating, as well as prepared to support with financial and logistical resources?

Answer. A core objective of the President's new strategy is to empower moderates, defined as those Iraqis who renounce violence and pursue their interests peacefully, politically, and under the rule of law. The expanded PRT program will be central to that effort. PRTs will support local, moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted as-

sistance, such as microloans and grants to foster new businesses, create jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective, sustainable manner.

Provincial elections provide another key means of empowering local leaders and ensuring more representative local government. It is too early to say what political trends or changes will solidify in the lead-up to those elections. However, we support the idea of holding provincial elections later this year, and will continue to target our assistance toward the development of the necessary institutions. To that end, the President's 2007 supplemental and 2008 budget includes requests for continuation and expansion of existing democracy programs, implemented by the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute and new programs such as the National Institutions Fund, the Political Party Participation Fund, and media reform programs, as well as for programs to support civic advocacy and democratic development activities, business associations, labor unions, and other political actors. The central goal of all these efforts will be to empower moderates and counter the destructive influence of extremists who are using violence to achieve their aims.

Question. This fails to provide an understanding about what the MoD is capable of now, or when such a program will be put in place. One of our concerns is our ability to oversee these transfers in a traditional fashion. How can the information flow about training and equipping be improved? Please be specific and cite examples.

Answer. The Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) is working with the Government of Iraq to move toward a traditional bilateral security assistance relationship. A critical part of this transition is Iraqi participation in the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) system which began in earnest in 2006 when the Iraqis committed over \$2.34 billion of Iraqi national funds to support procurement of equipment for the Iraqi armed forces. The information flow on equipment for the Iraqi security forces procured through FMS has already begun, such as with the congressional notification of the sale of a \$250 million logistic support package for helicopters, vehicles, and weapons in September 2006. In December, congressional notification was made for the sale of 522 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV), light armored vehicles, light utility and cargo trucks for an estimated cost of \$463 million. However, due to the urgency of the Iraqi Security Forces requirements, neither of the sales were included in the calendar year 2006 Javits report due to the time criticality of the events. Similarly, the 20-day notification requirement is occasionally waived to expedite the sale of U.S. manufactured material. During his nomination hearing, General Petraeus stated his intent to increase the information flow to Congress regarding the training and equipping of Iraqi security forces through monthly briefing updates. As Iraqi procurement practices mature and the security environment improves a more normal processing of FMS cases should be possible. For further details regarding the training and equipping of the ISF, the State Department defers to the Department of Defense.

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR NORM COLEMAN

Question. Hmong graves issue: A large group of Hmong refugees living in the ground of the Wat Tham Krabok in Thailand were recently resettled in the United States, including about 5,000 in Minnesota. The U.S. Government did, in my opinion, the right and honorable thing in finding a home for the living members of the Hmong community in Wat Tham Krabok. Now we need to treat the deceased members of this community in a similarly honorable fashion.

For some time, the Thai Government has been exhuming and cremating these bodies. While I understand the Thais supposedly have health concerns relative to these bodies, the current situation is not tenable. The Thais have reportedly offered to transfer bodies to their family members (for a fee), but these are refugees who cannot travel, there are problems with identifying bodies, and it is not difficult to imagine disputes over bodies. Cremation is also a big problem from a Hmong cultural standpoint. Unfortunately, it is difficult to chart a path forward. One possibility would be for the Hmong community in the United States to coalesce behind a group of individuals who could travel to Thailand in their name and relocate the remaining bodies to a more agreeable location.

If confirmed, will you work with me, the Hmong community, and the Government of Thailand to resolve this matter in a culturally respectful manner?

Answer. I look forward to working with you to resolve this matter. The State Department was made aware of the exhumation and cremation of Hmong remains bur-

ied in the Wat Tham Krabok in Thailand and subsequently took steps to help resolve this matter. The U.S. embassy was first informed of this situation in November 2005, by which time most of the exhumations had already taken place. Nonetheless, the United States embassy in Thailand reached out to the Royal Thai Government to explain the concerns of the United States Hmong community and to encourage a mutually agreeable solution. We understand that the Thai authorities, including temple officials, are willing to work with the families of the deceased that wish to claim exhumed remains that have not yet been cremated. If confirmed, I will continue the State Department's efforts to work with all interested parties to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

Question. Restoration of democracy to Thailand: On a somewhat related note, 14 years of democratic rule in Thailand came to an end last September with a military coup. The military-installed government insists that it is committed to restoring democracy, but it continues to impose martial law in much of the country, restrict press freedom, and limit activity by political parties.

Are you satisfied that the military government is moving fast enough to restore democracy? Are you considering any additional measures to encourage the government to move faster to restore democracy?

Answer. The Thai interim government continues to take concrete steps to restore democracy, although the pace of lifting martial law has been more deliberate than we would like. The senior Thai military leader reiterated in an interview with western journalists on January 31 the leadership's strong commitment to hold democratic elections before year's-end, which we welcome. Nonetheless, the State Department and our embassy continue to urge Thai authorities to move as expeditiously as possible to return Thailand to democratic rule, including full restoration of civil liberties.

In immediate response to the September 19 coup, the U.S. Government suspended \$29 million in bilateral assistance to Thailand and continues to carefully review all significant interactions with Thailand, including military exercises, on a case-by-case basis. In discussions with the Thai Government, we continue to strongly emphasize that a full restoration of bilateral relations, to the excellent levels we enjoyed prior to the coup, is contingent upon Thailand's quick return to democracy. If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of restoring democracy in Thailand.

Question. Recent events in East Africa have created a window of opportunity to bring security and humanitarian relief to the impoverished and war-weary people of Somalia.

If confirmed, how will you seek adequate troops to replace the Ethiopians who currently occupy the capital?

What steps must the United States take to foster political stability and how will you implement a strategy for Somalia if confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State?

Our ability to craft a productive Somalia policy is limited by the lack of a United States ambassador in Mogadishu. I have called for the appointment of a special envoy. Will you dedicate State Department resources to day-to-day management of this situation?

Answer. The rapid deployment of an African stabilization force in Somalia is one of three priority United States initiatives in Somalia. While supporting efforts to achieve rapid deployment of this stabilization force, the United States continues to encourage a process of inclusive political dialog between the leadership of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and other key Somali stakeholders, as well as to work with its international and regional partners to mobilize donor assistance to help build the governance capacity of the TFG.

Our most immediate objective is to stabilize the situation in southern Somalia and help establish a secure environment for political dialog through the deployment of an African stabilization force to Somalia. Uganda has offered to deploy 1,500 troops to Somalia pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1725. The African Union (AU) is also planning for a broader AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which was approved by the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) on January 19, and is actively engaged in seeking additional troop contributions for this effort. In January, Kenyan Foreign Minister Raphael Tuju traveled to several African countries to explore additional troop contributions. Following the recent African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, other African countries, including Ghana, Nigeria, and Burundi expressed a desire to offer troops. The United States is actively supporting this effort. We have made \$10 million available immediately to provide airlift and equipment for the Ugandan deployment and we are taking steps to make additional resources available.

Most important is the path to peace, reconciliation, and stability. The key to long-term stability in Somalia now lies in a process of inclusive dialog and reconciliation. To a great extent, the ability to achieve reconciliation will be determined by the willingness of the TFG leadership to reach out and create an inclusive political process. As part of the administration's strategy to promote political stability in Somalia, the United States continues to urge the TFG leadership to move forward with a process of political dialog leading to a sustainable political solution and the formation of an inclusive government of national unity based on the framework of the Transitional Federal Charter. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State, I will ensure that the United States' strategy for Somalia continues to emphasize the need for a lasting political solution and that United States representatives are actively engaged in supporting a Somali-led process of inclusive dialog.

Adverse security conditions currently prevent the establishment of a full-time United States diplomatic presence or any formal international diplomatic presence inside Somalia; however, the United States continues to engage with Somali interlocutors through the United States embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, which is responsible for United States engagement in Somalia. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State, I will seek dedicated resources to support effective United States engagement in Somalia.

Question. One of my constituents, Ms. Bree Schuette, has been fighting a custody battle with her former husband, a Russian citizen, Mr. Mikhail Yurievitch Slobodkine. After many years of abuse and the death of their son under mysterious circumstances, Ms. Schuette fled Russia for the United States, leaving behind her daughter, Veronika, a dual Russian/American citizen. On April 29, 2005, Ms. Schuette won from Russian courts full custody and place of living for Veronika, and the custody decision was upheld by the Russian Appeals Court in August 2005. Despite all of Ms. Schuette's legal victories, her rights under Russian law continue to be violated. Mr. Mikhail Yurievitch Slobodkine, Veronika's father, has refused to obey the court order and give up Veronika. Ms. Schuette has not seen Veronika in 2 years, and her ex-husband has essentially vanished with the child, possibly to the Volograd region. Monday was Veronika's seventh birthday.

If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State, will you raise this case with appropriate Russian officials and press them to seek the return of Veronika to her mother?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will pursue this case with appropriate Russian officials. Senior United States Government and State Department officials, including Attorney General Gonzales, Ambassador William Burns, Assistant Secretary Harty, and the Principal Officer in St. Petersburg have raised this case with the Russian Government on repeated occasions. We will continue to press the Russian authorities to locate Veronika and enforce the Russian court order awarding custody to Ms. Schuette.

Question. Due to the military engagement last summer, the United States embassy in Lebanon remains backlogged in its consular section. Because of instability last summer, many relatives petitioned for immigrant visas. Their petitions are now approved, but not scheduled. My understanding is that the consular section is fully scheduled for the entire month of February and still has 400 cases in the queue for an appointment. With the continuing potential for instability in that region, we would be well advised to work through this backlog in the near-term, so we can assuage families who have done everything according to the rules so far.

How does the State Department intend to work through this visa backlog at the United States embassy in Beirut?

Answer. The consular section in Beirut has been working hard to address the backlog of immigrant visa cases in the queue. Between September and the end of 2006, Embassy Beirut successfully reduced the immigrant visa appointment backlog by nearly half. At the same time, the embassy also eliminated the 2-month buildup of missed appointments caused by the suspension of services during the war.

Recent changes in the immigrant visa process will likely allow Embassy Beirut to permanently increase its appointment capacity by 25 percent. Based on current workload assumptions, we anticipate eliminating the backlog of cases held domestically at the National Visa Center within approximately 12 weeks. Once cases arrive in Lebanon, they should be processed in a matter of weeks. We are hopeful that Lebanon will be current in its processing of IV cases by the summer. I will be sure to look into this situation again after I am confirmed.

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

Question. Why isn't the State Department advocating a tougher approach to reducing mercury contamination around the world?

Answer. The United States is advocating a partnership approach that we believe fosters the most effective use of human and financial resources to address risks associated with international mercury pollution. We believe that partnerships are a positive and effective way to engage countries that might otherwise be unresponsive to approaches that put them immediately on the defensive. Partnerships enable us to tailor our approach to immediate problems in priority areas and countries and achieve near-term results. In our view, partnerships are more practical and effective than protracted treaty negotiations that may or may not produce future results—but impose significant opportunity costs here and now.

Question. The European Union has committed itself to stop selling mercury by 2012; would you support the United States adopting a similar ban on mercury sales abroad?

Answer. The issue of a ban on mercury sales abroad is multifaceted, and we need to know more than we do today about the potential impacts, particularly the unintended impacts, of such a ban. For example, those who support an export ban argue that it would increase the price of mercury and thereby decrease demand, particularly in developing countries. Others argue that a ban on exports could lead to an increase in primary mining of mercury in developing countries, whereas United States mercury exports come from environmentally preferable sources (recycled mercury or mercury obtained as a by-product from mining other metals such as gold). Still others are concerned that long-term storage options for quantities of mercury from decommissioned chlor-alkali plants and State recycling programs have not yet been adequately addressed, such that an export ban now would not be pragmatic.

Any effort to restrict trade in commodity mercury thus should carefully consider all potential impacts so that conditions among the world's most vulnerable populations are not exacerbated. We believe that further study is needed of the potential impacts, particularly unintended impacts, of such a ban, and that the issue of long-term storage needs to be addressed.

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

Question. When you were in the office, we talked about management. And I have another hat that I wear; I'm now ranking member of the oversight of Government management and the Federal workforce. And the fact of the matter is that we have been receiving—and I think Senator Lugar made reference to it in his opening statement—we've got some tremendous management problems today in the State Department. And for the record, I would like to have the record of the last 2 years in terms of retirement, in terms of key positions that are out—open and not filled.

I remember when Colin Powell took over. He talked about the team. He really instilled some new esprit de corps in the Department, and from what I understand right now it's sagged quite a bit. And I'd just like to know from you, in terms of the role that you've been asked to play, what you're going to do about trying to get a handle on that and see if we can't quiet things down and stabilize it and bring back the feeling in the Department so that we just don't keep hemorrhaging as we have in the past.

Answer. Following, per your request, is a list of key personnel vacancies at the State Department. As I noted during my confirmation hearing, filling these vacancies will be a personal priority and I look forward to working with the Secretary, Congress, and the White House on this issue.

Position	Vacated	Status
Deputy Secretary of State	June 2006	Deputy Secretary Designate Negroponte had his hearing on 1/30/07; awaiting confirmation.
Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT)	Jan. 2007	Vacant.
Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs (T)	Feb. 2007	White House has announced intent to nominate John Rood.
Assistant Secretary Political-Military Affairs (PM)	Jan. 2007	Vacant.

Position	Vacated	Status
Ambassador-at-Large To Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP)	Dec. 2006	Vacant.
Permanent Representative to the United Nations.	Dec. 2006	White House has announced intent to nominate Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad.

And I think some of this is simply part of a normal rotational cycle that will happen during the course of any 8-year administration, Senator.

But as far as how I visualize my own role in the Department, I think I can be of assistance to the Secretary in helping lead the Department, both here in Washington and abroad—the Foreign Service. I would like to think that one particular strength I can bring to the Department is my knowledge of how the Foreign Service works and my relationships with many Foreign Service officers. So I would like to build on that and strengthen the sense of satisfaction and enthusiasm for the work that they are doing, and I want to be supportive to the Secretary in her efforts to carry out this transformational diplomacy that we were talking about earlier.

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JIM WEBB

Question. Is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to take unilateral action against Iran, in the absence of a direct threat, without congressional approval?

Answer. In the President's January 10 address to the Nation on The New Way Forward in Iraq, he made clear that Iran was providing material support for attacks and interrupting the flow of support from Iran and Syria and that such action is unacceptable. The President also noted our intention to seek out and destroy the networks that are providing the advanced weaponry and training that threaten our forces in Iraq.

The administration believes there is clear authority for United States operations within the territory of Iraq to prevent further Iranian-supported attacks against United States forces operating as part of the Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I) or against civilian targets. Such attacks directly threaten both the security and stability of Iraq and the safety of our personnel; they also continue to undermine the region's security and stability. United States military operations in Iraq are conducted under the President's constitutional authority and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107-243), which authorizes the use of armed force to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq and to enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq. The United Nations Security Council has authorized all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of Iraq's security and stability, which encompasses MNF-I conducting military operations against any forces that carry out attacks against MNF-I or Iraqi civilian and military targets.

This question asks what authority might be relevant in connection with a hypothetical military operation in Iran. As the administration has said, we are not planning to invade Iran. For over 2 years, we have actively pursued a diplomatic strategy to address Iran's nuclear program, and we remain committed to resolving our concerns with Iran diplomatically. Of course, the Constitution charges the President to protect the United States and the American people. As Commander in Chief, he must be able to defend the United States, for example, if U.S. forces come under attack. Whether and how to do so in any specific situation would depend on the facts and circumstances at that time. Administration officials communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to the deployment of U.S. forces and the measures that may be necessary to protect the security interests of the United States and will continue to do so.

Question. Do you agree with Under Secretary of State Burns that the United States is "upping the ante" to send a message to Iran with the President's military deployments?

Answer. The United States remains committed to a diplomatic solution in the standoff with the Iranian regime, and we continue to call upon the regime to fully and verifiably suspend all nuclear enrichment and reprocessing activities as a precursor to direct talks. The passage of United Nations Security Council resolutions

1696 and 1737 reflects our efforts to encourage international diplomatic cooperation in applying pressure on the Iranian regime to change its destabilizing behavior. Together with our partners in the international community, we have moved against Iranian banks that are aiding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and financing terrorism.

Likewise, in response to Iran's threatening behavior in the region, as evidenced by Tehran's call for the complete destruction of Israel and its support for Hizballah, Hamas, and Iraqi militant groups, we have moved a second carrier battle group into the gulf. Our regional allies support this move, which is not to provoke the Iranian regime, but to reinforce a longheld United States foreign policy objective: gulf security. Our expanded military presence in the gulf helps ensure the free flow of oil and other resources, protects our interests in Iraq, reassures our regional allies, and helps stabilize the Middle East.

We are also responding to illegitimate and destabilizing Iranian action in Lebanon and Iraq, and calling attention to Iran's involvement in multiple terrorist attacks across the globe. These various steps are all fully integrated components of our often stated "priority to diplomacy" policy in dealing with the threat Iran poses.

Question. Does the United States have a concerted strategy to make Iran suffer consequences for its actions?

Answer. Our strategy with Iran is aimed at pressuring the regime to: (1) Abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons; (2) end support for terrorism; (3) end destabilizing activities in Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Palestinian territories, and throughout the Middle East; and (4) respect the rights of its citizens who would like to see greater democratic freedoms. Our most urgent task lies in curbing the regime's nuclear ambitions.

On June 6, 2006, China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the United States presented Iran with a generous package of incentives providing economic, political, and technological benefits for the Iranian people following a successful conclusion of negotiations aimed at resolving international concerns regarding Iran's nuclear program. Equally significant, Secretary of State Rice announced on May 21, 2006, that the United States would join our European allies in directly engaging the Iranian regime if it verifiably suspended its uranium enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. In announcing this offer, Secretary Rice also reaffirmed the United States' support for the Iranian people's right to enjoy the benefits of peaceful, civil nuclear energy. The Iranian regime, however, rejected this historic opportunity to reintegrate into the international community, and has instead continued along a path of confrontation and isolation by refusing to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Following Iran's failure to comply with UNSCR 1696, which required that Iran suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities by August 31, 2006, the United States engaged in several months of consultations with the other permanent members of the Security Council and Germany, which culminated in the unanimous passage of UNSCR 1737 on December 23, 2006. Resolution 1737 requires Iran to suspend its proliferation-sensitive activities and cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to resolve all outstanding issues related to its nuclear program. It imposes sanctions under article 41 of chapter VII of the U.N. Charter and obligates member states to freeze assets of several entities and individuals who are listed in the resolution's annex due to their association with Iran's nuclear and/or missile programs. We are working with other nations—including the U.K., France, Germany, India, Egypt, Brazil, Japan, and Australia—to promote and ensure swift implementation and monitoring of UNSCR 1737. The IAEA Director General will report back to the UNSC by February 21, 2007, regarding Iran's compliance with UNSCR 1737. Following receipt of his report, the UNSC may pursue additional chapter VII actions directed at the Iranian regime if it is found to be in continued noncompliance.

Outside of the United Nations, we are also increasing pressure on Tehran. In November 2006, we successfully convinced the IAEA Board of Governors to reject an Iranian-requested technical cooperation project that may have aided its construction of a heavy-water research reactor at Arak capable of producing significant quantities of high-quality plutonium.

As part of our efforts to stymie Iranian progress toward improved ballistic missile delivery and other military capabilities, we are taking measures to strongly enforce the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA).

Efforts to block Iranian access to the international financial system are perhaps our best tool for pressuring the regime. Under Executive Order 13382, the United States has designated 11 individuals and entities associated with Iran's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missile programs. Once designated, entities cannot

conduct business in U.S. dollars and assets currently held by U.S. banks are frozen. Citing ties to WNIID proliferation activities, the Department of the Treasury has also used domestic authorities to terminate the access of Iran-based Bank Sepah and Bank Sepah International to the U.S. financial system.

The international community has affirmed that an Iranian nuclear weapons capability is unacceptable. As we go forward, we will seek to maintain international consensus regarding the steps that Iran must take to comply with its obligations.

Question. Do you agree that by taking such actions in the Persian Gulf, the United States creates conditions that are dangerously unpredictable?

Answer. Our current and any future actions in the gulf do not and will not create conditions that are dangerously unpredictable. It is precisely the Iranian regime's behavior that creates instability and unpredictability in the region. The U.S. presence in the region is seen by all the gulf countries as stabilizing, as shown by their manifold concrete support for our military presence. Our policy of supporting gulf security has been a cornerstone of our Middle East engagement for over six decades, and the Iranian regime must understand that it cannot destabilize the region without a reaction from moderate Arab states and the United States.

Question. Would it not be preferable for the United States to carry out its diplomatic initiatives beyond today's half measures by seeking a broader international diplomatic resolution of the war in Iraq that would include participation by all nations in the region, including Iran and Syria?

Answer. We encourage all of Iraq's neighbors to act responsibly in supporting and assisting the Iraqi Government. To that end, we continue to call on Iran and Syria to suspend their destabilizing activities. Unfortunately, we have seen no evidence indicating that they wish to play a responsible role. Like Iraq's other neighbors, Iran and Syria must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and act in a manner that supports a stable and democratic future for the Iraqi people. We support Iraqi direct dialog with Damascus and Teheran—focused on building relationships based on the principle of full respect for Iraqi sovereignty and support for a peaceful, stable Iraq.

We have made many efforts in the past to engage the Syrian Government. Former Secretary Powell visited Damascus in May 2003 to discuss post-conflict Iraq. Following that, in September 2004, then-Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, William Burns, met with President Asad; former Secretary Powell met again with then-Syrian Foreign Minister Shara'a at the UNGA in late September and in Sharm el Sheikh in November 2004; and former Deputy Secretary Armitage visited Damascus in January 2005. In each of these efforts, the Syrians promised to take action against the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq, end its support for former regime elements living in Syria, and end its sponsorship of terrorism. We have yet to see any response to our efforts to engage in the last 4 years, and believe this track record does not demonstrate Syria to play a positive role in the region.

The President made clear in his January 10 speech to the American people on the administration's New Way Forward in Iraq, that Iranian support to armed groups who want to harm United States forces and perpetrate violence in Iraq would not be tolerated. The President also noted our intention to seek out and destroy the networks that are providing the advanced weaponry and training that threaten our forces in Iraq, including those involving Iranian assistance. As well, during recent meetings in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Kuwait, regional partners expressed their strong concern over the growth of negative Iranian involvement in Iraq and al-Qaeda terror.

We are actively pursuing a comprehensive diplomatic strategy to address Iran's nuclear program and destabilizing activities throughout the region. As the President, Secretary Rice, and other senior officials have publicly stated, we are committed to resolving our concerns with Iran diplomatically, but have yet to see the same commitment by Iran.

RESPONSES OF JOHN NEGROPONTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. How do you see your role as Deputy Secretary? Have you discussed your role with the Secretary? How do you expect to divide your time between organizational and policy issues? Are there specific issues or regions on which the Secretary expects you to take a lead role?

Answer. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State, I will assist Secretary Rice in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and function as the Chief Operating Officer of the

Department. The Deputy Secretary position has many varied responsibilities, including administrative oversight of the Department, coordination and supervision of U.S. Government activities overseas, representing the Department's position before Congress, and managing key foreign policy issues on the Secretary's behalf. How I might divide my time among these responsibilities would depend on the circumstances and most pressing issues of the moment, but I expect to focus on all of these critical areas.

In my discussions with Secretary Rice, we also have discussed the need for me to devote considerable time and effort to the implementation of our policies in Iraq. In my previous assignment before becoming Director of National Intelligence, I volunteered to serve as United States Ambassador to the newly sovereign Iraq because I believed—and still believe—that it is possible for Iraq to make a successful transition to democracy. Failure in Iraq would be a disaster for the Iraqis, for our friends in the region, and for the United States. I anticipate devoting a considerable amount of time to this complex, challenging, and vital national security issue, if confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State.

If confirmed, I would hope that, in addition to Iraq, I could make a strong contribution to our foreign policy in those parts of the world where I have spent the most time in my career—Asia and Latin America. The Secretary and I have specifically discussed my taking responsibility for diplomacy related to security in North Asia and for our political dialog with China. We have also talked about how I could help her advance our agenda in this hemisphere. Moreover, I expect to help Secretary Rice promote America's economic, business, and energy interests overseas as well as the transformational diplomacy that is the cornerstone of her leadership at the Department of State.

Question. Based on your extensive experience in the State Department, what initiatives do you believe are necessary to improve management at the Department?

Answer. As a career Foreign Service officer, I am intimately aware of the sacrifices and benefits of Foreign Service life. A Foreign Service career is much more than a 9 to 5 job; it's a commitment to devote your life, and that of your family, to advancing U.S. interests abroad. The same principle holds true for the Department's dedicated civil service employees and the 37,000 locally employed staff in U.S. missions overseas, many of whom work for the U.S. Government at great personal risk.

This level of commitment and sacrifice from employees requires an absolute pledge from the Department's senior leaders to support and defend the needs and interests of State Department personnel. As Deputy Secretary, I will reinforce the Secretary's efforts to bolster the Department's resources and secure the funding we need to train, protect, and reward our employees. Our highest priority should be taking care of our people.

In particular, I look forward to working with the Congress and the White House to minimize vacancies in senior positions at the Department. While some vacancies are an inevitable result of our nomination system and political cycles, the number and length of those vacancies should be kept to a minimum.

Question. During President Bush's first term, Secretary Rumsfeld and the Department of Defense were widely perceived as having played a prominent, if not dominant, role in shaping U.S. foreign policy in critical areas. Do you believe there has been a significant expansion of the role played by the Defense Department in foreign policy? If so, what impact do you believe this has had on the conduct of U.S. foreign policy? How would you help Secretary Rice in ensuring that the State Department takes the lead on important foreign policy issues?

Answer. We are at a critical juncture in our foreign relations with key and potential allies, faced with challenges in all corners of the world from terrorists and insurgents. All agencies of the U.S. Government are working together to best meet these challenges. Bureaucratic barriers between agencies do not serve our interests, and collaboration between U.S. agencies on planning, budgeting, and operations results in stronger foreign relations overall. In this regard, the Defense Department has an important role to play in the development of our national security policy and on our interactions with foreign governments, although the Secretary of State is the President's lead advisor on the development and execution of U.S. foreign policy and the cabinet official responsible for the day-to-day conduct of U.S. foreign relations.

Having said that, in my last two assignments as Ambassador to Iraq and as Director of National Intelligence, I developed excellent working relationships with the Pentagon and the uniformed services. If confirmed, I expect to build on my extensive past experience in dealing with the Department of Defense.

Question. What steps is the administration planning to take to address the continued conflict in Darfur? Has the administration begun to implement the so-called "Plan B" that the special envoy to Sudan described to committee members last year? What exactly does Plan B entail? Do other partners in the international community support this plan?

Answer. One of the top diplomatic priorities of the United States in Africa is the peaceful end to the conflict and humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Part of our strategy is the rapid transition of the African Union Mission in Sudan to a more robust U.N./A.U. hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur. Such a force is vital to our effort to stabilize the security situation, ensure access for humanitarian assistance, and protect internally displaced persons and refugees. There are also ongoing discussions about complementary U.N. peacekeeping forces in Chad and the Central African Republic to protect refugees and other civilians. We are working closely with our partners in the A.U., U.N., and especially with those with influence on Sudan such as Egypt, Russia, China, and the E.U., to support the U.N. effort. The special envoy to Sudan recently traveled to China to explain the United States' position on Darfur and to encourage the Chinese to use their influence to stop the atrocities.

We are also working actively to bring those rebel groups that did not sign the May 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement into negotiations to join an enhanced agreement. In doing so, the special envoy recently traveled to Chad where he met with many rebel leaders from varying parties, heard their views, and pushed for their united participation in a peaceful political process led by the U.N. and the A.U.

On peacekeeping in Darfur, we have been pressing Sudan and the A.U. to finalize agreement with the U.N. on the three-phased peacekeeping plan reached on November 16, 2006 in Addis. On December 23, 2006, the U.N. began implementation of the U.N. light support package to the African Union Mission in Sudan (phase I). The A.U. and U.N. have reached agreement on the elements of the heavy support package (phase II), and have sent a letter to President Bashir requesting his full cooperation for the deployment. Detailed discussions between the A.U. and U.N. on the modalities for the hybrid force are ongoing. We are encouraging all the parties to move rapidly, and are reaching out to encourage countries to contribute personnel and troops to these efforts.

If, however, we determine that the regime in Khartoum is deliberately acting to prevent peace from being achieved in Sudan, including efforts to delay or otherwise deter implementation of the Addis Agreements, we will adopt a more coercive course of action. We cannot discuss Plan B publicly, but Andrew Natsios, the President's special envoy to Sudan, would be happy to meet with you to discuss the plan privately. Our goals remain the deployment of a robust U.N./A.U. hybrid force with the authority to use force to protect civilians, the achievement of a peaceful political process that ultimately brings all rebel groups into the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), and continued access for necessary humanitarian work.

Question. How would you evaluate the status of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between north and south Sudan? Is there any cause for concern? What should the U.S. Government be doing to support improved implementation of the peace agreement?

Answer. Since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on January 9, 2005, much has been accomplished. The Government of Southern Sudan (GOBS) has been fully established, over \$1.5 billion in oil revenues has been transferred to the GOBS, and the U.N. reports that the redeployment of northern troops from the south is on schedule. However, the issues that remain are some of the most challenging.

The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) has failed to introduce transparency in accounting for oil revenues, and the GOBS is likely entitled to much more than it is currently receiving. The overall progress on withdrawing northern troops from the south masks the nearly complete lack of redeployment from the oil-rich Upper Nile region. The NCP has also moved slowly to support the work of demarcating the North-South border.

Meanwhile, northern backed militias continue to operate in the south and create instability. In Abyei, home to Sudan's most productive oil field, the NCP has refused to accept the Abyei Boundaries Commission report.

Moving forward on CPA implementation will require continued high-level engagement from the United States. Our diplomatic missions in Khartoum and Juba, the special envoy to Sudan and the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs have dedicated extensive efforts to the CPA, including recent trips by the special envoy to Juba, Malakal, and Abyei in the south. The United States has helped to establish the Assessment and Evaluation Commission, and we are its most vocal member. We have taken the lead on efforts to turn the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/

Army (SPLM/A) into a responsible political party capable of governing, with a regular army that can ensure peace and security. We also work with United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNPMIS), which plays an important role in supporting the CPA. The United States was the first country to establish a full-time diplomatic mission in Southern Sudan, and we continue to be the largest donor to the recovery and development of the region. The United States will continue to help the south create a more level playing field within the Government of National Unity (GNU) and demand full implementation of the CPA. This is the only way to foster the establishment of a strong and united Sudan that is stable and at peace with its neighbors.

Question. What, if any, supplementary medical coverage and long-term disability benefits do PRT members in Iraq and Afghanistan receive? What about contractors? Is the Department working on improving these health benefits?

Answer. Both civil service and Foreign Service employees of the State Department employees serving in Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq and Afghanistan are eligible a generous package of medical and disability benefits. State employees can choose from 10 group health insurance plans available to all Federal employees. Employees assigned to the PRTs can utilize the medical units at the embassies in Kabul or Baghdad, if needed. Embassy Baghdad has a full-time social worker who has traveled extensively to the PRTs as well. An Amman-based regional psychiatrist also visits Iraq periodically and has visited employees stationed outside of Baghdad.

Employees in PRTs also have access to mental health services, if requested, through the State Department's Office of Medical Services Employee Consultation Service. Employees and eligible family members can also take advantage of a 24 hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week support hotline coordinated by the Department's Family Liaison Office and offered through the Managed Health Network.

State employees are eligible for workers' compensation benefits, should they be injured in the line of duty. Long-term disability benefits are offered under worker's compensation. Generally, Personal Service Contractors (PSCs) are eligible for Federal Government workers' compensation benefits. Independent contractors are not eligible for benefits and would apply for workers' compensation benefits through their employers.

We are continuously evaluating the existing incentives for hardship service and determining if changes are needed to further support and compensate our employees who serve in the most difficult posts overseas. The Department does not have any plans at this time to propose changes to the existing health benefits package.

Question. As you know, Senator Lugar and I have introduced S. Res. 30, which calls for the United States to take an active role in international climate change negotiations under the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, with the objective of securing U.S. participation in binding agreements that establish commitments by all major emitters of greenhouse gases and further achieve a significant long-term reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions. Does the administration have a position on our resolution, and what is the administration's current position on negotiations under the Framework Convention, on an agreement to cover the period after 2012, post-Kyoto? Shouldn't we be working now on those next steps?

Answer. The administration shares your views that engaging developing countries, implementing clean energy technologies, and protecting U.S. economic interests are of paramount importance to addressing climate change.

The United States is taking an active role in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In addition to vigorously engaging in the issues negotiated under the convention, we are also its largest donor nation. Regarding an agreement to cover the period after 2012, the United States does not support an approach that would harm our economy, and we believe that a prescriptive targets and timetables framework is inconsistent with the need for a global response to climate change since developing countries reject binding emissions caps.

The United States believes that international climate actions must accommodate diverse national circumstances and approaches, and that climate actions should be considered in tandem with economic and other sustainable development goals. Countries in the developing world are focused on economic growth and providing for the needs of their citizens.

We believe that climate policies should recognize and complement these priorities. We are pursuing an approach through a range of collaborative approaches that focus on practical results.

Our flagship climate initiative, the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP), is one example of this approach. The APP is one of our

most important programs because it generates results where they matter most—in the countries that are the world's major emitters of greenhouse gases.

The APP brings together Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, and the United States to tackle complementary energy, economic, and environmental goals. In each partner country, governments and the private sector are collaborating to implement clean, efficient energy technologies and practices.

The APP is just one of the many international partnerships that the United States has initiated since 2002. They include partnerships to collect and reuse methane—a powerful greenhouse gas; to capture and safely store carbon dioxide; to develop and deploy clean, safe nuclear energy technologies; and to develop cost-effective hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. In addition, we have launched 15 bilateral climate change partnerships with countries and regional organizations that, with us, represent over 80 percent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Our emissions performance since 2001 has been among the best in the OECD. From 2000 to 2004, for example, U.S. energy-related carbon dioxide emissions increased by only 1.7 percent, while those in Europe grew by 5 percent. The results of our climate policy underscore the fact that there are diverse yet complimentary approaches to addressing climate change.

Question. Given your January 11 testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that al-Qaeda operates from “their leaders’ secure hide-out in Pakistan,” what new approaches toward Pakistan will you pursue to end half a decade of safe haven given to Bin Laden and his cohorts?

Answer. While we do not know Osama bin Laden’s precise whereabouts, al-Qaeda continues to exploit parts of the tribal areas of western Pakistan. It is not accurate, however, to say that the Pakistan Government is granting them safe haven as a matter of policy. In fact, Pakistan has been a vital partner in our fight against al-Qaeda. Pakistan’s military operations against al-Qaeda and other foreign militants in the tribal areas since 2004 have cost it hundreds of casualties but have not succeeded in breaking foreign extremist networks in areas that are essentially outside government control. Militant extremism in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and the Northwest Frontier Province is perceived in Islamabad as a major threat to Pakistan’s internal security.

We are pleased that the Government of Pakistan continues to take forceful measures against all terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda, but we recognize that purely military solutions are unlikely to succeed. While President Musharraf remains committed to rooting out violent extremist elements from Pakistan, we support his efforts to adopt a more comprehensive approach to combating terrorism and countering insurgency.

The State Department is exploring ways to support two initiatives designed to strengthen Pakistan’s ability to eliminate terrorist safe havens and strengthen control of the border with Afghanistan. The first will enhance the capacity of local security forces such as the indigenous Frontier Corps, Frontier Constabulary, and tribal levies groups that carry most of the responsibility for security in those areas. The second, Pakistan’s Sustainable Development Plan for the tribal areas, is a program of economic and social development and governance reform intended to meet the needs of the local population and render them more resistant to violent extremists such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Robust support for these two initiatives would improve the security environment in the frontier areas, whose population spans the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and contribute greatly to creating an environment inhospitable to violent extremism.

Meanwhile, I believe it is essential that the situation in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area be the subject of constant high-level dialog between us and the leaders of both countries.

Question. Some administration figures seem intent on playing Sunni and Shia Muslims against each other, in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world. Do you approve of this, or do you see such a policy as presenting grave dangers to America from both Sunnis and Shia?

Answer. Our foreign policy toward the Middle East is not based on religion or ethnicity, but seeks to encourage moderation and minimize extremism. The United States has worked hard to promote reconciliation and national unity—across the historical divide of Sunni-Shia relations—in places like Iraq, Lebanon, and Afghanistan. Today those governments are more multiethnic and confessionally mixed than ever before. Playing off religious or ethnic differences is a recipe for increasing, not taming, violence in this region.

We are concerned about Iranian regime’s support for terrorism throughout the region, specifically its support for both Shia and Sunni extremists (Hizbullah and

Hamas, respectively) and its destabilizing activities in Iraq. However, our differences with Iran lie with illicit behavior and dangerous ambitions of the Iranian regime, and not with the legitimate aspirations and interests of the Iranian people, or the Shia in general. Our strategy is to counter the threats posed by the Government of Iran while expanding our engagement and outreach to the Iranian people. More broadly, we support the empowerment and dignity of all the people in the region, regardless of ethnicity or religious belief, and we condemn extremism in all forms.

Question. The administration has proposed \$2 billion in reconstruction funds for Afghanistan. Two billion dollars spread over 2 years does not represent an increase in reconstruction funding, despite the fact that General Eikenberry and General Jones have requested a significant increase in reconstruction funding. Is the proposed amount of funding sufficient? What is our strategy for strengthening the implementation of reconstruction programs?

Answer. The amount of funding is sufficient given the limited capacity in Afghanistan to implement projects quickly. What is important is that we maintain a consistent and substantial level of funding over a period of time long enough to enable the Afghan economy to gain traction on its own.

Our strategy for strengthening the implementation of our reconstruction programs centers around capacity building in both the public and the private sectors, to increase the quality of Afghan firms and the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan to provide basic services, effective governance, and efficient administration of public funds.

Building capacity of Afghan firms to deliver goods and services is critical. Where applicable, our programs incorporate private sector capacity building components. In the infrastructure sector, for example, we are training Afghans to build and maintain the road assets United States assistance has funded. A vocational training program currently underway in Nangarhar is providing construction, electrical, plumbing, and other building trade skills to improve the skills of the local workforce employed by Afghan firms. We also provide credit, business skills training, and other assistance to enable Afghan firms to increase their competitiveness and profitability. This assistance, combined with regulatory, administrative, and other technical assistance is helping the Government of Afghanistan become an enabler of private sector activity.

For the government's line ministries in Kabul as well as the provincial capitals, we will be implementing the Afghan Building Capacity program, which provides technical training in public administration skills and scholarships for advanced degrees and technical training in Afghanistan and abroad. We will concurrently improve the quality of education delivered by Afghan universities to help build the technical skill base needed for a modern economy and state.

Question. The administration has proposed \$8.6 billion in security funds for Afghanistan. Both General Karl Eikenberry and General James Jones have noted the need for an improvement in the use of security funding (according to the Inspectors General of State and Department of Defense, current police training has already cost \$ 1.1 billion dollars, yet it has resulted in a nonfunctional police force). What will be done with the \$8.6 billion that addresses this concern? Do your plans for using this money represent a true change of course?

Answer. The \$8.6 billion requested for security assistance will be used to further train and equip the Afghan National Security Forces. Our plans for using these funds reflect an urgent need to augment our work to train effective and legitimate security forces that can protect the Afghan people from extremists and insurgents.

For the police, the course is well-charted regarding training, and we expect it to remain the same. We expect, however, to increase emphasis on police equipment and infrastructure. Training and equipping efforts augment and reinforce each other. We must look comprehensively at all the factors that will lead to success for the Afghan police. It will take a sustained effort over several years to institutionalize the police force and establish a self-sustaining program, let alone adequately assess the program.

We also intend to boost our efforts to train and equip the Afghan National Army. In fiscal year 2007, we plan to intensify our efforts to train this force so the Afghan Government can address security concerns. The Afghan army is currently fighting alongside NATO International Security Assistance Forces, and is an integral component of our efforts to take on the Taliban and extend the reach of the Government of Afghanistan's authority. At the moment, the army is in need of more soldiers and more equipment to meet the current security challenges. The \$8.6 billion in re-

quested security assistance funds will help us reach our goal of a well-trained and effective Afghan army.

Question. In addressing the illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, does the administration intend to press the Government of Afghanistan to accept a program of aerial eradication of poppy?

Answer. The Government of Afghanistan has decided not to use spraying of herbicides to eliminate poppy cultivation this year, but will implement a robust manual and mechanical eradication program to eradicate illicit poppy fields. We will focus on making manual and mechanical eradication efforts as effective as possible, without ruling out the future use of other options, such as ground-based or aerial spraying of herbicides.

The United States remains prepared to assist the Government of Afghanistan—in using herbicides to eradicate poppy. For many years the United States has assisted the Government of Colombia and other governments around the world in using herbicide to control illicit narcotics crops. Herbicide offers a safe and effective method for eliminating illegal crops, and it may be an appropriate tool for Afghanistan to use in future years.

The United States Government will continue to provide assistance to Afghan law enforcement institutions that eradicate poppy crops, including the Ministry of Interior's Afghan Eradication Force.

While President Karzai did not approve the use of herbicide, he recognizes that poppy cultivation poses a grave risk to Afghanistan's security. We welcome his renewed focus on developing a strong eradication program this year and will continue to work with Afghanistan to eliminate poppy cultivation.

Question. In the next few months, the issue of Kosovo's future status will likely come before the United Nations Security Council. If, as has been threatened, Russia uses its veto to block Security Council approval of Kosovo's independence, would you still support the United States recognizing Kosovo as an independent state?

Answer. We strongly support the settlement terms prepared by U.N. Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. This package creates the conditions under which Southeast Europe can have stability and certainty in its future, Kosovo can govern itself democratically, and Kosovo's minorities can receive generous protection. We expect that Ahtisaari's proposal, once finalized, will be discussed in the U.N. Security Council and that we will consult closely with Russia and other Security Council members on the best way forward. We are working to ensure a successful conclusion to the Kosovo status process established by the UNSC and believe we should refrain from speculating about hypothetical developments in the Security Council.

Question. What do you see as the proper role for NATO in promoting global peace and security? As the alliance moves forward, how inclusive or exclusive do you believe it should be in its mission and membership?

Answer. NATO plays a vital role in promoting peace and prosperity and advancing freedom and democracy. We strongly support the aspirations of countries within the Euro-Atlantic area that seek membership.

NATO remains the essential forum for action and dialog on transatlantic security and its primary responsibility is to provide security for its members. September 11 and the Madrid and London train bombings demonstrated that the key security issues facing the allies have changed fundamentally since the cold war. NATO has evolved with the times. The alliance is increasingly outward looking because the challenges to our common security are increasingly transnational and global—for example, terrorism, proliferation of nuclear weapons, and insecurity of energy sources.

Our partnerships with non-NATO countries leverage and enhance NATO's effectiveness and benefit the alliance. In Afghanistan, for example, in addition to all 26 NATO Allies, we have over 11 contributing countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, and Finland.

At NATO's Riga Summit in November 2006, the allies agreed to support a partnership initiative that will ensure that non-NATO countries that share our values and are willing to commit personnel and resources to a common purpose with NATO will have a more structured operational relationship with the alliance that facilitates seamless planning and execution.

This is not the same as saying that the alliance has no borders or that its collective defense provisions apply to partners. The alliance is anchored in the North Atlantic Treaty and the Article 5 commitment. The Riga declaration is recognition by allies of the vital role being played by NATO's partners who are committing troops and resources in places of mutual concern like Afghanistan and Kosovo.

Question. Policy analysts and scholars have noted that Latin America has not received the attention that was anticipated at the beginning of President Bush's first administration. Given your experience in the region, what recommendations do you have for the administration to increase attention toward the region? What specific issues need to be addressed more effectively? How would you work in your capacity as Deputy Secretary of State to do this?

Answer. The administration has, in fact, devoted considerable attention and resources to the region. In the area of foreign assistance, resources dedicated to the Western Hemisphere have nearly doubled from 2001 to 2007—even without including the Millennium Challenge account funds that already have been made available to Nicaragua and Honduras, and that are about to be made available to El Salvador.

The President himself has traveled through the region 10 times since taking office, and his visits have been complemented by numerous visits by cabinet-level officials from a variety of Departments. He is planning another trip to the region in March.

All that is not to say that we should be content with the status quo. While all but one of the governments of the hemisphere were elected democratically and economic indicators have been positive, democratic institutions remain weak and under assault in several countries, in part because governments have not been able to deliver on the promise of democracy that is security and prosperity for all citizens.

We aim to focus our efforts and our resources to help governments respond to their citizens by consolidating democracy, promoting prosperity, investing in people, and helping protect the security of the democratic state. If confirmed, I look forward to my own involvement with the region as Deputy Secretary, if confirmed, and the opportunity to draw on my many years of experience dealing with our hemisphere.

Question. Given the wave of presidential elections that have taken place in the region over the past year, can you discuss the status of democracy in the region? How can United States democracy and foreign assistance programs be more effective in supporting political stability in Latin America? What was the level of support that we provided to Latin American countries in the previous fiscal year for democracy promotion?

Answer. Some two decades have passed since Latin Americans in country after country rejected authoritarian models in favor of democracy. Every country except Cuba has held national elections to elect its President. On the whole, these have been relatively free elections resulting in unprecedented continuity in the region as leaders have served out their terms and handed power peacefully over to the next elected leader.

The wave of elections in the Americas (17 in total) over the last year is testimony to the durability of this process in most countries. However, democracy can be challenged where a personalistic populism threatens to overwhelm democratic institutions in countries where those institutions are weak. If citizens perceive that democratically elected regimes fail to address their most important needs, then democracy itself may be imperiled. That is why we are working to strengthen democratic governance so that citizens receive the benefits of good governance. Latin Americans have a right to expect their democratic governments to be responsive and accountable. Access to economic opportunity and the social mobility that it creates are fundamental components of social justice and are necessary to ensure that democracy continues to flourish.

Our democracy and foreign assistance strategy recognizes the transformational power of democracy. Both bilaterally and in collaboration with such entities as the Organization of American States (OAS) and other institutions of the Inter-American System, we are working to attack inequality, political marginalization, and exclusion. In order to consolidate democracy, the United States will continue to work together with our regional neighbors throughout the hemisphere. We support efforts to create competitive and inclusive political systems so that all citizens have access to political power. With greater competition, less corruption, greater accountability of elected officials, and better stewardship of state resources, citizens of the region can enjoy an improved quality of life. To achieve this, we will strengthen judicial independence and capacity, internal controls, and effective prosecution of corruption and other complex crimes. We will seek to strengthen institutions of representative democracy, such as political parties, legislatures, executive agencies, media, and civil society.

The United States provided \$174.698 million in foreign assistance to Latin American countries in fiscal year 2006 to contribute to the objective of governing justly and democratically.

Question. How do you anticipate that the new U.N. Secretary-General will address reform at the United Nations in his first year? In your role as Deputy Secretary, do you anticipate working on U.N. reform?

Answer. The arrival of Secretary-General Ban and his new team offers member states an opportunity to reinvigorate the U.N. management reform process and foster a climate of ethical conduct. We are pleased that Secretary-General Ban led by example by making public his own financial disclosure statement. We are also pleased that he has called for a system-wide audit of U.N. funds and programs. In the near future we would like to see Secretary-General Ban take the following steps:

- Ensure full operational effectiveness of the U.N. Ethics Office;
- Effectively exercise his budgetary discretion;
- Implement International Public Sector Accounting Standards; and
- Achieve greater efficiencies in the use of existing resources.

While there are some actions the Secretary-General can take independently, most of the burden for reform falls on the member states themselves and in the coming months, we expect member states to consider the following items:

- Progress on review of U.N. mandates;
- Activation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee;
- Strengthening the Office of Internal Oversight Services and ensuring its operational independence;
- Strengthening U.N. procurement processes; and
- Improving U.N. human resources management policies and practices.

If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State, I will work with my colleagues in the Department and at our mission to the United Nations to emphasize the continued importance of high ethical standards at the U.N.

Question. United Nations peacekeeping operations have increased markedly in the past few years, now totaling over 80,000 troops globally with new missions in countries such as Lebanon, Liberia, Sudan, and Haiti. Can you comment on the value of U.N. peacekeeping operations in supporting and advancing U.S. interests? Beyond paying the dues assessed by the United Nations, does the United States provide any other support to U.N. peacekeeping missions? Do you know of areas in which we should be providing such support?

Answer. U.N. peacekeeping serves U.S. national interests. We have a stake in the outcome of events in every region of the world. U.N. peacekeeping missions engage and commit the international community to seek solutions to violence and instability. Through our ability to draw upon global resources through a U.N. peacekeeping mission, we are able to address urgent international needs without committing U.S. forces. U.N. peacekeeping operations cost the U.S. approximately a quarter of what we would pay if we were asked to deploy American forces. I am personally a very strong believer in the utility of U.N. peacekeeping operations and was impressed by the demonstrated effectiveness of these operations during my tenure as ambassador to the U.N. in countries such as Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Liberia.

In the U.N. Security Council and through our contributions to the U.N., the United States ensures that U.N. peacekeeping mandates are clear, credible, and limited to what is achievable. We use our voice and vote to ensure that these missions are consistent with U.S. national interests. The United States has been in the lead in efforts to ensure that U.N. peacekeepers are properly prepared and equipped to defend themselves and to fulfill their mandate.

Direct U.S. participation in U.N. peacekeeping operations is limited but important. The U.S. currently has 298 police officers and 26 military officers deployed in 8 U.N. peacekeeping missions. In addition, the United States from time-to-time provides direct support for U.N. operations. For instance, the Department of Defense arranged for the November 2006 deployment of an Indonesian battalion to participate in the U.N. mission in Lebanon.

Given even greater force generation requirements for peacekeeping in the foreseeable future, an important area of United States support for peacekeeping is through our Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), including its African sub-component, the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. GPOI programs enable willing partners to build the capabilities to help meet the growing U.N. demand for competent peacekeepers. U.N. and African Union missions in Africa and Lebanon already benefit from ACOTA-trained units. In addition, GPOI initiatives are helping Indonesia, Mongolia, and several Central American countries build their capacity to participate in U.N. peacekeeping operations. Continued GPOI support is essential to help the international community as a whole meet the increased demand for peacekeeping.

