

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

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

—
JANUARY 30 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 24, 2008
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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110TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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KENNETH A. MYERS, Jr., *Republican Staff Director*

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
110TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr., Delaware, *Chairman*

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KENNETH A. MYERS, Jr., *Republican Staff Director*

*Note: Appointed February 12, 2008.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2008

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

Jones, Ms. Deborah, to be Ambassador to Kuwait
Moriarty, to be Ambassador to Bangladesh
Scobey, Margaret, to be Ambassador to Egypt

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:07 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Kerry, presiding.

Present: Senator Kerry.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. Good afternoon. I apologize for being late. This hearing will come to order.

I want to thank you all for coming before the committee today. Why don't I invite you to each, individually, introduce your family, if you can.

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I'm joined here today by my daughter, Ana, who is a sophomore at the Madeira School, here in Virginia.

Senator KERRY. Here? At Madeira?

Ms. JONES. At the Madeira School.

Senator KERRY. Great school.

Ms. JONES. And my husband, Ricole Olson, is also a Foreign Service officer. He is serving as Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. NATO right now. And our 12-year-old daughter, Isabella, is serving with him there.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, very much.

Ambassador MORIARTY. I would like to introduce my wife, Laura Moriarty.

Senator KERRY. How are you? Welcome.

Ambassador MORIARTY. A recently-retired Foreign Service officer who hopes to accompany me out to Bangladesh.

Senator KERRY. Great.

Ambassador MORIARTY. Our two children are off working in the West, my son is at U.H. Law School, and my daughter is working for UCLA.

Senator KERRY. Fantastic.

Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador, nice to see you again.

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Nice to see you again, sir

I'm very happy to introduce my brother, Jim, who came up from Winter Springs, FL, today, to attend the hearing. He and my brother, Marty, have been a real great moral support in providing a home away from home for me.

Senator KERRY. Fantastic, he came up from where?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Winter Springs, Florida.

Senator KERRY. Winter Springs, Florida. Florida—about 7 days from pitchers and catchers, right? We're all thirsty. We need to recoup, back in New England, you understand.

All right, well thank you.

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Very much.

Well, let me just say, on behalf of the committee that we are really blessed to have three such highly experienced, qualified individuals to serve in these positions, and we really appreciate what you all bring to the table.

Ambassador Margaret Scobey, nominee to be ambassador to Egypt, has had a very distinguished career with challenging assignments in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Jerusalem, Pakistan, Yemen, and Syria. And I had the pleasure of spending time with Ambassador Scobey during my trip to Syria in 2005, during which time I saw her to be a capable diplomat, and a gracious host, and I thank you for that visit.

Ambassador Moriarty, nominee to be Ambassador to Bangladesh, brings also considerable experience to this task, and particularly in Asian affairs. And he has served in Islamabad, Beijing, Taiwan, and most recently as the American Ambassador to Nepal. I'm also particularly pleased, he's a native of Massachusetts, and has received several honors, including a Presidential Meritorious Service Award.

And Ms. Deborah Jones, the nominee to be Ambassador to Kuwait, comes to us from the U.S. Consulate General in Turkey. Before that, she has had several overseas postings, including the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Syria, and Iraq. And I would congratulate you, Ms. Jones, on your first nomination to be an ambassador, a much-deserved honor for a distinguished record, and we welcome you here.

Obviously, the relationships between the United States and Egypt, Kuwait, and Bangladesh are particularly significant, given the 21st century challenges that we're finding with respect to that part of the world, Islam, and radical extreme religious fervor, and so forth. So, these pose real challenges for our policymakers and for our ambassadors.

We have long counted on Egypt as one of our strongest allies in this difficult region. I have visited with President Mubarak frequently over the course of some 20 years, and consider that a friendship, and I have enjoyed the conversations that we have had.

But, while we've maintained a strong personal partnership with President Mubarak, there's a growing consensus emerging that that relationship with Egypt is not at its highest point, and faces some challenges right now.

There are obviously concerns from some here in Congress about the aid package. Those have been raised, particularly over on the

House side, but here in the Senate, too. That aid averages about \$2 billion a year, and there are concerns that it may not have been as targeted as effectively as it might be, particularly in the effort to try to promote reform.

We all understand that Egypt faces internal challenges. And these are conversations that I and others have had with them. We also need to continue to encourage our friends to respect human rights, and move toward greater democratization. It's very important for the Congress and the administration to work closely together to craft an aid program that strengthens our relationship, at the same time that it delivers the maximum benefit to Egypt, and Egyptian people, by fostering programs that strengthen the civil society and the rule of law.

And I might add, both Egypt and other countries in the region—I'm not sure what the figures are for Bangladesh, but I know Saudi Arabia and Jordan, I think about 60 percent of the population is under the age of 25, and 50 percent is under the age of 21, and 40 percent is under the age of 18. And so the issue of education and jobs and disenfranchisement looms large in a world where people are waiting to snatch up fertile minds, and idle minds, and put them to other uses. And we need to think hard about that.

We welcomed Egypt's participation in the recent Annapolis Peace Conference, and look to them to make significant contributions in moving that process forward in the coming months. And nothing could be more important for our security interests or for stability in the region.

One key element of the peace process is controlling the flow of arms into Gaza. And for quite some time, we've heard concerns over the lack of enforcement at the Rafah border checkpoint. These fears were validated in the last days, when tens of thousands of Palestinians overran the border—a troubling development that may even have contributed to the first suicide bombing in Israel in over a year.

We know that \$100 million in United States foreign military financing is currently suspended until the Secretary of State certifies that Egypt has cracked down on smuggling and tunnels into Gaza. So, this is a big issue in the relationship and will be going forward.

This is also a trying and troubling time for Bangladesh, now having been ruled by the military for over a year. We have a very strong interest in maintaining strong relations with Bangladesh, but we also hope that Bangladesh is going to continue as a moderating voice in the Islamic world.

We also can't lose sight of the fact that we need to restore full civil and political rights to all the citizens of Bangladesh. In May of 2007, I wrote a letter with Senators Biden, Lugar, and others, urging Chief Advisor Ahmed, the civilian head of the current caretaker government, to immediately lift emergency rule, and announce a timeline for free and fair elections. And although emergency rule is still in place, the government has announced elections by the end of 2008. It's very important these be transparent and held as scheduled.

And instituting reforms to end the country's notorious corruption is also a challenge, and vital to restoring popular confidence in the government.

We have a very strong bilateral relationship with Kuwait that dates back over 20 years. In early 2004, we designated Kuwait as a major, non-NATO ally.

Today Kuwait hosts some 50,000 United States military personnel as they rotate in and out of Iraq, and some 10,000 are permanently based there. That raises important questions about the role that Kuwait may or may not play, as our military redeploys from Iraq. And particularly, as a staging point, for an over-the-horizon presence that many of us here in the Congress envision.

Kuwait also remains a key strategic partner in fighting Islamic extremists, countering the influence of Iran, and promoting stability in the region. And we've shown our desire to further strengthen this partnership with significant new arms sales.

We also must express concern over the fact that Kuwait did not participate in the Annapolis conference. And, to date, they have provided only \$135 million out of \$500 million that they pledged for Iraqi reconstruction. These will be important issues for our ambassador to address.

So, with that, I invite each of you to make your opening statements. If you could mostly summarize them, the full statements will be placed in the record in full, and I think you know that procedure, and we'll look forward to then having a chance to question.

Thank you very much.

Do you want to begin, Ambassador Scobey?

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARGARET SCOBEY, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**

Ambassador SCOBEY. Mr. Chairman, I'm deeply honored to appear before the committee as President Bush's nominee as the new United States Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt. I'm mindful of the confidence and the trust placed in me by the President and the Secretary and, if confirmed, will do my utmost to fulfill my responsibilities.

I've had the privilege of representing the United States in many Middle Eastern capitals, and look forward to doing so again in a country where we have built a vital strategic partnership based on many mutually shared goals of peace, security, and prosperity—not just for the United States and for Egypt, but for the entire region.

Sir, Egypt, as you know, is the most populous Arab country in the world. Its leaders promote peace and stability in a region that has often known conflict. Its forces protect the canal, combat terrorism, and participate in important peacekeeping operations. Its press and cultural vitality influence the entire Arab world, and it's the only Arab country with a global diplomatic reach.

Egypt's regional role has clear implications for United States policy. The United States must sustain and strengthen the bilateral security cooperation that we have depended upon for years, and the United States must encourage Egypt to take the lead in economic and democratic political reform in the region.

Successive administrations with Congressional support have recognized Egypt's role with significant military and economic assistance that underlies the relationship between the United States and Egypt today.

The United States Ambassador to Egypt oversees a broad range of important activities, including the protection of our citizens, outreach to all sectors of Egyptian society, and management of a very large mission.

I'd like to highlight three of the most important elements as I see it: The search for peace and countering extremism; the promotion of democracy and human rights; and the advancement of United States-Egyptian economic ties and continued development assistance.

Egypt's contributions to shared regional objectives, such as the establishment of a Palestinian state, living in peace and security with Israel, their support for our aims in Iraq and Afghanistan, their countering of terrorism and support for the U.N. mission in Sudan, are no less important today than the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1979.

Recent breaches in the Gaza-Egyptian border have posed new challenges. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain and deepen our ability to cooperate in all of these areas, and more, with a much-appreciated partner.

Egypt's strong economic performance and reform measures are transforming an economic relationship from one based on assistance, to one based on trade. Gains in literacy, life expectancy, access to clean water and electricity have all been advanced by U.S. assistance, and the administration believes a strong need remains for some continued U.S. assistance to support essential work in health and education.

If confirmed, I will work to expand United States and Egyptian trade, and work with you, other agencies of the United States Government and the Egyptian Government to develop the most constructive use of continued United States economic and military assistance.

Mr. Chairman, I know the members of Congress share the administration's serious concerns about the condition of human rights in Egypt and the limitations placed on political activity and freedom. Egypt has taken important steps over many years in opening its society with a vibrant press and civil society, and many advancements in Egypt in women's rights.

However, the government's respect for human rights remains poor, and serious abuses continue. Progress on political reform has slowed, with limitations on political pluralism, and major obstacles to opposition parties taking their rightful place in the political life of Egypt. Recent indictments against newspaper editors, the continued incarceration of Ayman Nour, private lawsuits against Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the prosecution in military tribunals, rather than civilian courts of some Muslim Brotherhood members, and restrictions on NGOs illustrates some of these limits that have been placed on political freedom.

Sir, I fully understand the importance of Egypt moving forward with meaningful democratic political reform that does reflect Egypt's culture and traditions. The administration is committed to pressing Egypt on reform, and if confirmed, I will take every opportunity to support and advance civil and political liberties in Egypt.

I look forward to working with the government and to meeting, learning from, and working with, leaders of Egypt's civil society. I

will do all in my power to assure that U.S. support is both coordinated and available to all of those who are working for the advancement of democracy and human rights, and who would welcome our encouragement.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Scobey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARGARET SCOBEY, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as President Bush's nominee as United States Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt. I am mindful of the confidence placed in me by the President and Secretary Rice and will do my utmost to fulfill my responsibilities. I have had the privilege of representing the United States in many Middle Eastern capitals and look forward to doing so again in a country where we have built, over the past three decades, a vital strategic partnership based on mutually shared goals of peace, security, and prosperity, not only for our own citizens but also for the people of the entire region.

I am also happy to introduce my brother, Jim, who came from Winter Springs, FL, to attend the hearing. He and my brother, Marty, who could not be here, have always provided me moral support and a home in between my assignments.

Egypt is the most populous Arab country in the world. Its leaders promote regional peace and stability throughout the Middle East and Africa; its security forces assure free navigation through the Suez Canal and combat terrorism; its press and cultural vitality influence the entire Arab world, and it is the only Arab country with global diplomatic reach. The implications for United States policy are clear: Continue to strengthen the United States-Egyptian partnership in advancing peace, and encourage Egypt to take the lead in economic and political reform in the region.

We recognize that reform must follow an Egyptian vision and proceed in an Egyptian manner. President Bush expressed in Sharm el Sheikh his firm hope that, "Egypt can play a role in the freedom and justice movement . . ." and that the Egyptian Government would build on its economic and democratic reforms to its people to give them "a greater voice in [their] future."

During the President's recent visit to Sharm Al Shaykh where he met with Egyptian President Mubarak, he also recalled the longstanding friendship between the United States and Egypt and the respect we have for the Egyptian people, their culture, history, and traditions. Above all else, this friendship has been strengthened by our shared objective of concluding a comprehensive peace between Israel and all its Arab neighbors in a manner that advances the interests of all and that liberates the human potential of this region by removing the fear of war. No Arab nation has done more to advance this fundamental goal. Egyptian courage opened the door to peace in 1979. Since then President Mubarak has persistently worked with us, the Israelis, and other Arab states in search for a just and lasting peace. Most recently, Egypt played a central role in the Annapolis conference, and now continues to seek ways to facilitate its aims.

Egyptian-United States cooperation on regional security and its contributions to regional stability go beyond the Israeli-Arab conflict. In recognition of this, successive administrations have made significant investments in security and economic assistance to Egypt, including \$1.3 billion a year in military assistance. The United States-Egyptian military partnership is a powerful force for regional stability in the Middle East and Africa. Our current military operations in the Middle East would not be possible without the overflight rights and facilitated Suez Canal passages afforded by the Egyptian Ministry of Defense.

Egypt is the largest contributor of peacekeeping troops to UNAMID—the U.N. peacekeeping force in Darfur. Egyptian diplomatic leadership helped persuade the Sudanese Government that this force would be in its best interest.

Egypt does face challenges. On January 24, Hamas operatives destroyed the border wall separating Gaza from Egypt and encouraged an influx of tens of thousands of Gazans into Northern Sinai. Egypt has sought to manage this difficult situation with a minimum of violence. Senior United States officials have remained in regular contact with Egyptian, Israeli, and Palestinian leaders who are consulting on ways to find a solution that will restore order at the Rafah border. Egypt is also spending FMF assistance to procure equipment to help combat smuggling via tunnels beneath the Egypt-Gaza border.

The United States benefits from Egypt's regional diplomatic leadership. Egypt hosted the first expanded neighbors' conference with Iraq in Sham Al Shaykh and

supports continued United States military engagement in Iraq until the Iraqi military can safely handle its security duties. Egypt is at the very center of seeking to resolve the impasse over Lebanese presidential elections.

Like the United States, Egypt has suffered terrible human and economic losses from terrorism and has long been a stalwart ally in the war against terror. United States-Egyptian security cooperation has saved lives throughout the region and will continue to do so.

The President and the administration will continue to seek Egypt's advice and support; if confirmed, I will do everything possible to facilitate communication and collaboration.

Much has changed in the decades since Camp David. The United States can be very proud of its contribution to economic and social development in Egypt at all levels, thanks to efforts and investment of USAID and its Egyptian partners. As a result of United States assistance programs, 99 percent of all Egyptians now have access to reliable electricity; 22 million Egyptians in 11 governorates have access to clean water and sanitary sewage collection, greatly reducing infant and child diseases. Since 1975, infant mortality has decreased from 132 per thousand to just 33; child mortality has decreased 80 percent. Polio has been eradicated, and life expectancy has been extended from 55 to 70 years old. Similarly, adult literacy has grown from 39 percent in 1975 to 60 percent now. Girls attending school has risen from 56 percent to 95 percent.

Egyptian economic reform is another success story. Prime Minister Nazif's economic team has reformed and streamlined Egypt's economy—retiring many vestiges of the old statist economy—to achieve record levels of growth—reaching nearly 7 percent in 2007. Egypt is attracting increased levels of foreign direct investment—\$11.1 billion in 2007, up from just \$5.3 billion in 2005. The World Bank in 2007 declared Egypt the “top reformer” in the world. Now the government is eyeing strategies for redistributing the benefits of nearly \$8 billion in annual subsidies on food and fuel to the poorest poor.

Again, the United States is playing a central role in Egypt's economic expansion. The United States is Egypt's No. 1 trading partner: United States foreign direct investment in Egypt exceeds \$5 billion and trade is sharply up—nearly 50 percent in 3 years. United States' exports to Egypt increased 33 percent in 2007; United States' agricultural exports to Egypt doubled.

The Qualified Industrial Zone program, which allows certain exports to enter the United States tariff and duty free, provided they contain 11.7 percent Israeli content, has produced more than \$700 million in exports in 2007 and sustains more than 100,000 jobs. Exports from these zones grew 141 percent from \$266 million in 2005 to \$643 million in 2006, and the impact of this unilateral trade benefit now exceeds the economic impact of our economic assistance.

But much work remains to be done. Forty percent of Egypt's population lives on less than \$2 per day. The government has identified major challenges in education and health reform. The United States intends to support these efforts in order to ensure a prosperous and stable future for this crucial Middle Eastern state.

As Egypt's economy has grown and matured, United States economic assistance has gradually declined, from \$815 million a year in the 1980s to just over \$400 million in fiscal year 2008. And in the current budget situation we can anticipate further adjustment. I look forward to working with you, other interested agencies of the United States Government, and our Egyptian counterparts to continue to develop the most productive and constructive use of United States assistance.

The transformation of Egypt's economy required patience and political courage. The gains we see today reflect the Egyptian leaderships' willingness to look beyond the needs of today to position Egypt to meet the needs of its people in the 21st century.

Mr. Chairman, I know that Members of Congress share the administration's serious concerns about the condition of human rights in Egypt and the limitations placed on political activity.

Egypt has taken important steps over many years in opening its society. Egypt's press, including new independent newspapers and television stations, engage in serious political debate, and Egyptian civil society, with countless NGOs, provide Egyptian citizens the opportunity to address many of the problems facing Egypt. In 2007, for the first time in Egyptian history, 30 female judges took their place on the bench. The Egyptian Government has acted to eliminate female genital mutilation—outlawing it in state hospitals and working at the grass roots to discourage this dangerous and debilitating practice. First Lady, Suzanne Mubarak has personally undertaken this campaign as a priority for the protection of young girls. In the second half of 2007, the state prosecuted three police officers for physical abuse of detainees.

However, as documented in our annual report, the government's respect for human rights remains poor and serious abuses continue. Progress on political reform has slowed, with limitations on political pluralism and major obstacles to opposition parties taking their rightful place in the political life of Egypt and to debate freely, government policy and actions. The recent indictment against seven newspaper editors, the continued incarceration of Ayman Now, the many private lawsuits pending against Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the prosecution in a military tribunal, rather than civilian court, of some 40 members of the Muslim Brotherhood, and restrictions on NGO's illustrate the ways in which the government limits political freedom.

Mr. Chairman, I fully understand the importance of Egypt moving forward with meaningful political reform. The administration is committed to pressing Egypt on reform, and if confirmed, I will take every opportunity to support and advocate the advancement of civil and political liberties in Egypt. I look forward both to working with the government and to meeting and learning from the leaders of Egypt's civil society. I will do all in my power to assure that U.S. support is both coordinated and available to all those who are working for the advancement of democracy and human rights and who would welcome our encouragement.

Over 200,000 Americans visited Egypt last year for business, education, and tourism. No embassy has a more important duty than extending protection and service to our citizens overseas, and I promise to make this a high priority. Likewise, over 45,000 Egyptians sought visas last year to visit the United States for similar reasons. While fully implementing necessary screening for all visitors, I want every Egyptian visitor to our embassy to feel welcomed and to anticipate the hospitality and positive experience he or she would have in the United States. We can also do more to encourage Egyptians students to study in the United States. Nothing can replace the opportunity to live and study in the United States. And we all know that the students who return to their home countries after that experience, come home with an admiration and affection for America that no overseas program can instill. I pledge to make this a personal priority.

If confirmed, I promise that the mission staff and I will give the great attention to getting our message out to the widest possible Egyptian audiences. Egypt enjoys a vibrant press and its opinion makers influence thinking far beyond Egypt's borders. Getting out to meet Egyptians throughout the country, promoting people-to-people exchanges, especially for students, academics, and religious leaders, bringing distinguished Americans to talk to Egyptian audiences, and engaging the Egyptian public at every opportunity and by every means possible will contribute to the improved mutual respect and understanding that we seek.

The United States' mission in Egypt is one of the largest in the world. If confirmed, I will have the great privilege of leading a team of talented Americans and Egyptians, from many different United States agencies but working together to advance our interests. I pledge to maintain the highest standards of accountability for the resources given to us and to assure that the U.S. mission takes care of its people.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, if confirmed, I would hope to welcome you and many of your colleagues from the Senate, as well as the House of Representatives, to visit. Your sustained interest in and oversight of our mission in Egypt is one of the most critical elements of any success we may have and helps assure that we are truly representing the American people in a country not only of strategic importance to us, but also one where we have enjoyed and benefited from great friendship.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Madame Ambassador.
Ambassador Moriarty.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES F. MORIARTY, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

Ambassador MORIARTY. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as the Ambassador to Bangladesh. I deeply appreciate the trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me for this position.

I also want to thank the State Department desk officers for Bangladesh, Sandeep Paul, Marcella Szymanski, and their administrative assistant, Alexis Olive—for all that they have done to help me prepare for my proposed assignment.

Would you stand up?

Senator KERRY. Thank you all very much.

Ambassador MORIARTY. Thank you.

I want to note the attendance here today of an old friend, the Ambassador of Bangladesh, Dr. Humayun Kabir.

Senator KERRY. Welcome, Mr. Ambassador, thank you.

Ambassador MORIARTY. And most importantly, I wish to express my personal gratitude to my wife of 25 years, Lauren. In addition to being my soul mate, she was the best Foreign Service officer I have ever met. She has made a heavy sacrifice, oh—current company, you know. [Laughter.]

She has made a heavy sacrifice in deciding to retire in order to accompany me to Bangladesh, if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, I have served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than three decades—in South Asia, Africa, the Near East, and East Asia. Most recently, I spent 3 exciting years as chief of mission in Nepal, as that country attempted to return to democracy.

My tour in Nepal followed a stint as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council. If confirmed, I will rely on the experience gained throughout my career to advance United States interests in Bangladesh.

I look forward to what promises to be a challenging assignment. In Bangladesh, our interests revolve around three intertwined D's—democracy, development, and denial of space to terrorism. The seventh most populous country in the world, Bangladesh, is overwhelmingly Muslim, and has—in the recent past—been grindingly poor.

If, under such conditions, it succeeds in building a tolerant, prosperous democracy, it will serve as a shining beacon for much of the world. If it fails in these tasks, it could become a nation of ungoverned space, and a potential safe haven and crossroads for international terrorism.

Mr. Chairman, over the years, the people of Bangladesh have overcome many daunting obstacles in their search for better lives. I feel strongly that it is in the United States' national interest to work with them, to help build a Bangladesh where democracy flourishes, where no child goes to bed hungry, and where no terrorist can find safe haven. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress in pursuit of these goals.

Let me also assure you that, if confirmed, I will zealously protect the welfare and safety of American citizens and interests in Bangladesh.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity of addressing you today. I would be happy to answer any questions later on.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Moriarty follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES F. MORIARTY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR
TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to serve as Ambassador to Bangladesh. I deeply appreciate the trust President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me and, if confirmed, I will serve to the best of my abilities. I also wish to express my personal gratitude to my wife of 25 years, Lauren. In addition to being my soul

mate, she was the best Foreign Service officer I ever met and her wise counsel has helped shape my career. She has made a heavy sacrifice in deciding to retire in order to accompany me to Bangladesh, if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, I have served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than three decades in South Asia, Africa, the Near East, and East Asia. Most recently, I spent 3 exciting years as chief of mission in Nepal, as that country attempted to return to democracy. My tour in Nepal followed a stint as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council. If confirmed, I will rely on the experience gained throughout my career to advance United States' interests in Bangladesh.

I look forward to what promises to be a challenging assignment. Bangladesh is a country in transition in an area of the globe vital to United States' interests. In Bangladesh, our interests revolve around three inter-twined "D's": Democracy, development, and denial of space to terrorism. The seventh-most populous country in the world, Bangladesh is overwhelmingly Muslim and has in the recent past been grindingly poor. If, under such conditions, it succeeds in building a tolerant, prosperous democracy, it will serve as a shining beacon for much of the world. If it fails in these tasks, it could become a nation of ungoverned space and a potential safe haven and crossroads for international terrorism.

DEMOCRACY

Since winning independence from Pakistan in 1971, Bangladesh has struggled to build a viable democracy. Its democratic performance has been mixed, and its brief history has included periods of military rule and civil disorder. On January 11, 2007, Bangladesh's President declared a state of emergency in the face of an opposition boycott of scheduled national elections and widespread political violence. In accordance with Bangladesh's constitution, the President appointed a caretaker government comprised of 11 nonpartisan advisers; that caretaker government in turn embarked upon an ambitious agenda to rid the country of endemic corruption, reform institutions necessary for a sustainable democracy, and hold free, fair, and transparent elections. In a country that Transparency International described in recent years as "perceived to be the most corrupt in the world," the anticorruption campaign quickly led to the arrests of a number of prominent individuals—politicians and businessmen alike. At present, two of Bangladesh's former Prime Ministers are in prison facing corruption charges.

Bangladesh's state of emergency continues today, more than a year after the current caretaker government assumed power. Under the state of emergency, the Bangladesh Government placed a ban on freedom of expression and the right to engage in political activity. In August 2007, the caretaker government received a jarring wake-up call when the country erupted in violent protests. The government, with the strong support of the military, quickly restored order by imposing a curfew in the areas hit by rioting. But the demonstrations showed what can happen when legitimate means of expressing grievances are unavailable.

Before and after the protests, the United States has consistently urged Bangladesh's caretaker government to lift the restrictions on basic rights, and on September 9, 2007, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed announced a partial relaxation of the ban on political activity. The United States has welcomed this announcement and urged the caretaker government to move as quickly as possible to take additional steps to restore civic freedoms and democracy. In particular, the United States has called upon Bangladesh's caretaker government to adhere to the electoral roadmap it announced in July 2007. That roadmap promises national elections by the end of 2008.

I am heartened by indications that the electoral roadmap remains on track. In an address to the nation on the anniversary of January 11, the chief adviser reiterated his commitment to hold elections that will restore, not replace, Bangladesh's democracy. Bangladesh's Chief of Army staff has underscored that the military supports the caretaker government and that he does not personally seek political office. Bangladesh's efforts to register 90 million voters remain on track despite disruptions from cyclone Sidr that left much of the southern part of the country in ruins last November. There are encouraging signs that the caretaker government is cracking down on human rights abuses. Meanwhile, though, the United States continues to insist the Bangladesh Government investigate allegations of extrajudicial actions by the security forces, mistreatment of members of ethnic and religious minorities, or wrongful detention of individuals. The anticorruption campaign remains popular, although the government must carefully follow due process.

Meanwhile, reformers within Bangladesh's major political parties are pushing to democratize the parties. The caretaker government has also responded positively to

the parties' call for dialog. While these are ultimately matters for the Bangladeshi people to decide, the United States is actively following these developments. We also continue to monitor the court cases brought against those detained during the state of emergency, including the two former Prime Ministers. The United States—along with like-minded partners—has advised Bangladesh's caretaker government that it must meet international standards for due process, transparency, and respect for human rights in all cases.

DEVELOPMENT

With respect to the United States goal of fostering development, Bangladesh has enjoyed several years of strong economic growth, despite perennial struggles against flooding, overpopulation, and poverty. Bangladesh needs sustained growth, if it is to escape from the jaws of debilitating and destabilizing poverty. The caretaker government has attempted to take some positive economic steps. Encouragingly, the Bangladesh Government has worked to expand power generation and to improve infrastructure. For example, the government has streamlined operations of Bangladesh's largest port, cutting transit times through the port from 9 or 10 days to 3 or 4 days, and reducing cargo handling costs by at least 40 percent. In the near-term, the caretaker government faces the daunting task of reducing inflation: Prices have soared due to high international commodity prices, devastating monsoonal floods and widespread crop damage from cyclone Sidr. Recent surveys and anecdotal evidence show that the people of Bangladesh worry more about feeding themselves than about political reforms.

This is one reason why foreign assistance plays such a vital part of United States Government efforts to promote stability and development in Bangladesh. We have provided roughly \$5 billion in assistance to Bangladesh since its independence. That assistance has, among other accomplishments, contributed to a 50 percent drop in Bangladesh's population growth, provided electricity to scores of millions of villagers, helped save the lives of hundreds of thousands during the most recent severe cyclone, and helped establish the conditions for three consecutive free and fair national elections. It has also built for the United States a degree of goodwill among the populace virtually unmatched in any other Muslim-majority country.

Currently, the U.S. Agency for International Development manages a large food aid program that targets the poorest of the poor, especially in the countryside where the effects of floods and other disasters are most severe. USAID also manages a broad-based program focusing on democracy and governance, public health, education for the country's poor, and expanded economic opportunity and competitiveness. These programs help provide a basic social safety net and a way out of poverty for their beneficiaries.

Late last year, the U.S. Government provided emergency relief to the millions of people whose livelihoods cyclone Sidr destroyed. USAID immediately provided \$19.5 million in aid and the U.S. military immediately provided desperately needed airlift to deliver food, water, and clothing to remote areas during Operation Sea Angel II. The United States' response to the crisis received widespread and exceedingly favorable media coverage in Bangladesh. This has helped cement the friendly ties between our two countries.

The damage from cyclone Sidr has been estimated at billions of dollars, and the Bangladesh Government has asked donors to help rebuild agriculture and aquaculture industries, to reconstruct rural electrification networks, and to mitigate future disasters. Bangladesh also needs help from donors to ensure that the most vulnerable of its citizens have adequate food security. The nation's grain stockpiles could be dangerously low by spring as Bangladesh struggles to meet the needs of its cyclone victims.

DENIAL OF SPACE TO TERRORISTS

Mr. Chairman, I would like to turn now to the United States interest in denying terrorists the use of Bangladesh's territory. Despite a long and admirable history of religious tolerance, Bangladesh has become a target of extremists in recent years. Poverty and political turmoil have provided some space for terrorists. Home-grown terrorists called the Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) simultaneously exploded over 400 small bombs throughout Bangladesh in August 2005; shortly thereafter, the JMB embarked on a terror campaign of suicide attacks against judges, other prominent figures, and crowded markets. The subsequent execution of six JMB leaders appears to have left the terrorist organization on the run.

A number of press reports also indicate, however, that Pakistan-based militant groups are using Bangladesh as a staging area and transit point to facilitate attacks directed at targets in India, and at least one of these groups, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba

(LT), has been able to tap into resources provided by local militant groups such as Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami, Bangladesh (HUJI-B) to support their operations. Indian press reports allege that Bangladeshi HUJI-B members and individuals affiliated with the LT are involved in an active terrorist network, operating from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Press reports also suggest that this particular network is responsible for a string of attacks in India, including the October 2005, May 2007, and August 2007 bombings in Hyderabad and probably the October 2007 bombing of a shrine in Ajmer, Rajasthan as well.

That said, Bangladesh is committed to partnership with the United States in the global war on terror, and the vast majority of Bangladesh's citizens appear to have little sympathy for the terrorists. The caretaker government has identified counter-terrorism as a top priority and has actively pursued extremists. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to work with Bangladesh to help it counter the internal terrorist threat, while strengthening control of its borders and various ports of entry.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, in closing let me say that I look forward very much to the challenges I will face if confirmed as United States Ambassador to Bangladesh. Over the years, the people of Bangladesh have overcome many daunting obstacles in their search for better lives. I feel strongly that it is in the United States' national interest to work with them to help build a Bangladesh where democracy flourishes, where no child goes to bed hungry, and where no terrorist can find safe haven. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress in pursuit of these goals.

Let me also assure you that, if confirmed, I will zealously protect the welfare and safety of American citizens and American interests in Bangladesh.

Thank you again for the opportunity of addressing you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Ms. Jones.

STATEMENT OF DEBORAH K. JONES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF KUWAIT

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I also welcome this opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. I am also deeply honored by the confidence shown in me by the President and Secretary Rice in making this nomination and, if confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with this committee and with others in Congress to continue to advance the vital interests of the United States in Kuwait, and in the broader Middle East region.

I'm also grateful today for a number of friends who have joined me from various countries in the region, as well as my daughter. I'm so proud of my husband, my family, and grateful for their steadfastness and encouragement as we have often served, particularly in later years, at different posts, not necessarily together as a family, in the world.

Mr. Chairman, as you've already noted, the State of Kuwait has been a reliable partner and friend in a turbulent and transitional region of utmost importance to United States' interests. Because of this, as you noted, Kuwait was designated a major non-NATO ally in 2004.

Since Kuwait's 1991 liberation from Saddam Hussein's brutal occupation, whose painful remnants remain visible to this day, United States military forces and our coalition partners have relied on Kuwait's indispensable material and logistical support for our policy priorities in Iraq, Iran, and the global war on terror.

If confirmed, I will work to consolidate and expand that support into broader political, social, and economic arenas, to build and sus-

tain a stable and democratic Iraq, and Iraq at peace with its neighbors, and also to maintain throughout the region.

We share with the Government of Kuwait a common interest in combating the spread of extremist ideologies, and in rooting out terrorist elements that threaten our peace and security.

If confirmed, I will seek to build even stronger and more robust counterterrorism cooperation to ensure the best possible force protection for our troops in Kuwait, as well as the safety of our mission employees, our family members, and the larger American community.

Kuwait continues to build positively on a proud indigenous tradition of boisterous political discourse, somewhat unusual in that region. In 2005, women were granted the right to vote, and subsequently, nearly 60 percent of those eligible to do so participated in their June 2006 parliamentary and municipal elections.

Since then, Kuwait has witnessed further democratic advancements, including increased press freedoms, and a much-needed redistricting law. If confirmed, I will endeavor to help Kuwait consolidate and expand those democratic gains, consistent with Kuwait's own goals and with the President's freedom agenda, to include supporting the development of additional civil society groups in advancing the rights and protections of vulnerable populations living within Kuwait's borders.

On the economic front, we must seek to create new paradigms of partnership, both within and beyond the energy sphere. The potential for dynamic synergies between Kuwait and the United States, combining capital, technology, and expertise to advance global development compatible with current environmental and other concerns, is enormous. Constructive, bilateral engagement on trade and investment-related issues through tools such as the Trade and Investment Framework, will support needed reforms and cement our committed partnership.

If confirmed, I will pursue ongoing policies that promote increased investment, trade, and project development between our two countries.

Finally, if confirmed, I will expand U.S.-sponsored exchange and English language programs to build stronger bilateral ties, and thus counter the negative extremist influences found all too often in regional media.

Mr. Chairman, I've served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than 25 years, most recently as principal officer at the Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey—another vital ally of the United States undergoing dynamic transition in a volatile region.

Prior to that, I served in Washington as Country Director for Arabian Peninsula Affairs, and the lead up to the March 2003 engagement in Iraq.

My experience with the region includes overseas postings in Baghdad, Tunas, Damascus, Riyadh, and the United Arab Emirates, and I look forward to continuing to serve the American people in Kuwait.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will work with persistence, with enthusiasm, and with stamina to protect American citizens and promote U.S. interests, while consolidating and augmenting the close ties between our leaders and our peoples.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I'm honored by this nomination and the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Jones follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEBORAH K. JONES TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF KUWAIT

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I welcome this opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. I am deeply honored by the confidence shown in me by President Bush and Secretary Rice in making this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with this committee, and others in Congress, to continue to advance the vital interests of the United States in Kuwait and in the region. I am joined today by my daughter, Ana, a sophomore at the Madeira School here in Virginia. My husband, Rick Olson, also a Foreign Service officer, is serving as Deputy Chief of Mission at USNATO, and our 12-year-old, Isabella, is happily serving with him there. I am so proud of them and grateful for their steadfastness and their encouragement.

Mr. Chairman, the State of Kuwait has been a reliable partner and friend in a turbulent and transitional region of utmost importance to United States' interests; because of this, the President designated Kuwait a major non-NATO ally in 2003. Since Kuwait's 1991 liberation from Saddam Hussein's brutal occupation, whose painful remnants remain visible to this day, United States military forces and our coalition partners have relied on Kuwait's material and logistical support for our policy priorities in Iraq, Iran, and the global war on terror. If confirmed, I will work to consolidate and expand that support into broader political, social, and economic arenas to build and sustain a stable and democratic Iraq at peace with its neighbors, and to maintain security throughout the region.

We share with the Government of Kuwait a common interest in combating the spread of extremist ideology and rooting out terrorist elements that threaten peace and security in the region. If confirmed, I will seek to build even stronger and more robust counterterrorism cooperation to include increased information sharing, intensified training efforts, and the careful evaluation of existing cooperative programs to ensure the best possible force protection for our troops in Kuwait, as well as our mission employees, family members, and the larger American community.

Kuwait continues to build positively on a proud, indigenous tradition of boisterous political discourse. In 2005, women were granted the right to vote; subsequently, nearly 60 of those eligible to do so participated in their June 2006 parliamentary and municipal elections. Also in 2006, the Government of Kuwait respected constitutionally mandated procedures in appointing its new leader, Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al Sabah. Since then, Kuwait has witnessed further democratic advancements, including increased press freedoms and a much needed redistricting law. If confirmed, I will endeavor to help Kuwait consolidate and expand those democratic gains, consistent with the President's Freedom Agenda, to include supporting the development of fledgling, grassroots women's organizations, civil society groups and other activists, and advancing the rights and protections of vulnerable populations living within Kuwait's borders.

In addition to deepening our security cooperation and advancing President Bush's Freedom Agenda, we must seek to create new paradigms of economic partnership, both within and beyond the energy sphere. The recent historic deal between DOW Chemical and the Kuwaiti Government, the largest of its kind in Kuwait's history, exemplifies the kind of creative initiatives that are possible. The potential for dynamic synergies between Kuwait and the United States, combining capital, technology, and expertise to advance global development compatible with current environmental concerns, is enormous. Constructive bilateral engagement on trade and investment-related issues, through tools such as the Trade and Investment Framework (TIFA), will help support needed reforms and cement our committed partnership. If confirmed, I will pursue ongoing policies that promote increased investment, trade, and project development between our two countries.

Finally, if confirmed, I will expand U.S.-sponsored exchange and English language programs and utilize Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) funds to reach a broad spectrum of young citizens and future leaders throughout Kuwaiti society. These programs ensure stronger bilateral ties and thus counter the negative extremist influences found all too often in regional media.

Mr. Chairman. I have served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than 25 years, most recently as principal officer at our Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey, another vital ally of the United States undergoing dynamic transition in a volatile region. Prior to that, I served in Washington as Country Director for Arabian Peninsula Affairs in the lead up to the March 2003 engagement in Iraq. My experience with the region includes four Washington assignments directly related to the Near East and overseas postings in Baghdad, Tunis, Damascus, Riyadh (as a dependent spouse) and the United Arab Emirates. I look forward to continuing to serve the American people in Kuwait.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will work with persistence, enthusiasm, and stamina to protect American citizens and promote U.S. interests, while consolidating and augmenting the close ties between our leaders and our peoples. Again, I am honored, Mr. Chairman, by this nomination and the opportunity to appear before you today. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you

Senator KERRY. Well, thank you very much, each of you, for good, solid statements.

But, you just mentioned, Ms. Jones, in your statement, working to deal with this issue of the radical challenge, and so forth. Can you each share with me, based on your experience in these countries and this region, and just watching what's going on, what you think the most advisable and important steps are for us to take that would have an impact, in your judgment—not just in the country you're going to serve in, but speak to that specifically—and also, this is a larger issue regionally, and if you could address your sense of how we could best contribute in our policies to facilitate that minimization of radicalization?

Ms. JONES. Obviously, we have a lot of programs that are funded right by the Middle East Partnership Initiative that involve exchanges and a lot more outreach. My sense, and my experience based in Turkey and elsewhere, is that we are perfectly capable of competing in the vast world of ideas, and similar to what happened prior, previously with the cold war, the United States can honestly debate in public fora, what the choices are.

I think some of the choices may not appear to some people to be as stark as they were during the cold war, in the sense, then, that we had clear—no freedom of religion and a broken economic system. Now the challenge is much more subtle. But my sense and my experience is that, when people participate in the free dialog that is in our society, within our own society—when they come and study in the United States, when they see us, here, and see the variety that is here, it assists them in putting into broader context and more accurate perspective—the freedoms that we enjoy, the excesses that they may observe coming—what they perceive to be excesses coming out of our society—and where that really fits in the broader scheme of human freedom and personal choice.

I think it's in large part an educational issue. And our being comfortable and open about speaking to all of the issues and not shying from it. Maybe that sounds simplistic, but that's what I've seen work in Turkey.

Senator KERRY. So, your biggest single thing, you think, is on the cultural exchange side?

Ms. JONES. I would go beyond that to even say, I think that whenever we bring a young person to the United States, or whenever they engage with us, they become a force multiplier, particularly in the age of blogging, when they can go back and say, "This is what I saw, this is what it really was."

I think right now, in fact, the best advertisement we have for our system is our elections. I know so many young people throughout the Middle East who are watching, fervently, what happens in the United States elections, watching the debates, and watching democracy in practice. And when they see that, that has a far greater impact on them than any kind of pamphlet we could ever issue. I think that's the advantage we have, actually, with the Internet right now, and with global communication.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Moriarty.

Ambassador MORIARTY. I'd like to endorse what Deborah has said. I would also point out, though, that the issue in South Asia is actually a little bit different from the issue in the gulf and points further west.

Basically, in South Asia, you traditionally have had relatively little support for the more extreme forms of Islam. So, when terrorism does come into places like Bangladesh or India, it's usually an imported ideology. And why does it come in? It comes in because of poverty, it comes in because of a lack of options. I've actually been told that in Bangladesh, the United States has about its highest reputation in any Muslim majority country in the world. Why is that so? Frankly, it's so because we have stayed engaged with Bangladesh since independence in 1971.

I look at other places where we come in, then come out, and our reputation is not as strong. So, I think it's important that we remain engaged—when I say remain engaged, I do heartily endorse the concept of as many exchanges as possible, but in the grindingly poor countries of South Asia and other impoverished parts of the Muslim world, that also has to have a very strong economic component.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Mr. Chairman, again, I would agree with my colleagues as well, but in addition, I think we need to also realize, and again, based on my experience in the last several years, even though the challenge of extremism is keen and very real to Americans, I think we also need to realize that the societies in the region have also been, in some ways, taken by surprise and shocked by the violence that has emerged from their societies.

And one of the most important parts of the response to extremism, I believe, is taking place in these countries themselves, through voices of moderation, moderate clerics, government leaders, political leaders—they're all speaking out and working together. I think it is our challenge to make sure that we have outreach to these opinion makers inside countries, to assure that they understand what the United States stands for, what our principles are, because they are the true—they have the true ability to get out into their own communities, and to affect the views of the youth of today, and the attitudes that they will shape, then.

Senator KERRY. Just following up—can aid policy, and cultural policy, exchange policy, overcome the hurdles of perceptions of our larger foreign policy? In other words, how an administration is perceived in a region because of larger decisions, like Iraq, or Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, things like that? Do you think you can fend through, notwithstanding, or do those other things have a seri-

ous impact on your ability to achieve your goals on a more implementation/practical level?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir, I think that the U.S. aid policies, our economic programs in countries, our cultural programs and exchanges are some of the tools that we have. There is also an ongoing need for continued speaking out, publicly and frequently to—as I said—to make clear what our values are, what the United States stands for, and often to explain our policies. We may not always find agreement with our policies overseas, but I think that our honest effort to explain, and to reach out, and to listen, to respond, does maintain the kinds of ties that we will need to eventually overcome the challenge of extremism throughout the region and the world.

Senator KERRY. What do you think, and with respect to the current relationship with Egypt—visiting Senators, visiting Secretaries of State, visiting Presidents—have had conversations about human rights, opening the democracy, accountability, et cetera. But last year, even, our own State Department's report was pretty tough on what's happening in Egypt.

You know, we are grateful for Egyptian support in a lot of respects. And, I think they know that, and I hope they know that. And they have, and can, play a very constructive role with respect to the peace process. So, are we the prisoners of those other needs in that you can't leverage anything? Or is it that we've made a more pragmatic decision here about what we can do?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir, I believe that our goals and objectives in Egypt, our strong strategic cooperation are not in conflict with our goal, and our encouragement for a democratic reform, and respect for human rights. The visits of Senators, of senior administration officials, the work of our diplomats in the field—keep these issues to the front. And I would say that other parts of the world have also brought these issues to Egyptian attention.

We have, as you know, a number of other efforts underway to work with civil society directly, to work with trying to build the rule of law and institutions of government that will help Egyptians form opinions about what good governance is. I don't believe that this is an issue, as I said, where our goals are in conflict, but I agree that it is a work of—that may take time, so that all Egyptian voices will eventually be able to be heard.

The government—the leaders in the government themselves have, over time, acknowledged and pointed to areas where they need reform to take place. That hasn't happened. I think it is our goal—I know the President has made clear, even on his last trip—that he would like to see the Egyptians take a more leading role in the region, to promote democratic reform and justice.

We believe it is, certainly, a capability, and we will continue to encourage that, as we can. But, I don't believe that there is a conflict in our goals here.

Senator KERRY. And, do you have a view with respect to the linking of aid and human rights progress?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Well, sir, as you know, the administration very strongly opposed the conditionality element of the security assistance, economic assistance package. And, on the belief that it

does, it will not help leverage or move Egypt toward specific changes that we have articulated for them.

Senator KERRY. The President and the Secretary, as I've said, have repeatedly urged the Egyptian Government to "show the way" toward democracy in the Middle East. But the most recent State Department human rights report called the record on human rights "poor." And there are many who are certain that Egypt has regressed on democratic reform. What would you say about that?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. I would say that the path toward democratic reform that many voices inside Egypt and many international observers, including our own observers—both from NGOs and from our embassy—have clearly pointed out that the government has not taken enough steps toward genuine, democratic, political reform. There are certain issues out there now that have been particularly noteworthy, and in the press the detention of Ayman Nour has been a particularly difficult action for us to understand, as to why he remains in detention, and it is our—I will certainly, if confirmed—continue to promote, and to urge that the Egyptians release him.

And there are other examples, as well, of what—where their actions have not matched what we had understood of their intent to be. If confirmed, I will continue to promote these issues, and we will continue to work directly with civil society, and other Egyptians who are really also seeking further reform within Egypt.

Senator KERRY. And what is your interpretation of the current state of threat of the Muslim Brotherhood?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Well, as you know, the Muslim Brotherhood, as an organization, is illegal in Egypt. And I don't think I have really good data as to what its ultimate strength is. But it is a potent force throughout the region, it has been attractive to a number of publics throughout the Middle East. It—although it did not run in elections because it could not—there are a number of independent candidates in the Egyptian parliament that most experts believe are, in fact, affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and they captured a good number of votes in the last parliamentary elections.

Senator KERRY. What's your attitude about the political banning with respect to them? I mean, obviously the experience—and I've heard this from President Mubarak, and we've all seen it—our pressure for an election in the West Bank, against President Abbas is—well, then Abu Mazan's pleas, and the Israeli pleas—resulted in the election of Hamas. And one of those things that people often talk about is, if you push that process too fast to a place you don't know, you better look out what you get as a result. Do you think there is that threat? That if you sort of open it up and the Muslim Brotherhood were legitimate, that you would in fact have a more radical outcome, and greater instability in Egypt?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir, I think that Egypt can open up its political system to greater political pluralism, it will be a question for Egyptians to be able to define that. But what we see now, is that there are many, many obstacles to the registration of new parties and their ability to act.

Of course, as I said, the Muslim Brotherhood—although illegal—there are many in Egypt that are drawn to its ideas, and I think

we believe that if the political process were opened up so that other political parties could emerge, Egyptians would be able then, to have their choice of possible solutions to some of the political challenges that they currently face.

Senator KERRY. Would you agree that there is some sensitivity in the Egyptian population about foreign interference, particularly American interference in their political system?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir, I can't answer specifically, because I have not really been able to test this in Egypt, but certainly from my experience in the region, I think it is a fairly standard sensitivity, of the appearance of any foreign power telling them what to do.

Senator KERRY. Is there the possibility that, as we promote political reform, we can also alienate the secular reformists and as well as frustrate the ruling elite?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Well, sir, I think if we couch our goals and objectives in terms that are consistent with international standards for political pluralism and political freedom, I think that we, at the end of the day, we will be able to defend our position, in that we will win more friends in Egypt.

Senator KERRY. Have you been given any specific instructions, with respect to enforcement on the Gaza border and the arms trafficking and tunnels?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Well, sir, as you know, I'm not yet confirmed, so I haven't. But my understanding of where the situation is—

Senator KERRY. Well, the process of prepping up for this and for everything—

Ambassador SCOBEEY [continuing]. Yes, yes. Yes, sir.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Have they—

Ambassador SCOBEEY. It's clearly a—has been even before the January 23rd breach—been a topic of a lot of concern, both to Egyptians, clearly to the Government and people of Israel and to others—it is a vulnerability. On the 23rd, the Egyptians were overwhelmed with the number of people pushing through, and an operation appears to have been coordinated by Hamas. The Egyptian Government was extremely sensitive to the possibility of civilian injuries, and were very, very careful to try to prevent violence from breaking out.

They have gradually pushed most people—encouraged most people—to get back into Gaza, and have tried to reseal the border. I think they are looking, talking—I think the good element here is that they are talking very closely, I understand, with the Israelis, with the Palestinian authority to try to find a way to improve the situation on the Rafah border. And as you know, with regard to the tunneling and smuggling problem that preexisted, the Egyptians have already, I think, submitted requests for some specialized technical equipment that will help them monitor the terrain, and try to mitigate the problems of these tunnels that have been there for 30 years.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Moriarty, what would you define as the principal challenges right now, with respect to Bangladesh? You mentioned the Muslim issue in your comments, also.

Ambassador MORIARTY. I look upon the three issues that I raised as intertwined. We have to address all of them, they have to be addressed together—one is democracy—

Senator KERRY. Development, the—

Ambassador MORIARTY [continuing]. The move back toward democracy, the other is development, increasing prosperity. The third, which sort of overlays both of the other two, is the desire to deny space to international terrorists.

Senator KERRY. How do you think we best do that?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, I think we have to—

Senator KERRY. With that kind of populace, with that kind of order, movement, et cetera?

Ambassador MORIARTY. In terms of denying space to the terrorists, I think we have to play on the already considerable suspicion of extreme Islam on the part of most of the Bangladeshi people. I think we do that by encouraging a return—as quickly as possible—to democracy. And I think we do that by encouraging steady development of the economy.

You remember that they were hit very hard by a cyclone in November—set back years of development progress down in the south. We are looking at a package to help with that, and I would hope that we will be bringing it to Congress in the coming weeks.

Senator KERRY. So, is it your judgment or the judgment of the administration, I suppose I should ask, that the military is resolved to withdraw from the political domain, and facilitate transition?

Ambassador MORIARTY. They continue to say so, sir. The chief advisor who, of course, is the chief civilian official, has repeated his commitment to this timetable of elections by the end of this year. The Chief of Army Staff has reiterated his determination to see this process move forward. He has consistently said he has no desire for political office, and he want to see the Army go back to the barracks by the end of this year.

Senator KERRY. Have we identified factions that are opposed to that action? That prefer to—

Ambassador MORIARTY. Within the Army? No, sir. In fact, I think that what happened was, after a few months of relative calm last year, there were riots at the universities. I think they looked at the—the military looked at the situation in Pakistan, and I think there was a decision reached at some point last year that, “Gee, we really do have to make this work. There is no alternative to marching back toward democracy.”

Senator KERRY. How would you assess the influence and relationship that we have with their military?

Ambassador MORIARTY. I think it is strong. We have had training programs for a long time. A lot of their senior officers have studied in U.S. courses. We do have a big question, a human rights question related to something called the “Rapid Action Battalions”—that is the elite group that was set up to fight terrorism, to fight crime within the country. Up to now, we don’t really have a formal relationship with them. We want to improve their human rights record as a precondition for any sort of improved engagement with them.

Senator KERRY. And how would you assess regional relationships with Bangladesh?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, again, I would rather let those kind of speak—

Senator KERRY. Has the political change, the military government altered that balance in any way? Our relationship?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, I think right now, Bangladesh's neighbors are willing to give the current government the benefit of the doubt and say, "Okay, you have a timetable, move on it." I don't think any of the neighbors would be comfortable if, as you suggested, there might be further military moves in the future. That would isolate the Bangladeshis.

Senator KERRY. And how has the political turmoil impacted the status of the Islamist radicals in the country at this time?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, you hear—oh, excuse me. I was going to say, you hear varying things on that issue. Some people assert that they are making progress because they have not had as many of their leaders arrested in the anticorruption campaign.

Others assert that there is no evidence of any groundswell of support for the Islamic parties. I would remind you, in the last election they gained something like 6 percent of the total vote.

Senator KERRY. You mentioned the cyclone, natural disaster, et cetera—this is an ongoing thing. We seem to always have a setback, whether it's a tidal wave, or you know, whatever. Are you aware of whether or not they are currently focused on taking steps, both in terms of their development policies and other policies, to deal with the potential of climate change having a profound impact on them?

Ambassador MORIARTY. They are extremely worried by climate change. Their fears are that Bangladesh, which is very, very low, would end up being one of the countries worst affected by climate change in the future.

Much of what we've been doing with the Bangladeshis, in terms of trying to improve their structure—infrastructure, to protect against cyclone, to protect against tsunami—does, of course, actually help out with respect to that, too.

They do need, they assert, a lot of help in improving the infrastructure down south, much of which was hit very hard by this latest cyclone.

Senator KERRY. When you say "a lot of help," what are you talking about?

Ambassador MORIARTY. They estimated that the economic damage and infrastructure damage was about \$2 billion that need to be repaired.

Senator KERRY. Have commitments been made with respect to that?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Yeah, there have been—we're still looking at exactly what we need to do. In fact, we have teams out in the field in Bangladesh right now, including from the military, looking at what sort of infrastructure projects are necessary.

Senator KERRY. And what about the—do you have an assessment from the administration, anticipation as you approach this—about the prospect for elections, i.e., that they will be held? That they will be accountable and open? What's your take on that at this point?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, we are encouraged by the steps that are being taken, to date. Basically this roadmap, just—in-

cluded the final goal, it laid out the steps that needed to be taken to get to that goal.

Probably the most important is coming up with a revamped voters list that is much more foolproof than what they've had in the past. They're doing that pretty well, and progress to date is encouraging.

So, I would say that we have seen nothing to indicate that they're going to back off or shy away. And we, of course, are out there. And I, of course, if I get confirmed, will go out there to drive home the message that they need to make progress, and they need to hold the election on time.

Senator KERRY. Your confidence level about that?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Reasonably high. I mean, not having set foot in the country yet, but again, everything we've seen indicates that they are headed in the right direction.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Ms. Jones, Kuwait is an interesting and complicated place. I remember, I was there with Strom Thurmond and Pat Moynihan, literally, the day the al-Sabah family returned to their palace after the invasion had been repelled. And I remember having a long conversation with them about their gratitude, and our interests and mutual interests and so forth.

We've had some hiccups in between then and now, that sort of raise some questions about that. On the other hand, they are a very important staging area for us, and we couldn't be doing a lot of things we're doing, or pose some of the strategic positioning that we do without their supports. How would you characterize that relationship right now? Where do you see those strategic interests? And how would you describe the relationship?

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I would say that Kuwait's relationship with the United States remains the bedrock of its security strategy. And the mutual benefits of that relationship remain pretty clear and compelling, as evidenced by the amount, the support—both material and logistical—that Kuwait provides for us, as well, which is something to the tune of a billion dollars a year.

And that doesn't necessarily include the fuel arrangements we have, and other things. The generous support they've given—of course, in their interest, as well.

But because Kuwait sits at this nexus of very critical—in a very critical area, but of a unique set of political and geo-political circumstances, I think that relationship is going to continue, I have no doubt of that. And in that sense, there's an advantage for us.

It's also a small and wealthy and relatively agile society in some respects. It's a young society. As you've commented earlier, Mr. Chairman, the—as with most of these populations, more than 60 percent of the society is under the age of 30, more than 40 percent is under the age of 15, in fact, I believe, in Kuwait.

They do have an active and vociferous, sometimes, parliament, and they do deal with other dynamics internally that some of these other countries do not deal with in the region, which can, at times, make them appear to be less forthcoming.

You mentioned Annapolis, for example. The fact is that as their foreign minister later explained, Kuwait is not a member of the Arab Peace Initiative Committee that did attend Annapolis and did

represent a number of countries that were not part of that committee. But they had already agreed, in advance, to follow the lead of the committee in providing support, and they all subsequently pledged \$300 million in assistance to the Palestinians.

I think the issue with Kuwait on the three—on the areas of importance for us, for example, with Iraq, sustaining their support, but—and expanding that support into commercial investment, and other areas that will solidify and stabilize Iraq's ability to function as an independent and a good neighbor—good, stable, democratic neighbor. Obviously, Kuwait has historical concerns about Iraq, which are somewhat justified in many people's minds there.

I would say that the same goes with the peace process—there have been a number of commitments that we need to work with them to follow up on, in terms of their support for the Palestinians, for the Palestinian authority.

Frankly, their record in terms of compliance is not quite as good as a number of our other Gulf friends has been—beyond the initial commitment. Moving back to Iraq, I think you had—someone had commented on that earlier—the level of support, what—Kuwait has made a number of commitments for project assistance, and I think part of the question there is waiting for Iraqis to direct—to decide themselves, the Government of Iraq—which are the projects that merit the assistance. And my understanding was that this month, someone was coming from the Ministry in Iraq to talk to the Kuwaitis about specific assistance.

There's no question that we need to work, and if confirmed, these will be areas that I will press on, to push for that support, and to be forthcoming with it.

On the freedom agenda—and this is, again, where Kuwait has a unique environment, it's gone back and forth over the years—but in fact the march has been fairly steadily forward in terms of women's rights and other issues—there's a large problem that remains with the treatment of domestic workers in Kuwait.

This is an area of concern for us. Recently, they did open a shelter, for example, for domestics. But more needs to be done to ensure that, again, those vulnerable populations are protected within Kuwait, and that's one of, if confirmed, that one of the areas that I will work with them on.

Because as they—because they know it's the right thing to do, too. As Kuwait moves forward and continues to progress as a full player in the modern world, with international standards, they know that's the right thing to do.

Senator KERRY. Do you have any sense of whether or not rivalries within the al-Sabah family for succession may or may not complicate that relationship that you've described? The strategic relationship we have?

Ms. JONES. Well, I—obviously I'm not in a position right now, Mr. Chairman, to comment on a lot of those. However, I would only note that in the transition, I mean, as the current emir was selected, they followed their constitutional processes and I think that was a very encouraging thing.

Again, and I don't mean to be Pollyannaish, but I think with increased transparency, and with the transparency that comes with their young population not only observing what happens here and,

amongst their own society and their communication with each other—they do, I think, feel and understand that they have an obligation to play according to established rules, and they do have a constitution, and they have followed that.

Senator KERRY. To what extent are there, is there evidence of Kuwait citizens and/or organizations who finance terrorist activities?

Ms. JONES. This is, I think, the challenge of tracking and countering the flow of terror financing, is a huge challenge, one that I've dealt with quite a bit in previous assignments. And it certainly remains an item of concern in Kuwait. It's a place where a lot of cash does flow in and out of the country, and obviously, therefore, it's a place that people who want to exploit these avenues will seek to exploit, given its location.

The Kuwaitis have taken a number of steps over the past several years to increase the monitoring and tracking of money, primarily that's been given through charitable organizations, which is hard to track. They have put in place with their central bank and other things, systems for tracking. Obviously, more can be done, and that's certainly an area where we seek to work more intensely with them to improve the mechanisms, not only for the flow of the money itself, but for surveillance, et cetera, of individuals who might be involved with that.

Senator KERRY. Are you aware of—how would you describe al-Qaeda influence, and/or presence in Kuwait?

Ms. JONES. I am aware that are some who are very concerned about the growing influence and presence of al-Qaeda in Kuwait, perhaps in the sense of the Whack-A-Mole effect. As the Saudis have clamped down, and al-Qaeda looks for more fertile grounds where they might feel that they aren't under the same level of observation or monitoring.

The Kuwaitis feel—share this concern with us, deeply—and it is a small society, which gives them a certain advantage in the sense that they can monitor. Obviously, there's more to be done on that side, as well, but it's probably something that's best discussed in another venue.

Senator KERRY. What about infiltrators from Iraq and/or Iran, and Iran's regional policies? How do those impact Kuwait?

Ms. JONES. Well, obviously, on the Iraq side, of course, Kuwait is deeply concerned about flows back and forth over the border. And I think that's one of the reasons that they've been so receptive to having us there as a presence, and would hope to have us there for a time to come.

With respect to Iran, it's obviously—I would have to, honestly, Mr. Chairman, look more in terms of infiltration. I'm not aware that that is a big problem, per se, infiltration from Iran.

I do know that the Kuwaitis have a regular dialog with Iran. The Foreign Minister was there, recently. They have assured us that the purpose of this dialog is to convey our concerns, and to convey their own concerns to Iran about Iranian activities in the region.

Senator KERRY. So, what do you understand to be the like strategic interests here, between Kuwait and us? And are there different strategic interests that conflict with that?

Ms. JONES. Quite honestly, I don't see that we vary. Perhaps I'm lucky in this sense, but I don't see that we have great—that there's a great deal of light between our strategic interests, and Kuwait's, frankly.

I think we want the same things—we don't want a weaponized, an Iran that has nuclear weapons. We don't want an Iraq that is unstable, and a playing field for al-Qaeda. We don't want al-Qaeda active in the region, and extremism. We want development, we want a peace in the Middle East. I think Kuwait has been extremely supportive of the Arab Peace Plan, certainly, and others in support for the Palestinian Authority, as well as—I am, I think at the right time there will be—I don't think there will be problems in coming to full peace with Israel—although I'm probably stepping out of my role here, I'm speculating, obviously, which I shouldn't do—but I don't see any impediment to that. They are as concerned as we are about instability in the region.

And I think, at the same time, they have undertaken, on their own, not only in response to pressure from us, but their own society is undergoing important democratic transition and changes and development, and they have the luxury of being able to afford a lot of that, as well.

So, I think that we're actually, pretty much in step with each other, strategically.

Senator KERRY. The arms sales that we currently have on the table with respect to the region—how do you see that affecting that relationship?

Ms. JONES. Again, with Kuwait, it's largely—I think it's about a \$1.4 billion package, that it's mostly kits to upgrade with missile defense system, it's the PAC-3. And again, I think that Kuwaitis would agree with us, and the famous American poet, that “good defenses make good neighbors.” Especially in that part of the world.

Senator KERRY. So, coming back to, again, all three of you—is there any—and two of you have now served as ambassadors, and you've been in the region a considerable amount of time. Is there anything that you would say to us, in the Congress, that we ought to be doing on this committee, or in the Congress as a whole, more effectively, in order to facilitate what you have to try to achieve out there?

Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir, I think the continuing interest and oversight of our mission, our roles out there, is continuing—is a valid, very great interest and important to us. I welcome visits from you, from your colleagues in the Senate and the House, to get out and to see for yourselves, and talk to the leadership there. Obviously, the administration has put forward requests for assistance packages, certainly, for Egypt that we would want to work with the Senate and Congress on, in terms of assuring that—answering questions to try to get these approvals needed for this, because we believe these to be very, very important elements of advancing our interests in Egypt.

Senator KERRY. Yes, sir.

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, unfortunately, Ambassador Scobey stole almost all my thunder.

Senator KERRY. That's okay, we're happy to have nonanswers here. [Laughter.]

Ambassador MORIARTY. But I would also stress that as a country goes through transition, as Bangladesh is going to be going through transition, I think it's important that we have as many codels and staffdels out as possible. Not just to inform the Congress of what's going on out there, but more importantly, to let the Bangladeshis hear that there is a united message here—that we do support development, that we do oppose the spread of terrorism, and that we do want to see that democratic transition completed by the end of the year.

Another item I raised is, I think you will be getting a Cyclone Sidr package coming up in the coming weeks and months, and I hope that the Congress will look at that seriously and will be as supportive as possible.

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I think that the Kuwaitis have been gratified that, increasingly, Congressional delegations who usually have used Kuwait just as a stopping point to refuel or change planes, en route either to Iraq or Afghanistan, have actually taken the time to stop in Kuwait and meet with the leaders there and hear some of their concerns. I think the most important thing we can do with Kuwait is to reassure them again and again that we'll be there, and that we are there, and we intend to be there for the long run.

Senator KERRY. Do you foresee any logistical issue with respect to the potential of increased force presence there for over-the-horizon purposes?

Ms. JONES. I think the Kuwaitis have shown that they're ready to accommodate us as we need, in fact.

Senator KERRY. Do any of you have any potential conflict of interest that might arise in the conduct of your responsibilities in each of your posts?

Ambassador SCOBEEY.

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir, I've been advised by the legal office in State that I will have to divest myself of a few investments, if confirmed, and I'm prepared to do that.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Moriarty.

Ambassador MORIARTY. No, not that I'm aware of.

Senator KERRY. Ms. Jones.

Ms. JONES. No. I was required to recuse myself from activity in my family's business in the State of Arizona—don't ask me why because we have careful lawyers at State—but other than that, I have no other issues.

Senator KERRY. And with respect to recusal, either of you, otherwise, is there any issue from which you'd have to recuse yourself?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. No, sir.

Senator KERRY. None? Okay.

Well, I appreciate your testimonies today. We're going to truly want to try to get you out there as fast as possible, obviously. And I'm confident that we'll move expeditiously here in the Senate.

And again, I repeat, and particularly in the case of the two of you, Ambassador Moriarty and Ms. Jones, we're—you know, we hate for you to have given up your position, and respect the deci-

sion that you've made, and appreciate your mutual affection for the Foreign Service, and for your service to the country.

And we appreciate all of you in this willingness to do it. It is not the glamorous, glorious job that once many people thought an ambassadorship was. It's hard work, and in some cases hardship, and sometimes dangerous. And so, we have enormous gratitude to all of you, and to your families, for your willingness to undertake this.

And, we look forward to getting you confirmed, and get out there and get on the job.

One last question, just quickly—you got any idea whether we're ever going to have an ambassador back in Syria again?

Ambassador SCOBEEY. Sir? Somehow I thought you might ask that.

As you saw, Syria, it's a fascinating country with a wonderful feeling, and wonderful people who deserve good governance and prospects for their future, but I've had to, sadly, conclude that the choices the Government of Syria has made over the past 2 years since I've left have not increased confidence that an ambassador is going there very soon.

Senator KERRY. Well, this hearing is not about Syria, it's another topic, but I appreciate your telling us that, and I thank you all very, very much for being here.

Good luck, Godspeed, thank you.

[Whereupon, at 2:12 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL K. INOUE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII

Today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will consider the nomination of James Moriarty to serve as the United States Ambassador to Bangladesh. I am pleased and honored to express my strong support for his nomination.

Ambassador Moriarty has had a long and distinguished record of public service beginning in 1975, immediately after graduating from Dartmouth College, when he joined the Foreign Service as a political officer. His many assignments have included posts at the U.S. Embassies in Morocco, Swaziland, and Pakistan, as well as tours in Beijing and Taipei. In addition, he speaks Chinese, Nepali, Urdu, French, and is learning Bangla. His various posts have earned him numerous awards for his vital role in shaping U.S. foreign policy. Furthermore, these recognitions are a reflection of his command and knowledge of the issues that affect Asia, and his effectiveness as a diplomat of the United States.

Most recently, Ambassador Moriarty served as the United States Ambassador to Nepal from 2004 to 2007, where he has been dedicated to end the Maoist insurgency, and to establish peace and democracy. In this capacity, Ambassador Moriarty has demonstrated his understanding of the complex issues of establishing a prosperous, democratic nation.

Ambassador Moriarty's experience demonstrates an enduring commitment to advocating American foreign policy and interests, and I am certain that his record of public service has well qualified him to take on the responsibilities of serving as the United States Ambassador to Bangladesh.

On a more personal note, I have had the pleasure of knowing Ambassador Moriarty for many years. He comes from a family dedicated to public service. His father-in-law, David M. Peters, served as my executive assistant and for 14 years, and his wife, Lauren Moriarty—a native Hawaiian—is a former U.S. Ambassador and career Foreign Service officer.

I am confident Ambassador Moriarty is well aware of the enormous responsibilities that await him, if confirmed, and I have no doubt that he will fulfill those responsibilities with great distinction. I respectfully urge my colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to favorably support Ambassador Moriarty's nomination.

RESPONSES OF HON. MARGARET SCOBAY TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What is your assessment of the state of political reform and human rights in Egypt? What are the most important steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in Egypt? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. According to the latest country report on human rights, the Egyptian Government's respect for human rights is poor, and serious abuses continue in many areas. The government limits the democratic rights of citizens and has resisted political reform.

The administration has been committed to promoting democracy and human rights in Egypt. Senior United States Government officials have raised serious concerns about the path and pace of political reform, human rights, and democracy in Egypt at the highest levels and will continue to do so. If confirmed, this will be a high priority for me as ambassador to Egypt. I hope to establish a constructive dialog with the government and with civil society advocates as both are necessary to the expansion of political freedom and democratic pluralism, respect for human rights, and rule of law that we seek. We intend to sustain existing programs and create additional initiatives to assist in democratic development in Egypt.

Question. Despite personal pleas from President Bush and the cancellation of a trip to Egypt by Secretary Rice, opposition leader Ayman Nour remains in jail. What will you do to try to secure his release?

Answer. The administration remains troubled by the continued imprisonment of Ayman Nour. His conviction and imprisonment raises serious concerns about Egypt's commitment to democracy, freedom, and the rule of law and is inconsistent with the Egyptian Government's professed commitment to increased political openness and dialog within Egyptian society.

If confirmed, I will continue to press the highest levels of the Egyptian Government to release Mr. Nour under Egyptian law. His release would be an important step in human rights promotion in Egypt, and one that I will try to encourage.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Egypt in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. The conditions in Egypt for advancing human rights, including specific cases, present both opportunity and challenge. The citizens of Egypt, both within the government and outside, are searching for ways to address the country's future needs—economic, social, and political. They have not reached consensus. The challenge for any foreign person or entity is to find a balance between providing support and encouragement, while not interfering in domestic matters.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Embassy Cairo's Mission Performance Plan (MPP) explains in detail post's human rights objectives. If confirmed, I will use the MPP as a framework to ensure that the embassy's country team promotes our human rights and democracy agenda. All agencies and offices at the embassy are represented in the country team and it affords an opportunity to discuss how every office can contribute to our reform plan.

As a career Foreign Service officer, I understand the importance of recognizing and rewarding the work of outstanding officers. If confirmed, I will use the evaluation process and award system to recognize superior performance.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and Egypt, including those facing internal political pressure, who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to meet regularly with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the United States and Egypt who would welcome such meetings.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Egypt has provided \$3.1 million to the National Democratic Institute (NDI), \$2.8 million to the International Republican Institute (IRI) and \$3.9 million to International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to promote domestic election monitoring; provided training and technical assistance to Egyptian political parties; and worked with civil society organizations advocating for political and electoral reform. Since 2006,

USAID has provided \$800,000 to Freedom House to link Egyptian civil society advocates with counterparts throughout the Arab world through training, technical assistance, mentoring, professional fellowships, small grants and regional coalition building, and protection strategies. Also, the Middle East Partnership Initiative is providing \$2 million to the International Labor Organization to undertake efforts to strengthen independent labor unions. If confirmed, I will continue to support these programs.

In addition to support for United States' NGOs, USAID provides direct support for Egyptian NGO's that foster civil society. These programs have already produced a large cadre of several hundred election monitors. Through grants to Egyptian NGOs, we continue to support innovative Egyptian reform initiatives in political and electoral reform, increased political participation, civil society strengthening, civic education, human rights, women's rights, community development, independent media, and transparency.

Question. If confirmed, how would the United States embassy monitor Egypt's compliance with the Leahy Law prohibiting United States assistance to foreign military units if there is credible evidence of human rights violations? Will you affirm that any Egyptian security force unit that is credibly alleged to be engaged in gross human rights violations is ineligible to receive United States assistance or to train with United States forces?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that the United States embassy in Egypt continues to fully comply with the Leahy Law. Currently, all prospective training participants are rigorously vetted for suitability by the embassy, and appropriate offices at the State Department, including the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and the Political-Military Bureau review the names. If any Egyptian security force unit is credibly alleged to be engaged in gross human rights violations, it is ineligible to receive United States assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act or Arms Export Control Act.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. As a political officer in Jerusalem, Kuwait, and Iraq, as Deputy Chief of Mission in Yemen and Riyadh, and Chief of Mission in Syria, the advancement of human rights and democracy has been a significant priority in all of my assignments.

As Deputy Chief of Mission in Yemen, I found an environment open to United States assistance with democratization. I worked closely with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to prepare Yemen for the 1997 parliamentary elections. I encouraged women's groups to focus on voter registration and turnout—with higher numbers of women voting in 1997 than in 1993. I supported NDI's successful international election monitoring program and approached election commission officials to pave the way and facilitate their cooperation with IFES. In advance of the presidential elections in 1999, I made the rounds of political opposition parties to persuade them to field candidate for president.

In Syria, I did not find an environment open to United States support and assistance to democracy and human rights. Nonetheless, during my year there, I met with a wide range of civil society activists, including those calling for political reform. I pressed the government to allow Iraqi refugees in Damascus to participate in U.N.-sponsored out-of-country voting for the Iraqi parliament in January 2005. To no avail, I urged the government to release well-known political prisoners such as Riad Seif. I also advocated on behalf of the rights of Syrian Kurds.

In Saudi Arabia, most of our human rights efforts focused on religious freedom and women's rights. Both the Ambassador and I frequently raised with senior Saudi officials at the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs specific cases where the Saudi policy of allowing non-Muslims to practice their religion in private was not respected in practice. In addition to having Saudi authorities reaffirm this policy, in all cases that I recall, those Christians incarcerated as a result of their religious activity were ultimately released. Regarding women's rights, as the first woman Deputy Chief of Mission in Riyadh, I promoted a number of large-scale women's events that allowed Saudi women to network more broadly. I advocated frequently, with some success, on behalf of American women who could not depart the Kingdom without their husband's consent.

Progress in human rights and democratization in countries where I have served has been cumulative. I take satisfaction in noting that although it did not happen on my watch, Kuwaiti women now vote and serve in the cabinet, local elections have occurred in Saudi Arabia, and several candidates contested the last Yemeni presidential election.

RESPONSES OF DEBORAH K. JONES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career, to date, to promote human rights and democracy? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have held a variety of positions throughout my 25 year career, not all of them dealing with policy. I have striven, however, in every aspect of my foreign service work—whether processing Somali refugees in Ethiopia, ensuring fair, multi-ethnic hiring practices when reopening our embassy in Baghdad in 1984, ensuring fair and equal treatment to both Lebanese and Syrian visa applicants when we had no visa facilities in Beirut and the Lebanese had to come to Damascus, where I was consular chief, or overseeing a staff of over 16 different nationalities while Deputy Chief of Mission in Abu Dhabi and allowing them a voice in choosing between available programs or benefits—to adhere to bedrock American principles of fairness based on equal treatment under the law and participatory governance, when appropriate.

More specifically, and in more senior positions as Country Director for the Arabian Peninsula and principal officer at our Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey, I was a forceful advocate with foreign government officials for addressing serious human trafficking issues, such as the treatment of young South Asian “camel jockeys” in the GCC countries (specifically, the UAE and Qatar, where the practice has now been largely criminalized and/or abolished in favor of robots), as well as their treatment of foreign laborers in general; I have pressed foreign governments, particularly the Saudis, to adhere to international accords governing child custody and the right of the (often female) custodial parent to take back her abducted children, despite the constraints of Shari’a law, with significant success; and I have marched publicly in Turkey—following the assassination of Armenian activist, Hrant Dink, who was a personal acquaintance and good contact of the Consulate General—in support of tolerance and religious freedom. In addition I have spoken out openly and appeared frequently in public with His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, whose diminishing Greek Orthodox community has suffered under unfair property confiscations and other actions at the hands of the Government of Turkey. I hosted, *inter alia*, a major Alliance of Civilizations gathering at the official residence as well as mixed gatherings of various political and religious groups who had previously avoided interaction; when I departed Istanbul, it was written in the press that I had been a very positive force for tolerance and change in a society undergoing a difficult transition from its secularist, Kemalist roots to a more democratic, albeit Islam-oriented political reality.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Kuwait? Will you commit to make legal protections for the “bidun jinsiya”—the stateless people of Kuwait—and foreign domestic laborers a priority? What are the most important steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in Kuwait? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Kuwait include strengthening democracy, increasing protections to combat trafficking in persons, assisting stateless individuals, and supporting civil society and women’s empowerment. The United States Embassy in Kuwait continues to encourage democratic reform and development through exchange and visitor programs in addition to United States Government-funded democratic reform programming. MEPI currently funds programs aimed at improving the professionalism of Kuwaiti journalists, empowering student activists, increasing women’s involvement in the political system, and training political and civil society groups.

If confirmed, I will continue United States efforts to encourage sustained Kuwaiti commitment to improve the rights of victims of trafficking and to clarify the status of stateless individuals while working to improve their fundamental rights. The Government of Kuwait has taken some steps to address the needs of vulnerable population within its borders. In September 2007, the Kuwaiti Government opened a shelter for victims of trafficking in persons and in late 2007 the government announced plans to study the legal issues surrounding the bidun jinsiya in an effort to create lasting solutions to their grievances. Unlike in previous years, the MOI issued a limited number of passports to Bidoon that they were allowed to keep. Recently, the Government of Kuwait announced plans to issue a list of bidoon who will receive Kuwaiti citizenship. We eagerly await the publication of this list and additional protections for the bidoon. These are noteworthy efforts; however, much more needs to be done to support the needs of both victims of trafficking and Kuwait’s

stateless population, and if confirmed I will continue to raise these issues with appropriate Kuwaiti interlocutors.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Kuwait in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. If confirmed, I will endeavor to help Kuwait consolidate and expand those democratic gains to include supporting the development of fledgling, grass-roots women's organizations, civil society groups and other activists, and advancing the rights and protections of vulnerable populations living within Kuwait's borders. Kuwait continues to serve as a regional leader on political reform and has developed somewhat accountable democratic institutions, as illustrated by its robust Parliament. Kuwait has enjoyed a number of recent democratic successes including the successful transition of government following the January 2006 death of Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al Sabah, the enfranchisement and participation of women in the political process, and the expansion of media and press outlets. Nonetheless, further reform is critical for Kuwait's long-term stability, and Kuwaiti progress on democratic reform and human rights will serve as a powerful example to the gulf region. Kuwaitis themselves must be encouraged to drive this process toward democratic development, and campaigning for increased participation by women, civil society and the rights of Kuwait's vulnerable populations will remain one of my most challenging obstacles. If confirmed, I will look for outlets to continue United States partnership with Kuwaitis to expand and solidify Kuwait's democratic institutions. Critical human rights issues, including the exploitation of expatriate workers, will continue to be a focus of embassy efforts under my leadership and guidance.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Kuwait is a positive model of United States transformational diplomacy efforts in the gulf. If confirmed, I will work to solidify the groundwork on democratic reform and human rights laid by my predecessors, and I will work to promote United States human rights goals and objectives as an integral part of Embassy Kuwait's activities.

A key element of these efforts will include the use of MEPI and public diplomacy programs and exchanges to energize Kuwaiti citizens toward proactive engagement on critical human rights issues. Embassy Kuwait enjoys a number of robust and effective programming options at its disposal. Examples of current MEPI programming options include the following:

- The Women's Advocacy and Political Participation program launched by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) to support Kuwaiti women's organizations and help them to work as a coalition and increase their political participation.
- The Gulf States Civil Society Organization Law Reform Initiative (ICNL) works with regional and international experts to examine the role of civil society in democratic societies, and the legal framework necessary to enable and protect it. A regional workshop examines samples of existing and draft laws governing civil society from the region, Europe, and the United States, and common components of effective legislative frameworks.

These two programs are examples of the broad range of programming tools available for incubating and developing democratic reform and human rights objectives in Kuwait. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Congress, the Government of Kuwait, as well as international and domestic civil society organizations to support reform efforts in Kuwait.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Kuwait who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If confirmed as Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy Kuwait, I will endeavor to strengthen support for Kuwait democratic institutions as well as encourage further progress on human rights issues. I will work hard to encourage the Government of Kuwait to ease restrictions on nongovernmental organizations and enhance opportunities for the international community to engage with local human rights organizations.

The use of United States-funded programs, while an important tool, must be partnered with regular exchange and dialog with Kuwaiti leaders and activists in order to promote positive change and reform in support of democratic reform and the development of civil society in Kuwait.