

**NOMINATIONS OF THE 112TH
CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION**

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

—
FEBRUARY 7 THROUGH NOVEMBER 28, 2012
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
112TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

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**NOMINATIONS OF SCOTT DELISI, MICHAEL
RAYNOR, AND MAKILA JAMES**

THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2012

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

Hon. Scott DeLisi, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador to the Republic
of Uganda
Michael Raynor, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of
Benin
Makila James, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the
Kingdom of Swaziland

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., in room
SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher A.
Coons, presiding.

Present: Senators Coons, Udall, and Isakson.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS,
U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE**

Senator COONS. I am pleased to chair this hearing of the Senate
Foreign Relations Subcommittee for Africa, considering nominees
to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda, the Republic of
Benin, and Kingdom of Swaziland.

As always, I welcome my good friend and ranking member, Sen-
ator Isakson, hopefully as well as some other members of the For-
eign Relations Committee who may join us.

I would like to welcome today our distinguished nominees,
Ambassador Scott DeLisi, the nominee for Uganda; Makila James,
the nominee for Swaziland; and Michael Raynor, the nominee for
Benin. I apologize that ongoing votes and deliberations of the floor
have delayed our start by a few moments. I am grateful for your
patience.

These three nominees bring to the table today a vast array of
professional experience, and I look forward to hearing your vision
for advancing United States interests, values, and policy concerns
in Africa. We will speak about three important countries in three
very different regions of Africa.

Uganda, a country I visited 25 years ago, but have not had the
joy yet of returning to. It is a valued strategic partner of the
United States. Uganda is playing a critical role in regional efforts
targeting Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army in close

coordination with recently deployed U.S. military advisers in Central Africa. Uganda is also a leading contributor to the AMISOM peacekeeping mission in Somalia and has shown a longstanding commitment to countering al-Shabaab and other destabilizing forces in the Horn.

The U.S. Ambassador to Uganda will have the challenging job of continuing that strategic partnership, while urging Uganda to also improve systems of governance and adopt democratic reforms. President Museveni has ruled for 26 years, and government security forces have at times taken a heavy-handed approach toward political opponents. Also, in my view, a deeply troubling bill imposing harsh criminal penalties for homosexuality that is currently making its way to the Ugandan Parliament, and has been a source of some tension between our governments.

Last, new discoveries of oil promise to bring new revenue and economic opportunities to Uganda, but also increase the importance and urgency of insuring transparency and combating corruption.

Swaziland, a tiny country on the border of South Africa, has a long record of stability, and is a top exporter of textiles to the United States under AGOA. Its constitutional monarchy has created tension between the dominant royal family and pro-democracy opposition groups who want the right to form political parties and participate more directly in governance.

Swaziland has the highest HIV/AIDS infection rate in the world with more than a quarter of adults suffering from this infection. Challenges for the new Ambassador will include working with the government to encourage political freedom and democratic reform while continuing our effective health sector funding and partnership.

Last, Benin, a country that Senator Isakson and I had an opportunity to visit together last year, has made important progress on governance, and has had two decades of peaceful and democratic transitions. With vital assistance from the Millennium Challenge Corporation, Benin has upgraded and rehabilitated its port, and it remains an important producer of cotton.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the important trade between the Port of Wilmington in my home State and the Port of Cotonou, making Benin one of the biggest international trading partners for the State of Delaware.

Benin has the potential to be an even more diversified and important trading partner with the United States, and I hope the new Ambassador will work with President Yayi and his government to increase transparency, combat corruption, and improve the ease of doing business.

All three nominees before us have had long, distinguished careers with the State Department and bring a wealth of experience to these positions. Ambassador DeLisi has 30 years of Foreign Service experience, is currently the Ambassador to Nepal, previously served as Ambassador to Eritrea, and deputy chief of mission to Botswana.

Ms. Mikala James is also a Senior Foreign Service officer currently serving as Office Director for Caribbean Affairs, having previously served as Deputy Director in the Office of Southern African

Affairs, and as the principal officer at the consulate general in Juba.

Last, Mr. Michael Raynor is currently serving as the Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs, where he oversees support of U.S. policy goals for the Bureau and its 53 overseas embassies, consulates, and offices. He has served primarily in Africa, including Zimbabwe, Namibia, Guinea, Djibouti, and Congo Brazzaville.

I look forward to hearing from them after first turning to Senator Isakson for some opening remarks.

Senator Isakson.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA**

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would ask unanimous consent that a prepared statement be put in the record.

Senator COONS. Without objection.

Senator ISAKSON. And I want to welcome all of you today to this hearing and do what I always do when people accept posts that are not necessarily considered the political plums of assignments around the world. And your sacrifice for your country is noted and appreciated. And we appreciate your willingness to serve very, very much.

I have had the occasion to have quite a relationship with the nation of Benin, which Mr. Raynor and I have discussed. The Ambassador preceding you, Mr. Knight, has done a phenomenal job, and I enjoyed visiting with him, along with Senator Coons.

President Yayi has done a remarkable job in terms of reform, and I have to congratulate and commend Minister of Justice Ms. Bedo, who is undertaking the prosecution or the hopeful prosecution of the perpetrators of the murder of the young Georgian by the name of Kate Puzey, who served in the Peace Corps and was brutally murdered in Benin for doing the right thing, I might add.

But I really appreciate the State Department's cooperation on this. Aaron Williams has been fantastic. Knight has been fantastic. And I am sure that will continue with Michael Raynor, and it is my hope that justice will ultimately be done.

I also congratulate Benin on just entering into their second Millennium Challenge contract with further expansion to Port Cotonou. That shows that they are working on corruption issues and other issues that MCC requires for improvement. And like Senator Coons, acknowledge they will continue to be a growing trading partner with the United States of America.

I have never had the privilege of going to Swaziland, but I have read the briefs, and I know it has got a number of challenges. I know its location is close to South Africa, and a part of the world I want to get to one day so I can add it to the list of African countries I visited. And I will be interested in seeing Ms. James' comment on what alarmed me, which was the high rate of AIDS infection in Swaziland, which was 25.9 percent of something we are obviously, because of PEPFAR and the initiative of President Bush and President Obama, interested in trying to make a contribution.

Mr. DeLisi, it is a pleasure to see you again. I honor you for accepting this appointment to Uganda. I look forward to going to

Uganda in the not too distant future. As you note in your prepared testimony, we have introduced advisors, military advisors, to help the Ugandan Government and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in terms of the issues with Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army. But that is—you are right in the garden spot of the Great Lakes Region of all of Africa. The friendship the United States has with Uganda has grown since the 1986 election, and we appreciate the improvements in democracy that have been made there. I look forward to hearing your comments, not only about our relationship, but also about any comments you have on Joseph Kony and the advisors we have deployed in that country.

So, on behalf of the people of Georgia that I represent, thank you for your willingness to serve the country, and I look forward to your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Senator Isakson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Thank you, Chairman Coons. I am pleased to join you in welcoming Ambassador Scott DeLisi, Mr. Michael Raynor, and Ms. Makila James to the committee. I appreciate this opportunity to discuss your nominations and discuss our bilateral relationships with Benin, Swaziland, and Uganda. All three countries present many opportunities and challenges.

Last June, Chairman Coons and I had the opportunity to visit Benin to engage Benin's Government on the ongoing investigation into the murder of a young Georgian named Kate Puzey who was killed while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in northern Benin. Finding justice for Kate and her family has been a priority of mine and I am thankful for the U.S. mission to Benin and the Government of Benin for their cooperative efforts and continued dedication to pursuing justice. The current U.S. Ambassador to Benin, James Knight, has been a great advocate for the United States, particularly for the Puzey family, and I have greatly appreciated his efforts during his term.

President Yayi's continuing reform efforts in Benin are helping to develop its economy and his collaborative efforts with fellow ECOWAS leaders have seen Benin emerge as a leader on the issues important to West Africa. In December 2011, Benin was declared eligible for a second compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation. This compact would allow Benin to continue the development of the Port of Cotonou which is crucial to economic growth for Benin.

While I have not had the chance to visit Swaziland or Uganda, I am well aware of some of the challenges facing the nominees if they are confirmed. Swaziland, with the world's highest HIV infection rate, has been the recipient of much U.S. assistance to turn the tide of the growth of that rate. As we consider U.S. commitments to global health, it is important to understand the strategy for implementation of U.S. global health programs in countries such as Swaziland. Swaziland has made great strides in increasing its ownership over U.S.-funded HIV/AIDS treatment programs, and the next Ambassador will be charged with encouraging the continuation of this positive trend.

President Museveni has been in power in Uganda since 1986 and has helped to bring stability and democracy to a country that had experienced years of civil war. However, concerns have been recently been growing about a deterioration in democratic rights and President Museveni's increasingly entrenched hold on the Presidency.

Located in the troubled Great Lakes Region, Uganda is crucial to regional security cooperation. There are currently 100 combat-equipped U.S. military advisors providing training to the Ugandan military in their quest to track down and capture Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army. I look forward to hearing Ambassador DeLisi's thoughts on how he plans to continue to engage the Government of Uganda on our shared interest of regional stability and security.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for calling this important hearing. I look forward to hearing the testimonies of the nominees.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

I now look forward to hearing from our nominees, starting with Ambassador DeLisi, followed by Ms. James, and finally Mr. Raynor.

Please start, if you would, by introducing your families or anyone else you would like to recognize that is here in support of you. And I would like to also start by thanking both you and your families and circle of friends and supporters for sustaining your long careers in service to the United States.

Ambassador.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SCOTT DELISI, OF MINNESOTA,
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

Ambassador DELISI. Thank you, Senator, and I am honored to introduce my wife, Leah, who has been a partner in diplomatic service to our Nation for decades, and probably a better diplomat than I am.

With that, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda. I am grateful to the President and the Secretary of State for their confidence and their support.

Uganda is a vital partner in a volatile region. As the major troop contributor to the African Union mission in Somalia, AMISOM, Uganda has made tremendous sacrifices to promote peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.

The Ugandan military has also led regional efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army. Although the LRA has not been active in Uganda since 2006, it continues to cast a wide shadow across Central Africa. The United States has supported Uganda's constructive role both in AMISOM and against the LRA. Most recently, we deployed a small number of U.S. military personnel to serve as advisors to Uganda's counter LRA forces and those of other regional partners.

Uganda has also contributed to the peace and development in South Sudan, Africa's newest nation and Uganda's neighbor to the north, by providing training and assistance to its civil service, judiciary, and military.

Uganda stands out not only for its current contributions to regional peace and security, but also for its own transition from a state in chaos to one of the region's most stable nations. When President Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986, after decades of violent internal strife in Uganda, he instituted political reforms and sound macroeconomic policies that created a more inclusive government and contributed to steady economic growth.

Against this backdrop, the United States has enjoyed a close bilateral partnership with Uganda for the past quarter century. We recognize, however, that we must continue to work with Uganda to address a number of ongoing challenges in terms of broad economic development and the nurturing of a democratic political culture.

On the development front, we have a robust set of programs. The President's Feed the Future initiative focuses on improving productivity and incomes in the agriculture sector on which 70 percent of Uganda's citizens rely for their livelihoods.

Another area of focus has been Northern Uganda where we provided \$102 million last year to help the region's people, including many former LRA abductees, rebuild their lives and communities.

The health sector is another challenge. Although HIV/AIDS prevalence rates have decreased from a high of 20 percent in the 1990s, they have stagnated at around 6 percent for the past decade. Malaria is another lethal threat in Uganda, causing an estimated 100,000 deaths per year.

There are also very significant challenges in the area of maternal and child health. Through the Global Health Initiative, the President's emergency plan for AIDS relief, the President's malaria initiative, we are working the Ugandan Government to improve the quality and accessibility of health services and to address Uganda's most pressing health concerns.

We recognize, however, that long-term success will require a significant and sustained commitment from the Ugandan Government. If confirmed, I will continue to reinforce this point and seek to build an even more effective partnership with the Ugandan Government, civil society, and faith-based groups in the areas of economic development and health.

We are also working to help Uganda strengthen its multiparty democracy and reinforce its respect for human rights. Although Uganda's electoral process last year was more transparent and peaceful than previous elections, it was carried out on an uneven playing field and fraught with irregularities. More can be done to improve and empower Uganda's governing institutions, and we will continue our efforts in that regard. Likewise, we continue to urge the Ugandan Government and civil society to respect not just political freedoms, but also the fundamental human rights of all individuals.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, the protection of U.S. citizens and U.S. business interests in Uganda will be one of my foremost concerns for my team and for me.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will seek to strengthen our partnership with Uganda as a force for regional peace and security. I will also work with the government and people of Uganda in pursuit of a healthier, more productive, and more prosperous society where protection of citizens' political and personal freedoms is a priority for all. Achieving these objectives will be critical to Uganda's future stability and economic growth, as well as its continued role as an important and constructive regional leader.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve our Nation and Uganda if confirmed, and welcome any questions that the committee may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador DeLisi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR SCOTT DELISI

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda. I am grateful to the President and Secretary of State for their confidence and support.

Uganda is a vital U.S. partner in a volatile region. As the major troop contributor to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Uganda has made tremendous sacrifices to promote peace and stability in the Horn of Africa. The Ugandan military has also led regional efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

Although the LRA has not been active in Uganda since 2006, it continues to cast a wide shadow across central Africa.

The United States has supported Uganda's constructive role both in AMISOM and against the LRA. Most recently, we deployed a small number of U.S. military personnel to serve as advisors to Uganda's counter-LRA forces and those of other regional partners. Uganda has also contributed to peace and development in South Sudan, Africa's newest nation and Uganda's neighbor to the north, by providing training and assistance to its civil service, judiciary, and military.

Uganda stands out not only for its current contributions to regional peace and security but also for its own transition from a state in chaos to one of the region's most stable nations. When President Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986 after decades of violent internal strife in Uganda, he instituted political reforms and sound macroeconomic policies that created a more inclusive government and contributed to steady economic growth. Against this backdrop, the United States has enjoyed a close bilateral partnership with Uganda for the past quarter century.

We recognize, however, that we must continue to work with Uganda to address a number of ongoing challenges in terms of broad economic development and the nurturing of a democratic political culture.

On the development front, we have a robust set of programs. The President's Feed the Future Initiative focuses on improving productivity and incomes in the agriculture sector, on which 70 percent of Uganda's citizens rely for their livelihoods. Another area of focus has been northern Uganda, where we provided \$102 million last year to help the region's people, including many former LRA abductees, rebuild their lives and communities.

The health sector is another challenge. Although HIV/AIDS prevalence rates have decreased from a high of 20 percent in the 1990s, they have stagnated at around 6 percent for the past decade. Malaria is another lethal threat in Uganda, causing an estimated 100,000 deaths per year. There are also very significant challenges in the area of maternal and child health. Through the Global Health Initiative, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and the President's Malaria Initiative, we are working with the Ugandan Government to improve the quality and accessibility of health services and to address Uganda's most pressing health concerns.

We recognize, however, that long-term success will require a significant and sustained commitment from the Ugandan Government. If confirmed, I will continue to reinforce this point and seek to build even more effective partnerships with the Ugandan Government, civil society, and faith-based groups in the areas of economic development and health.

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Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, the protection of U.S. citizens and U.S. business interests in Uganda will be one of the foremost concerns for my team and for me.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will seek to strengthen our partnership with Uganda as a force for regional peace and security. I will also work with the government and people of Uganda in pursuit of a healthier, more productive, and more prosperous society where protection of citizens' political and personal freedoms is a priority for all. Achieving these objectives will be critical to Uganda's future stability and economic growth, as well as its continued role as an important and constructive regional leader.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve our nation in Uganda if confirmed, and I welcome any questions the committee may have.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador DeLisi.
Ms. James.

STATEMENT OF MAKILA JAMES, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

Ms. JAMES. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great privilege and honor to appear before you today as President

Obama's nominee to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland.

I am extremely pleased to have my family here with me—my husband, Louis Welles; my son, Mandela; and several close friends. They have always provided me with unwavering love and support throughout my Foreign Service career, and I am most grateful to them.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the honorable members of this committee to advance U.S. interests in Swaziland. I am confident that based on my 24 years in the Foreign Service, I am prepared for the challenges of leading our efforts to strive for an HIV-free generation, promote democracy and good governance, support respect for human rights and the rule of law, and foster sustainable development in Swaziland.

Swaziland is an extraordinary country and a valued partner to the United States. As one of the few resident diplomatic missions in the Kingdom, we have a unique opportunity to engage directly and to influence the government on issues of shared strategic interest. We must take advantage of the opportunity to do so as Swaziland faces an uncertain future.

After decades of absolute monarchy, the government's initial efforts to expand political freedoms have slowed. Swazi citizens have limited ability to engage meaningfully in politics, and basic rights, such as freedom of assembly, speech, and press are restricted. A deeply traditional society that prides itself on stability, the Kingdom is beset by modern problems: fiscal shortfalls, a devastating HIV/AIDS rate, and the need for political change toward a more inclusive democratic system. Despite these serious challenges, I am confident that progress remains possible, and that we must work diligently to pursue our goals in Swaziland.

If confirmed, I will serve during a crucial moment in Swazi history. Under my guidance, the U.S. Embassy would continue to advance democracy in Swaziland by encouraging support for key government institutions, including Parliament and the judiciary. We will support civil society, labor unions, the media, and other institutions that hold the government accountable, in particular in the run up to the 2013 parliamentary elections, a possible turning point in Swaziland's future.

I would also work closely with the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland and civil society to enhance the status of women and children—a critical area of engagement to help address HIV/AIDS and uphold universal human rights. Like many Swazis, I, too, am convinced that there is no fundamental tradeoff between democracy and tradition, that Swazis can be both proud of their culture and proud of their freedom. Perhaps the greatest threat to Swaziland's future, however, lies in the health of its people. Swaziland has the most severe national HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis crisis in the world with a prevalence rate of 26 percent and a life expectancy of only 43 years.

The United States is helping Swaziland fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic by providing resources under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR. The PEPFAR budget for Swaziland has risen from roughly \$9 million in 2007 to \$33 million in 2011.

To stem the tide of HIV/AIDS and help improve aid effectiveness, the U.S. Government has signed a Partnership Framework Agreement with the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland that has contributed significantly to Swaziland's prevention of mother-to-child transmission and HIV/AIDS treatment programs, amongst some of the most effective in all of Africa.

The aim now is to strengthen public health and community systems to sustain the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic beyond the PEPFAR program lifespan. If confirmed, I will work to increase Swazi Government accountability and capacity to combat HIV/AIDS while promoting Swazi-led efforts to create an HIV-free generation.

The Government of Swaziland is also challenged by a fiscal crisis that has hampered its ability to operate effectively. If confirmed, I will continue our work with the Swazi Government to promote economic reforms, provide technical assistance, and encourage fiscal transparency and accountability. In addition, I will promote labor reform and provide other guidance for Swaziland to remain eligible for African Growth and Opportunity Act benefits, and I will advocate for U.S. businesses who are seeking to enter the Swazi market.

As a rotating chair of regional organizations, including the Southern African Development community and the African Union, Swaziland is important to United States interests as it wields significant influence despite its small size. It is critical to our regional strategic interests that we ensure that Swaziland remains stable.

Fortunately, the United States-Swazi bilateral relationship is strong. There is no greater evidence of our friendship than the vibrant Peace Corps program through which 66 American volunteers are currently engaged in community health, HIV/AIDS prevention programs, and youth development. Encouraged by the mutual respect our two nations share, and energized by the challenges that lie ahead, I look forward to serving as Ambassador to Swaziland if confirmed.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I will be happy to answer any questions you have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. James follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MAKILA JAMES

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great privilege and honor for me to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland. I am extremely pleased to have my family here with me—my husband, Louis Wells, and my son, Mandela. They have always provided me with their unwavering love and support throughout my Foreign Service career and I am most grateful to them.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the honorable members of this committee to advance U.S. interests in Swaziland. I am confident that based on my 24 years in the Foreign Service I am prepared for the challenges of leading our efforts to strive for an HIV-free generation, promote democracy and good governance, support respect for human rights and the rule of law, and foster sustainable development in Swaziland. I have spent the vast majority of my Foreign Service career working in or on Africa. I have served as Principal Officer in Juba, Southern Sudan; Political Officer in Harare, Zimbabwe; and Political/Economic Officer in Kaduna, Nigeria; as well as Desk Officer for Sierra Leone and The Gambia; International Relations Officer for Africa in the United Nations Security Council;

and a Member of the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Office responsible for Africa. I believe that my experiences in Zimbabwe, a country still in transition toward greater democratization, has especially prepared me to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Swaziland as it confronts similar challenges in expanding democracy. My overall experiences in each of these assignments has prepared me to serve in a difficult environment and afforded me a broad knowledge of the region and people.

In my current position as Director of Caribbean Affairs, I have led my staff in supporting U.S. policy in the 14 countries and several independent territories for which I am responsible, helping to strengthen democratic institutions, address major threats to citizen security, promote human rights, and encourage economic development. I have also served as Deputy Director and Acting Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs. These positions, as well as my service in Juba, have provided me with the important management skills which I would bring to an assignment as U.S. Ambassador to Swaziland.

Swaziland is an extraordinary country and valued partner of the United States. As one of the few resident diplomatic missions in the Kingdom, we have a unique opportunity to directly engage and influence the government on issues of shared strategic interest. We must take advantage of this opportunity as Swaziland faces an uncertain future. After decades of absolute monarchy, the government's initial efforts to expand political freedoms have slowed. Swazi citizens have limited ability to engage meaningfully in politics, and basic rights such as the freedom of assembly, speech, and press are restricted. A deeply traditional society that prides itself on stability, the Kingdom is beset by modern problems: fiscal shortfalls, a devastating HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the need for political change toward a more inclusive democratic system.

Despite these serious challenges, I am confident that progress remains possible and that we must work diligently to pursue our goals in Swaziland. If confirmed, I will serve as Ambassador during a crucial moment in Swazi history. Under my guidance, the U.S. Embassy would continue to advance democracy in Swaziland by encouraging support for key government institutions, including Parliament and the judiciary, which engender and uphold democratic values. We would also support civil society, labor unions, the media, and other institutions that hold the government accountable, in particular in the runup to the 2013 parliamentary elections, a possible turning point in Swaziland's future. I would also work closely with the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland and civil society to enhance the status of women and girls—critical areas of engagement to help address the HIV/AIDS epidemic, support poverty alleviation efforts, and uphold universal human rights. Like many Swazis, I, too, am convinced that there is no fundamental tradeoff between democracy and tradition, that Swazis can be both proud of their culture and proud of their freedom.

Perhaps the greatest threat to Swaziland's future, however, lies in the health of its people. Swaziland has the most severe national HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis crises in the world, with an HIV prevalence of 26 percent and a life expectancy of only 43 years. The United States is helping Swaziland fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic by providing resources under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR. PEPFAR's budget for Swaziland has risen from roughly \$9 million in 2007 to \$33 million in 2011. To stem the tide of HIV/AIDS and help improve aid effectiveness, the U.S. Government has signed a Partnership Framework Agreement with the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland, the second-ever agreement of its kind. This Partnership has contributed significantly to Swaziland's prevention of mother-to-child transmission and HIV treatment programs, among the most effective in all of sub-Saharan Africa. The aim now is to strengthen public health and community systems to sustain the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic beyond the PEPFAR program's lifespan. If confirmed, I will work to increase Swazi Government accountability and capacity to combat HIV/AIDS, while promoting Swazi-led efforts to create an HIV-free generation.

Compounding the challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the Government of Swaziland is challenged by a fiscal crisis that has hampered the government's ability to operate effectively. If confirmed, I will continue our work with the Swazi Government to promote economic reforms, provide technical assistance, and encourage fiscal transparency and accountability. In addition, I will promote labor reforms and provide other guidance for Swaziland to remain eligible for African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) benefits, and I will advocate for U.S. businesses seeking to enter the Swazi market. AGOA is a critically important program in Swaziland that is helping the country address its serious unemployment rate of 41 percent. Swaziland is a country that has successfully utilized AGOA and is one of the top African exporters of textile to the United States. AGOA employs approximately

15,000 Swazi workers in the textile sector, many of them women. I would encourage Swaziland to demonstrate the continued progress required for renewed AGOA eligibility to ensure its continued access to its trade preferences.

As a rotating chair of regional organizations, including the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the African Union, Swaziland is important to U.S. interests as it wields significant influence despite its small size. It is critical to our regional strategic interests that we ensure Swaziland is stable. Fortunately, the U.S.-Swaziland bilateral relationship is strong. There is no greater evidence of our friendship than the vibrant Peace Corps program, through which 66 American volunteers are currently engaged in community health/HIV prevention and youth development. As the impact of the Peace Corps Volunteers continues to gradually expand throughout 2012, I would focus on working with the in-country Peace Corps staff to ensure the effectiveness of this important program—the face of America throughout much of rural Swaziland—as well as the safety and welfare of each of the volunteers. Encouraged by the mutual respect our two nations share and energized by the challenges that lie ahead, I look forward to serving as U.S. Ambassador to Swaziland, if confirmed.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I will be happy to answer any questions you have.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. James.

Mr. Raynor.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL RAYNOR, OF MARYLAND,
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN**

Mr. RAYNOR. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today, and grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Benin.

I am happy to introduce my wife, Kate, my son, Bradley, and my daughter, Emma. They have all done America proud through many years overseas, and I could not be more grateful for their support.

I have focused on Africa during 20 of my 24 years in the Foreign Service, including 14 years at our Embassies in Congo, Djibouti, Guinea, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, and 6 years in Washington, most recently as the Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs. From this experience. From the service I have gained rich experiences upon which I will draw to support U.S. interests if confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Isakson, I greatly respect the interest you have taken in Benin. Your visit last June highlighted important U.S. Government programs, as well as your strong interest in achieving justice for Kate Puzey, a wonderful Peace Corps Volunteer who was tragically murdered just over 3 years ago. The impressive luncheon you hosted last July for President Yayi and three other West African Presidents further reflected your significant engagement in the region.

The United States and Benin have a strong relationship founded on common interests and objectives. Benin is a West African success story and a proponent of values we Americans hold dear. Since the early 1990s, Benin's embrace of democratic pluralism has resulted in multiple free and fair elections, including peaceful democratic transitions between political parties. And it continues to buttress its democratic institutions and procedures.

If confirmed, I will promote U.S. engagement in support of good governance, accountability, and capacity-building within the government and civil society.

Benin has a strong record on human rights. Religious tolerance and freedom of expression are hallmarks of Beninese society. Benin and the United States have collaborated to promote women's and children's rights and to counter violence against women. If confirmed, I will build upon efforts to protect Benin's most vulnerable populations. This commitment extends to investing in the health of the Beninese people to boost maternal and child health, keep Benin's HIV rate in check, and combat malaria and other diseases.

Benin and the United States share an interest in countering terrorism and promoting regional stability. Benin's region presents significant terrorist and maritime security concerns. Benin participates actively in U.S. international military education and training programs, and has contributed to United Nations' peacekeeping efforts in Africa and Haiti. If confirmed, I will support Benin's capacity to promote regional and global security.

Since embracing free market principles over 20 years ago, Benin has pursued economic reforms and diversification. Last October, Benin completed a \$307 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact that improved Benin's port and increased its citizens' access to entrepreneurial credit, land title, and legal remedies. Due to this success, and in light of Benin's commitment to good governance and economic development, Benin was deemed eligible to develop a proposal for a second MCC compact. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Government of Benin toward a second compact, both to enhance Benin's economic vitality and to promote U.S. commercial opportunities in Benin.

While Benin is indeed a success story, it faces challenges to sustaining and building upon its progress. Benin ranks low on many of development indicators, including measures of education, health, corruption, personal income, and business climate. The United States has a strong stake in helping Benin overcome these challenges, not only for the sake of the Beninese people, but because of the value that a democratic, responsible, and economically vibrant Benin brings to the United States efforts to promote these values more broadly.

When he met with President Obama in Washington last July, President Yayi reiterated his commitment to building upon Benin's strengths, addressing its vulnerabilities, and expanding its positive role on the world stage. If confirmed, I will work hard to enhance the vital role of the United States in these efforts.

Any discussion of United States interests in Benin must sadly include the terrible murder of Kate Puzey, a tragedy not only for her family and friends, but for all who stood to benefit from her positive influence on the world. Great good was brought from this tragedy through the enactment of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act last November, but legal justice is needed as well. The United States continues to assist Benin in investigating the crime. If confirmed, I will press efforts to achieve justice and resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to address you today. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and representing the interests of the American people in Benin. I am happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Raynor follows.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL RAYNOR

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today, and grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Benin.

I am happy that my wife, Kate, my son, Bradley, and my daughter, Emma, are able to join me today. They have all done America proud through many years overseas, and I couldn't be more grateful for their support.

I have focused on Africa during 20 of my 24 years in the Foreign Service, including 14 years at our Embassies in Congo, Djibouti, Guinea, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, and 6 years in Washington, most recently as the Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs. From this service I have gained rich experience upon which I will draw to support U.S. interests, if confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to address you today. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you in representing the interests of the American people in Benin. I am happy to answer any questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you to all three of our nominees today. I would like to open our first round of questions by just asking each of you in turn if you would, to broadly address what you see as the most critical policy objectives for the United States in your country of appointment, and, in particular, given our fairly difficult and limited budget environment in the coming decade, what you see as the means that you will use to focus our partnership, our assistance with these three countries to make sure that they are effective, and what you will be doing to promote trade and responsible economic development in partnership between the United States and your countries of appointment.

Ambassador DeLisi.

Ambassador DELISI. Thank you for the question, Senator. It is wide ranging.

Certainly in your introductory remarks, you touched on the key issues, I think, for us in Uganda. They certainly would be part of what I would address if confirmed. Strengthening and maintaining the strategic partnership that we have and the role that they have continued to play in support of bringing peace and stability to both the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region is tremendously important. We appreciate the sacrifices that Uganda has made, especially in Somalia. We want to keep that relationship vibrant.

But just because we have a strong security partnership does not mean that we cannot speak candidly and constructively to our partners about issues of concern, and that includes democracy and human rights. You have noted that there are challenges in that arena, and that is something that I think that we have to address.

And on that front, it is not always about resources. We have some money that is in our democracy and governance programs that is intended to address those concerns, but it is about leadership, and it is about visibility. And I think one of the things that an ambassador has to do is be the spokesperson, to be seen as visibly and in a very clear way demonstrating that we care about these issues. And that is something that I have tried to do in Katmandu. It is something that I would try to do as well in Kampala if I am confirmed.

Equally, as we seek to build strong partners in Africa, prosperous, stable societies, public health issues are critical. We have a robust budget there. We are not strained for resources. But I think it is imperative, given that it is a resource constrained world, that we look at the budget that we have and that we use it in the most effective way possible; that we review our programs, make sure they are directed toward the support of a comprehensive and strategic vision about what we are doing there.

The other thing that I would hope to be able to do in terms of addressing our resources and the constraints is to leverage other people's money. I have found it can be an effective tool in Nepal and many of the efforts that we launched. We have provided leadership, but we have not been able to use the resources from partners in the private sector, other diplomatic partners, to support the

issues of concern on which we have led, and I would hope we would be able to continue to do that.

In terms of building the economic relations, the trade relationships, right now we have not a very robust trade partnership with Uganda. I would like to see that change, but I know that is not going to be easy. It is about building infrastructure. It is about addressing some of the fundamentals within the Ugandan economy that have to be looked at first before they can be the kind of partner that we might want. And that is what we are trying to do. We are trying to look at issues of corruption. We are looking at issues related to energy. We are looking at ways that we can strengthen the agricultural sector, which is the heart of the economy, and that is where we are directing our Feed the Future resources.

We will continue to do all of that. And meanwhile, once I am on the ground, if confirmed, I will be looking to see what other opportunities there are for U.S. business, and we will pursue them as strongly as we can.

Thank you, sir.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador.

Ms. James.

Ms. JAMES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As you know, Swaziland does have a very difficult and challenging political environment, and so democracy and governance are very high on the agenda for me, in particular. It has been a challenge because this is an absolute monarchy. Political parties are effectively banned, and basic rights have been severely restricted. Nevertheless, there are some signs of positive developments which I would want to take advantage of and really work very hard to engage on.

Swaziland does have democratic institutions. The court system and Parliament are targets of opportunity that I think we would want to work very closely on. We try to build capacity there with the limited program funding that we do have.

I also think it is important that we engage heavily with civil society and with the government to keep a regular dialogue open and to underscore that these are priority issues for the United States Government. As Ambassador, I would be very visible, very vigilant, in following up on these kinds of conversations with all parties in the country.

We have very limited democracy and governance funds, and so it is going to require that we are smart, that we are efficient, and that we leverage all of our programs, because within a number of our programs, we have the opportunity to build good governance capacity.

Within the PEPFAR program, which is very focused on the Health Ministry and the Finance Ministry, we have an opportunity to work to build up systems to help address accountability and transparency issues. Similarly, with the AGOA eligibility requirements, we have an opportunity to engage with the government on a regular basis to encourage anticorruption efforts and political pluralism. So, we have vehicles there that we will use, even though we do not have dedicated, significant democracy, and governance funds.

With respect to promoting trade, I would note that Swaziland has actually benefited very much from the African Growth and Opportunity Act. They have exported extensively to the United States, and that is creating a more prosperous Swaziland. A key ingredient for American businessmen who want to operate in Swaziland is the need for a market. They need a purchasing market, and so to the extent that we are using AGOA to help build up Swaziland's own economy and its own income there, that is good for the U.S. economy as well.

There is also a very enabling business environment in Swaziland despite the issues we talked about on the political front. There is a very good business climate there. Senator Isakson, as you may know, Coca-Cola has the largest plant on the continent in Swaziland. They have been there for many years successfully. They are a good corporation which exercises social responsibility. They are a role model. And I would want to engage with them to think about how we could bring in more businesses there.

So, I think the enabling business environment and working with the government on labor issues, would support the kinds of conversations that I would want to have to encourage businessmen to look at Swaziland.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. James.

Mr. Raynor, if you would.

Mr. RAYNOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, on your question with regards to policy objectives, in a nutshell I would say that I would see, if confirmed, my objective in Benin to be essentially to solidify and build upon the gains that Benin has made, and then to look at the obstacles that it faces to further progress.

As you noted, Mr. Chairman, Benin has established quite a strong track record in terms of democracy and good governance, as well as human rights. Indeed, it also has established a good record with regards to economic structural reforms and sustained rates of economic growth. As such, it already serves as something of a role model within West Africa and beyond of a stable, democratic society.

I think one thing I would do if confirmed would be to stress in diplomacy and public diplomacy that these attributes are things that we, the United States, value very highly in Benin, and they essentially form the cornerstone of our very positive relations.

And from that basis, I would then engage with the Government of Benin to look at the obstacles to further progress and what we may be able to do with regards to formal aid and otherwise to help the country overcome them. These obstacles include the need for further progress in areas of health and education. Also, the business climate. And I think we would need to look at what we are doing with our formal aid, and we would have to make sure that evolves in response to gains made, in response to the Beninese own assessment of their priorities, in response to what other actors in the donor community and the international community are engaging on so that there is complementarity and a sort of a multiplier effect to our engagement.

Certainly growing Benin's economy, I think, is central to its interests in the future, and I would certainly look for ways to leverage and build upon the gains made through the MCC compact,

which, as you noted, Senator Isakson, markedly improved the Port. It both expanded and renovated it. It also addressed some of the issues related to the business climate in the country with regards to access to credit, access to judicial process.

So, I think those are gains that need to be solidified and built upon. The prospects of a second compact would also be a very encouraging prospect. And, more generally, I think we just need to look for ways to assist in Benin in diversifying its economy, both diversifying its agricultural sector and its broader economy.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Raynor.

Ambassador DeLisi, if I might, one last question this round, and then I will turn it over to Senator Isakson.

Ambassador DeLisi, have we been doing enough as a nation to support the pursuit of Joseph Kony and to be actively engaged in the efforts to end the Lord's Resistance Army? What more could we be doing? How can we sustain this effort? And what has the United States been doing to help the communities in Northern Uganda recover from the impact of the Lord's Resistance Army?

Ambassador DELISI. Thank you very much for the question, Senator, and I would like to thank you and your colleague, Senator Isakson, and others who passed the resolution yesterday addressing this issue. The sort of leadership that we have seen on the Hill, and I do not say this just because I am here before you today, but this is important. It sends a powerful message to support what the administration is trying to do in pursuit of Joseph Kony and his lieutenants.

And, yes, I think we are doing well. I am very pleased with what I have been able to learn in the few weeks that I have been reading. I think we have had a very active engagement and support of our African partners, because this is an African-driven initiative, and I think that that is a good thing.

But we have been active in support. We have provided over \$50 million in assistance over the past 4 years as we have pursued this. We have now deployed, as you know, special operations forces to support, again, our African partners to give them both the intelligence and operational coordination that is necessary to make this more effective.

We are looking to partner more effectively with the African Union, which is it sees now with this issue, and is launching their own initiative to press forward. And that is good. I think that will be especially important to us in terms of standing up the coordination center in South Sudan, giving us a standing headquarters that we can engage with, but also in encouraging the regional partners to work together as effectively as we need.

We can always try to do more, but we know that this is a daunting task. Kony and his cadre are in an area the size of the State of California in some of the most inhospitable terrain, some of the most dense jungle, without roads, without easy access, not easy to track. This is a long-term effort. But we believe that the governments of the region and that the Government of Uganda in terms of its role is committed to staying the course. I hope that we will be as well.

I know that there is pending legislation that was introduced in the House that would expand the Rewards for Justice Program. I

think that that would be a tool that would be very useful for us if we could apply the Rewards for Justice Program to Mr. Kony and his top commanders, again another step in the right direction.

We are looking as well to see what we can do in terms of assisting with one of the greatest challenges, and that is mobility, and that is something that we will be consulting with, and I will be talking to colleagues in the Africa command if I am confirmed, and we will look at these issues in coordination with colleagues in Washington.

Finally, turning to Northern Uganda, we provided just last year alone, as I noted in my open remarks, \$102 million. We have seen that close to 95 percent of the people who were displaced during the conflict, of those 2 million people, 95 percent have now returned to their homes, to their communities, or are in transitional centers. We are starting to move from humanitarian assistance to more traditional development mechanisms. We are working with vocational training, creating jobs, revitalizing agriculture.

And in that group that we are assisting are many former LRA abductees. There is over 12,000 who have come out in the past decade, little more than a decade. And many of them are being assisted by our programs in Northern Uganda. But we are doing that in partnership with the Government of Uganda, which has its own peace recovery and development program for the north, and they have been funding it, and they are continuing to do so as well.

And that is the important part that this is in partnership with Africa and with African nations. I think we are making good progress. We will continue to do so, I hope.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador DeLisi. We look forward to working with you and sustaining our effective engagement on this issue.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Raynor, I want to sincerely thank you for your prepared statement and your commitment to the Puzey family. I want to make sure that statement gets in the hands of Kate's mom and dad. They will appreciate the fact that you are carrying on where Ambassador Knight began. Senator Coons and I are interested in following that and appreciate any communication along the way you can give to us as the process of that investigation and hopefully ultimately a trail. But I want to thank you for your acknowledgment of the gravity of that situation and your personal commitment to it.

And I might also say, Ms. James, I want to thank you for mentioning Coca-Cola. Any time somebody mentions the biggest business for my home State, I am always grateful.

Also, Senator Coons and I visited in Ghana a Coca-Cola water project. I do not know if you are aware of what Coca-Cola is doing in Africa, but they are investing millions of dollars in clean water projects where they put in purification systems, teach the people how to maintain the system, charge them 7 cents a day for 5 gallons of water, which is the amount of money necessary to maintain and keep the plant in condition. And with clean water being the biggest issue, Africa really has, among many, many issues, I would encourage you to talk with Coca-Cola about that. But thank you for acknowledging them.

And thank you for acknowledging the AIDS problem and the AIDS infection rate. And I would only—I read the governmental organization of the Kingdom of Swaziland, and it is a kingdom. It is not a democracy. I mean, any time the King can dissolve the Parliament, you got one person in charge. And I wish you a lot of luck with the democracy efforts that you make.

But I would ask that you, for a second, comment on the fact. One thing Senator Coons and I are working on, every time we meet with African countries that are in the PEPFAR program, is to get the governments receiving—who are in PEPFAR to take over more of the human responsibility of testing and delivering the retrovirals. The more countries can help—and Tanzania, by the way, is doing a great job of that now. The more they can replace the manpower that we have been using through NGOs and through USAID and through CDC, the more we can put in retrovirals, but the less the total cost. So, I would appreciate your comment on that.

Ms. JAMES. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

First of all, I want to thank you back for your kind words. I look forward to engaging with Coca-Cola. I understand they are a good corporate partner in the country, and I am very much interested to see what more we can do with that partnership.

With respect to PEPFAR, PEPFAR is a very successful story in Swaziland. The program has been active for a while, and it is really a partnership with the government. Specifically, you mentioned antiretrovirals. I am really pleased to report that the Government of Swaziland has basically taken over the distribution of all the antiretrovirals. So, we are not in the business of doing that. We are in the business of capacity-building, working with community organizations, getting more local engagement in solutions for the orphans and vulnerable children. The numbers there are just astronomical, about 10 percent of the population.

We are really working at the grassroots level and the capacity-building level, and the government has taken ownership of the ARV programs. At least since 2010, they have been solely in the business of distributing the ARVs. And from all accounts, it is going well. It is a multifaceted program.

As I said, we also have Peace Corps engaged, and I think Peace Corps has been doing a great job for us in the rural areas, and they are working in partnership, one on one with local leaders in small community centers helping to build life skills and helping to deal with the needs of orphans and vulnerable children. And so, we really have a partnership out in the rural areas through Peace Corps as well as PEPFAR staff that is working in the major areas engaging with the Ministry of Health.

So, I thank you, and I look forward to furthering that.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I thank you.

Ambassador DeLisi, when you were referring to the north and humanitarian effort, I guess you were talking about Gulu or that region of Uganda, is that correct?

One of the big NGOs in Africa is based out of Atlanta. That is CARE, and their presence, as I understand it, is pretty complete in Northern Uganda. And I am glad to hear we are going from

humanitarian focus to vocational focus in trying to bring that area back, which was so devastated by Kony and his people.

On Joseph Kony, I say the same thing to you I said to Mr. Raynor regarding his passion on the Puzei case. I think it is very important that America's diplomats and America's politicians speak forcefully when we see a human tragedy like what is going on at the hands of Kony. I traveled to Rwanda and saw firsthand how the world looked the other way. And they paid no attention to a genocide that was taking place in that country.

And I think it is important that we as a country be a leader in focusing when we know there is an injustice. And I commend you on your passion for that. And when I go to Uganda later on, I intend to meet both with the military personnel as well as hopefully yourself or the person that you are succeeding, one way or another, to try and help in any way we can in the Congress of the United States to do that.

And one other question on the South Sudan. I have traveled to Sudan and Darfur and South Sudan, or near South Sudan. We are grateful that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was reached, but we are scared to death that the South Sudan and the North will get into a civil war like what happened in the past.

You refer to Uganda's deployment or Uganda's assistance in South Sudan. Can you elaborate on what they are doing to help stabilize that area?

Ambassador DELISI. Senator, I have looked at this somewhat. I have not looked at it extensively. From what I have seen, though, I know that Uganda has been a longstanding friend of the people of the South to begin with, and has supported them through their struggles, and now supporting them into independence.

The support at this point in time is largely on two fronts. One is to build an effective government, so they are working on establishing the government institutions, the military, the civil service, all of the things that a nation needs to begin to function effectively. And this is a challenge when you are starting from scratch in many ways.

They are also involved very much in the economy of the region. I know that South Sudan is the major trading partner for Uganda, and there is a lot that goes on there. But the nuts and bolts I really cannot speak to at the moment. I would have to look at that a little bit closer. But this is one of the areas that I know is going to be extremely important as we move forward. And, like you, I think we all recognize that this is a volatile region. The potential for problems is always there, and it also means the potential for new refugee flows if problems erupt.

So, it is in our interest and it is in Uganda's interest as well to try to forestall problems, to look at these things, to strengthen their regional partners. And that is one of the things that is so important to us and why our partnership with Uganda has really mattered. It is something that I will work to continue to build if confirmed and when I am in Uganda, and I know that we have to look across the region broadly, not just at Somalia, not just at Sudan, not just at Joseph Kony, but, again, many challenges throughout that part of Africa.

And so far, Uganda has been a very good partner for us in addressing them, and I hope will be able to continue that.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I really appreciate your mentioning it in your remarks because you are being named Ambassador, and I hope confirmed Ambassador, to Uganda, in fact, South Sudan may be a major part of your role as you are in Uganda. That is a very nasty neighborhood, and to the east of South Sudan you have got Somalia. To the north you have got the North of Sudan, and you have got the rebels that are fighting, the Janjaweed, I think they call them, in the Darfur area. So, there is a lot of potential for an expansion of the bad things that have happened in West Sudan and in Somalia.

And I think engagement by Uganda, which has been a forceful player in that portion of Africa, and our support for their engagement to help the South Sudan go from a fledgling democracy to a functioning democracy, will be critically important because if we fail to do that, we will be confronted with a civil war primarily over petroleum between the north and the south, and that would be a tragedy.

Let me just conclude my remarks by thanking the spouses and the families of each one of these nominees because an ambassador's job is a team effort. Without your support, they could not do their job. Thank you for your support for these nominees.

Senator COONS. I have one more round of questions. Thank you.

If I might, just a few more questions for each of our nominees today because you each will be representing us, if confirmed, in countries I think with great and complex challenges.

Mr. Raynor, if you might, piracy off the coast of Somalia has received a great deal of deserved attention for a number of years now. But piracy off of Benin and across the whole West African region is also a significant and growing challenge.

What could we do to more effectively partner with Benin, with regional allies, in strengthening maritime security?

Mr. RAYNOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You are absolutely right. Piracy on the West Coast of Africa is certainly growing as a problem and a concern, and Benin has taken actually a leadership role in addressing that. I think it recognizes the potential impact of piracy on, for example, its port, which is a major economic driver in the country.

Therefore, it has taken a lead role in trying to develop a national maritime strategy that the United States has been providing technical assistance toward. In addition, I think the United States can do more to help forge a common strategy between the states of Central and West Africa who share that coastline so that there is a coordinated approach and a pooling of resources.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Ms. James, AGOA has meant a lot for Swaziland. What can we, should we be doing to make sure that AGOA is reauthorized in an appropriate timeline, and what impact do you think it might have, if, as has sadly often been the case here in the Congress, we wait right up until its expiration to deal legislatively with its reauthorization?

Ms. JAMES. Well, thank you, Senator, for the question.

As I noted, AGOA has been very successful in Swaziland. It is one of the major producers of textiles on the continent exporting to the United States, and it has had an amazing impact on the country.

About 15,000 people are actually employed, but each one of those people supports a very large extended family. So, it has had a broad impact in the country as well. It has been a source of stability, and many of those employees are women, and so we would like to see that kind of a program stay in place. It has a great impact on the health and the productivity of the country.

With respect to the annual reauthorization, we have had some questions and some difficulties with Swaziland's status of governance, its levels of transparency and questions of corruption. And the AGOA reauthorization process has been an entry point for us to engage the government at all levels to talk about addressing those issues.

We have focused heavily on labor rights and practices, and I think we can report today that the recent reeligibility decision to reapprove their AGOA status was a result of the fact that the Kingdom has made some progress, not a lot of progress, but progress nevertheless. And we will just keep hammering away on the areas of concern still to be addressed. The Government of Swaziland has actually begun to have more conversations with labor unions and with the international labor organization. The government has a tripartite standing dialogue that is ongoing on labor issues. So, this conversation that we have around AGOA has actually been helping democracy and labor and human rights across the board.

As you may know, the country depends upon imported fabrics. It has a third-country preference in place, and that has been very important, and that has been a helpful thing for the country. If they were to lose that, it would probably have a very devastating impact on the ability to continue to operate as they have with AGOA. So, it is very important that AGOA remain and that it remains strong with all the elements that are currently in place.

Senator COONS. Well, it is my hope and intention to support proceeding to the AGOA reconsideration as promptly as we can because of concerns that we have already heard from a number of African Ambassadors.

Ms. JAMES. That is very encouraging to hear. Thank you, sir.

Senator COONS. Ambassador DeLisi, there was a tragic murder in Uganda, the killing of a gay activist, David Kato, last year. And I am concerned about the antihomosexuality bill that has been introduced and is proceeding in Uganda. It is one of the more extreme such laws being considered around the world because it includes the death penalty for homosexual acts.

I think the opposition in the United States is clear. What do you think are its prospects of passage, and, if adopted, what are the options you would see in your role as Ambassador?

Ambassador DELISI. Thank you, Senator. I share your concern, and, as you know, our Embassy, our government has been forthright in stating our opposition to the bill.

In terms of its potential for passage, obviously that is a decision that the people and the legislature in Uganda will have to make.

But I think that I find encouraging several signs. First, the Ugandan Human Rights Commission has been very forthright, and has spoken out, and has made it clear that this bill as written, and I think almost in any form, would be contrary to both the Ugandan Constitution and violation of the constitution, and contrary to Uganda's international commitment and obligations on human rights.

Other NGOs and civil society groups have become much more vocal and have spoken out strongly on this. I just saw an article recently in which some of the LGBT organizations said that their dialogue, that the community dialogue in Uganda, has become richer as a result of this. And they have seen not an outpouring of public support, but at least a greater degree of support for their efforts. And those are promising signs.

I am also heartened by the fact that the Ugandan judiciary overall has shown consistent support for the rights of all communities, all the marginalized communities, and that is also promising.

I hope the bill will not pass. I think most in the international community would hope that. I think that there are also many in Uganda who recognize that if the bill passes, that it has—there is significant potential consequences. The impact on Uganda's international reputation and standing, the impact on tourism. They are very proud to have been named as tourist destination of the year for 2012, and it is the pearl of Africa. But this is the sort of thing that does have an impact. And so, they have to look, and I think they are looking, at the realistic—the practical, pragmatic consequences of this also.

For us meanwhile, I think that the Secretary has made it clear that while we are absolutely committed on these issues, we also recognize that it is not always about being punitive or lecturing; it is about engaging constructively. It is about educating civil society groups, supporting them. It is about getting the right sort of debate going, showing people that when the rights of any community within your country are being brought under attack, when you are discriminating against any element within society, all society ends up suffering, and everyone's rights are ultimately at risk.

Those are the sorts of conversations that we have had that we will continue to have, no matter what the outcome of the legislation, even if it is not passed. We need to continue to be affirmative in our engagement and be good partners as we discuss these sometimes very sensitive social issues, but issues that have to be addressed and recognized, and that the fundamental human rights issues involved here are central to any engagement with our partners.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador.

I, last, would be interested in hearing a little more detail on the regional effort in the hunt for Joseph Kony, how the Central African Republics, how Sudan and, in particular, the DRC, have responded, how engaged they are with allowing Ugandan troops either in their territory or working collaboratively with them, and what you see as the critical next steps in this ongoing pursuit to remove Joseph Kony and his top lieutenants from the battlefield.

Ambassador DELIST. Thank you, Senator.

I think the regional effort is going pretty well overall. I had the chance last week—we had our global chief of missions conference here, and we took advantage of that to sit down with our ambassadors throughout the region and our leadership in the State Department to discuss how we are coordinating our efforts and what we are finding in the respective capitals in the region.

I think we are seeing very strong support for the overall goal of bringing Kony and his commanders to justice, and that is good news because these countries are still being affected. We see the continuing impact of the LRA in the DRC, and the CAR, and, to a degree, in South Sudan.

I think that the militaries in these countries are participating. They are participating actively. Not all of them have as much to bring to the table in terms of resources as the Ugandans have, but they have long military experience. But it is improving. And we are working with those governments in all four instances to make sure that that partnership is right, that we are giving them the logistical and other support that they need to be effective in their efforts to bring Kony to justice.

Overall, the coordination between the four countries is good, but there is that concern about Ugandan forces at this point in time are not entering into the DRC. The DRC asked the Ugandans to refrain from coming into their sovereign territory. This was in part due to the elections that were coming in the DRC; we understand that. I think that is an issue that does need to be addressed, and I know the two governments, the governments involved are talking to each other. I know our Ambassador in Kinshasa is working on these issues as well. I think that with the AU effort, we will also have perhaps greater traction in making this happen.

So, I think that we are moving in the right direction. As I said earlier, if we can find ways to bring the Rewards for Justice Program to apply here, that could be a good thing. We will continue to look at issues of mobility, and sit down and say—figure out what—where we can make the greatest additional value to this effort in the coming months.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador.

Senator ISAKSON.

Senator ISAKSON. In deference to Senator Udall, who has arrived, I am going to ask one question and then give him a chance, if that is all right, Mr. Chairman, to—

Senator COONS. Absolutely.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Ask a question. But I would—actually it is not a question. It is an observation.

When the chairman and I were in West Africa, and, in particular, in Benin, you have got Nigeria, which had its first “successful”—and I put that in quotes—democratic election with Goodluck Jonathan. And then you have got Benin, and then you have got Togo, and then you have got Ghana, and then you have got Cote d'Ivoire, I think, is the right—if I got my geography right.

And one of the barriers to their growth or some of the trade barriers between the countries and the fact that the roads are not always open, many times are manned by folks who are collecting corruption fees to let you pass. And so many of the goods are perishable—poultry, pineapple in particular, which is so prevalent in

the region and which the chairman and I sat and ate in the middle of a pineapple patch one day, and it is the best pineapple I have ever eaten in my life. But the problem is it is highly perishable, and the roads are not that good. And the barriers to trade are.

Can you share with us some ideas you might have on expanding the trade between countries on the West Coast of Africa so they can benefit from their own assets one to another?

Mr. RAYNOR. Thank you. Thank you, Senator. You are absolutely right. It is one of the great hindrances to development in Africa, the interconnectivity, or lack thereof, between countries. And certainly these are a lot of countries that are very close to each other, and that should have very robust trading relationships, and for infrastructure reasons and other reasons, do not.

Specifically with regards to infrastructure, it is a challenge. It is the sort of thing that one could look at as part of the second phase of the MCC potentially. I think ultimately it is something that requires collective effort, and I think perhaps ECOWAS would be a useful partner in that regard. Certainly President Yayi is very strongly engaged in ECOWAS. I think issues of economic integration within West Africa are central to his concerns and ECOWAS, and I think we would certainly look for opportunities to promote that sort of dialogue and to look for opportunities to build those linkages, and eventually those physical linkages, to improve those trade connections.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much. And I will defer the balance of my time to Senator Udall.

Senator COONS. Senator Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I very much appreciate your courtesy, Senator Isakson.

First of all, let me just thank Mr. Raynor for bringing up Kate Puzey and her—Peace Corps volunteer, her service to the country. We know she died in Benin, and we ended up honoring her, I think, in terms of naming a bill after her. And thank you for bringing her up.

You know, Benin recently completed a successful 5-year compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation. How do you think that Benin and the United States can build off the successes of this partnership and continue to encourage economic development?

Mr. RAYNOR. Thank you, Senator. Yes, indeed, the MCC was quite successful in proving the port and in addressing certain aspects of the business climate that have been deficient—access to credit, access to judicial process.

I think the first and most important thing is to build on those gains and to make sure they are sustained. I think it is also important that we look for ways to engage with the Government of Benin and the people of Benin to boost U.S. commercial engagement in the country. Part of that will be looking for opportunities to diversify the economy of the country, which right now is very heavily dependent on cotton and to the vagaries of the cotton prices and production. So, I think it will be important to work with Benin in looking for ways, both to invite and promote U.S. engagement, and also for ways that Benin can itself expand its economic base.

I think also part of that is building the human capacity of the people of the country. Right now you have got serious challenges

with regards to education, with regards to health, and I think it will be important to continue to build the capacity of the people to be active agents for their own material as well as other gains.

Senator UDALL. Thank you for that answer. You know, experts estimate that Uganda's Albertine Basin holds up to 2.5 million barrels of oil. Accessing this reserve could impact both Uganda's economy and its environment. What steps can Uganda take to ensure that should the decision to access it be made, it is done with respect to this ecologically sensitive area, and should we be worried that Uganda signed a contract with China's CNOOC given China's record of environmental degradation in the region?

Ambassador DELISI. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

First of all, they are moving forward. They have recently approved the decision to move forward, and you have got three major companies that will be operating in the Albertine Basin. One of them is CNOOC.

One of the things that we are doing, and we recognize the challenges and the potential for this great potential benefit to Uganda could also become a curse. And we all know that this is a challenge that has to be addressed.

We are tackling it in a number of ways. USAID has already engaged on these environmental questions and is working with the government to talk about if they are going to exploit this oil, how do you do this in an ecologically sound way, and how do you protect this tremendous natural resource for Uganda? Those partnerships will continue I hope. If I am confirmed, certainly it would be one of my primary interests to see that they continue.

Equally, USAID, through some of their programs, is working with civil society because civil society's voice and role in the managing of this and in holding the government accountable in looking at these issues will also be important. So, we are working with them, showing them what has happened elsewhere, giving them the skills that they will need to address these questions.

But equally, we are working with the government. And through our new energy governance and capacity initiative, we are helping the government to try to build the legal and the financial framework, the system that they need to manage this resource in an effective way, to tie the resources that they are getting to their longer term development goals, and to do this in a coherent, effective way, to improve communication between ministries, all of this needs to be done.

I am not familiar with CNOOC's record in terms of their environmental protection, but I certainly take you at your word that this is a concern. And no matter who it is, though, any of these oil companies, as I noted at the outset, this is a very sensitive environmental region. So, we are attuned to this, have already been working on this, and will continue to do so, Senator.

Senator UDALL. Thank you. One other question on Uganda. In 2010 and early 2011, Uganda's economy and population suffered from high food prices, high fuel prices, and high inflation. In the past few months, it is my understanding that these indicators have leveled or dropped slightly. Is this a long-term trend, or is Uganda suffering from issues of chronic food instability?

Ambassador DELISI. I think that it—from what I have read, and, again, I am not yet an expert on all of this. But what I am seeing and what I am told is that most economists believe that it will level, that this leveling off will continue, that the degree of economic growth we are going to see in Uganda will continue this past year, that it was still 5.8 percent. Not quite as robust as in earlier years, but still doing well.

The issue of food security, though, is one that we really have to be cognizant of, and this is part of the reason that our Feed the Future Program is looking so closely at where we are going. And it becomes all the more of a concern because of the high population growth rate in Uganda.

At present, we were looking at a population of 33 or 34 million people, but in 20 years it is estimated that that is going to be a population of 60 million, and 20 years after that it will probably be 90 million.

So, food security and the sustainability of agriculture becomes a crucial factor for us, and this is what we are starting to look at very careful, I believe, through our Feed the Future Program. Also increasing agricultural livelihoods, the whole agricultural process, including agro industries. Again, if confirmed, this is an area that I think I will work on because we have to be focusing on this in the days ahead.

Senator UDALL. Great. Thank you.

Mr. Raynor, you mentioned that Benin's economy is dependent on cotton production, and we all know that in some of these areas, cotton production and this crop have been linked to degradation of the soil, in turning areas into deserts. And what I am wondering is, you know, is there a sustainable way to do this? I mean, is this an environmental threat they should be worried about? What, how will the United States work with them in order to bolster their economy, but at the same time make sure it is done in a sustainable way?

Mr. RAYNOR. Thank you, Senator. Yes, in fact, Benin has been seeing cotton yields over time, and that is certainly—desertification is an aspect of the problem they're facing. I think that is why one of the things that Benin really does need to focus on and we need to focus on in our engagement with Benin is ways for them to diversify their agricultural sector.

Right now, cotton accounts for 40 percent of GDP, potentially as high as 80 percent of exports in a given year. So, really a vastly disproportionate bet on one commodity. I think it would be important for us through USAID engagement, Peace Corps engagement, there is a component of our Peace Corps activities that focuses exactly on issues of conservation and good stewardship of the land. I think we can build upon that. We can certainly look for additional ways to bring professional expertise to bear, to help the government understand the consequences of overreliance on one crop, and to explore opportunities for diversification.

Senator UDALL. Great. Thank you very much.

And, Chairman Coons, good to be here with you. And I once again, even though Senator Isakson is not here, thank him for his courtesies on yielding time. And really appreciate all your hard work on chairing the African Subcommittee. I know you are work-

ing hard at that, and spending time in Africa, and also doing a lot of visits here with many of the officials that come through Washington.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you. And, Senator Udall, I am hoping you will join us in a future visit to Africa. It would be great to have your company.

Senator UDALL. I look forward to it.

Senator COONS. Senator Isakson is well and widely recognized for his graciousness and is a wonderful partner in this work. And our trip to West Africa last year was memorable.

Kate Puzey had Delaware roots. Her father was born in Delaware, and there has been a lot of attention paid to that case in Delaware as well. And I am really grateful for Senator Isakson's focus and leadership on this. And I know it will produce long-term benefits to Peace Corps Volunteers who serve all over the world, and who are an important part of our diplomatic and development presence globally.

If you will forgive me, I need to go preside. We have had a thorough and full hearing. I am, again, impressed with the preparation and the professionalism, the dedication and the willingness to serve of all three of you, as Ambassadors, as nominees to be Ambassadors. It is my hope that the Senate will take up your nominations quickly and confirm you.

I wanted to thank Leah, Louis, Mandela, Kate, Bradley, and Emma, for your patience. And neither Bradley nor Emma fell asleep. I am quite impressed.

I was quite struck when my own children just two weekends ago asked me if I knew anything about the Lord's Resistance Army and Joseph Kony, and whether I was going to do anything about it. And I reminded them that I chair the Africa Subcommittee, the Foreign Relations Committee. They all three expressed quite, you know, they were really rather surprised by that and were unaware that I did things as I got on the train and went to Washington in the morning.

So, one of the things that has been most inspiring to me about the very broad response of tens of millions of Americans and folks around the world is how many young people have been inspired and challenged by the issue of the Lord's Resistance Army and the hunt for Joseph Kony. And it is my hope that working together, we can engage them, and inform, and sustain their concern for African-led solutions to African problems, for an ongoing American engagement in responsible, mutual development, and for the kind of positive role for the United States and the world that all three of you have exemplified in your service, in the Foreign Service.

With that, thank you very much.

The record will be kept open for any members of the committee who had questions but were not able to join us today.

And this hearing is hereby adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:35 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF SCOTT DELISI TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. Uganda is the youngest country in the world with approximately 50 percent of the population under the age of 15. If confirmed, what would your strategy be to engage with the youth of Uganda?

Answer. I believe it is essential that we continue to engage effectively with the youth of Uganda, and, if confirmed, I would hope to emulate what I have done in Nepal in that regard. In Nepal, I have used social media (principally Facebook) to spark a dialogue with the more than 13,000 young Nepalis who follow that page. We have used it to great effect to discuss both U.S. policy and basic issues of development, governance, and economic growth. In addition, we created a Youth Council that continues to grow and provides us another platform from which to reach the youth of Nepal who, as in Uganda, make up a majority of the population. If confirmed, I would draw on these experiences, including the funding of civil action and democracy, building projects through the Youth Council, to deepen our engagement with the young people of Uganda. I would also build on Embassy Kampala's current activities, including its outreach to a number of Ugandan universities and to a group of 30 Youth Advisors drawn from academia, NGOs, media, and other civil society backgrounds.

Question. Section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 imposes restrictions on assistance to any unit of a foreign country's security forces for which there is credible evidence that the unit has committed gross violations of human rights. U.S. Embassies are heavily involved in ensuring compliance with this requirement. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the Embassy effectively implements section 620M?

Answer. Effective implementation of section 620M starts with the selection of host country candidates for security assistance. If confirmed, I will ensure that we carefully select units and individuals for U.S.-sponsored training based on their records and reputations. I will continue to ensure that Embassy Kampala thoroughly vets all individuals and units nominated for training before submitting the vetting requests to Washington for further review. If confirmed, I will make a point to be engaged in, and closely monitor, U.S.-funded security sector assistance and training while also ensuring that the Embassy's vetting of selected candidates continues to occur in a thorough and timely fashion.

Question. In particular, what actions will you take to ensure, in a case in which there is credible evidence that a gross violation of human rights has been committed, that assistance will not be provided to units that committed the violation?

Answer. The Department of State does not provide training to individuals or units against whom there is credible information of gross human rights violations. Leahy vetting is an important tool not only for ensuring that U.S. funding is not used to train or assist units or individuals who have committed gross human rights violations, but also for engaging host country military and security forces on the need to put in place accountability mechanisms and strengthen respect for human rights. If confirmed, I will ensure that we take advantage of any instances where Ugandan candidates do not pass Leahy vetting requirements to engage the Ugandan Government in a broader discussion of ways that the Ugandan military and police can strengthen respect for human rights and institutionalize accountability at all levels.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure that the Embassy has a robust capacity to gather and evaluate evidence regarding possible gross violations of human rights by units of security forces?

Answer. If confirmed, I will review the Embassy's vetting process to see if any changes are needed to make it more efficient, streamlined, and coordinated across the various relevant sections of the Embassy. I will ensure open and regular communication between the Defense Attaché Office, Regional Security Office, and Political Section for the purposes of gathering and evaluating information from a range of different sources. I will also ensure that our Ugandan counterparts understand and take into consideration the vetting requirements when proposing candidates for U.S. security assistance, while at the same time encouraging them to institute reform where needed to institutionalize respect for human rights within the military and security sector.

RESPONSES OF MAKILA JAMES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. Given your previous experience as Director of the Office of Caribbean Affairs and Deputy Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs as well as your other posts in the field, what lessons have most significantly shaped your approach to managing a post like Swaziland?

Answer. Throughout my 24 years as a Foreign Service officer, I have served as a Political/Economic Officer in Nigeria, Desk Officer for Sierra Leone and The Gambia, Political Officer in Zimbabwe, Principal Officer in Southern Sudan, as well as International Relations Officer for several Africa-wide positions in the Bureau of International Organizations Affairs and as a Member of the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff, where I have engaged extensively in promoting democracy and good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and sustainable economic development. In each of these positions, I served in or worked on countries that have had authoritarian or military regimes, and understand the challenges of engaging with such governments while also maintaining a robust dialogue with opposition groups and civil society to support their efforts to press for greater political rights and freedoms.

One of the most important lessons I have learned in working on these issues is the necessity to engage all parties to underscore the mutual rights and responsibilities of governments and their citizens to promote democracy and development. The United States remains an influential partner for many African governments. Our values are respected by their citizens, who look to us to uphold democratic principles of good governance and universal human rights—critical elements for ensuring development and stability. My experiences have also impressed upon me the importance of promoting strong democratic institutions, particularly parliaments, courts, and independent oversight bodies to ensure transparency and accountability from every branch of government. Similarly, my election observation experiences have underscored the importance of engaging at all levels to help ensure political pluralism, civic education, and a level playing field before and after voting takes place.

If confirmed, I would draw upon these experiences to support all elements of the mission in actively engaging with government and civil society to help identify opportunities for institutional capacity-building, promote greater budget transparency, and strengthen oversight of government activities at every level. A daunting challenge I have worked on in every post, and which is a concern in Swaziland as well, is the need to enhance the status of women and children to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic, alleviate poverty, and protect universal human rights. I would urge the Mission to work closely with civil society organizations to expand their ability to participate in dialogue with their government on these fundamental rights. Each of my assignments has given me the chance to help promote efforts to expand U.S. exports and engage with the local private sector to encourage employment and development. I would draw on my knowledge of the many U.S. Government agencies responsible for trade and business development, along with State Department resources, to support American companies in the United States and the region who are seeking access to the Swaziland market.

My experiences as the Director of the Office of Caribbean Affairs, in which I am responsible for the management, staff and policies of U.S. Government missions serving 14 developing countries, along with my experience as Deputy Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs and Principal Officer at U.S. Consulate Juba, have provided me with strong management skills to support the needs of small posts in difficult environments. I appreciate the importance of using limited resources wisely in a tight budget environment by seeking efficiencies and leveraging all available program funds to pursue our goals, as well as taking advantage of the close proximity of our mission in South Africa to work with their staff to bring activities to Swaziland. Most importantly, in a small mission without a significant U.S. security presence, I have learned to be extremely attentive to the safety of all Americans employees, as well as U.S. citizens in the country, and to ensure high morale within the community. If confirmed, I would bring a positive attitude, broad knowledge of American and African culture, and a commitment to public service to ensure that Embassy Mbabane is a strong diplomatic presence representing U.S. values and interests.

Question. Male circumcision programs have encountered difficulties in Swaziland, although in other countries demand has been very high. How would you seek to work with the government and civil society in Swaziland to encourage the uptake of this important HIV prevention tool?

Answer. The low level of male circumcision in Swaziland is one of the main drivers of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and it is imperative that we do as much as possible to address it. The rapid expansion of male circumcision is a top priority of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Partnership Framework Plan. Since 2008, PEPFAR has contributed to the circumcision of 36,453 men in Swaziland. In 2011, PEPFAR and the Swazi Government launched the Accelerated Saturation Initiative (ASI), which is a comprehensive package of HIV prevention, care, and treatment services centered on male circumcision. Its target was to reach 80 percent of 15–49-year-old men within a 1-year period with male circumcision services (approximately 152,000 MCs). The initiative, however, has fallen considerably short of that goal, reaching only 11,331 males.

The main challenge facing ASI has been the low demand for male circumcision. Many Swazi men fear the pain of circumcision, lack information about it, or have heard bad stories and myths. To address these challenges, the PEPFAR in Swaziland will re-strategize the male circumcision program for 2012 based on recommendations from the recent visit by the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) and the male circumcision Technical Working Group (TWG). Recommendations focused on augmenting the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland's ownership of the male circumcision program in Swaziland and increasing national leadership. While there was high-level buy-in for the campaign from the Minister of Health, the Prime Minister, and King Mswati III, there were challenges with buy-in from mid-level officials. More research will be done on the health seeking behaviors of Swazis and exploration of why demand has been low to date, followed by greater dialogue with local leaders and government management on the implementation of the male circumcision program moving forward. Increasing dialogue with civil society would also help the U.S. Government understand cultural barriers and myths that have resulted in low demand for male circumcision in Swaziland.

If confirmed, I will encourage the augmentation of the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland's ownership and leadership of the male circumcision program, increase dialogue with local leaders on the implementation of the male circumcision program, and increase dialogue with civil society to understand how the program can best overcome cultural barriers and how the local community can encourage men to seek male circumcision services.

RESPONSES OF MICHAEL RAYNOR TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. Given your experience as Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs and as Management Officer in Namibia, Guinea, and Djibouti, among other posts, what lessons have most significantly shaped your approach to managing a post like Benin?

Answer. These experiences have taught me several lessons in building successful teams, eliciting strong performance, fostering high morale, and operating effectively in small, isolated, and hardship posts like Benin.

To maximize operational impact and effectiveness at such a post, it is essential to engage every element of the mission in establishing clear goals within the framework of administration priorities, and to lead employees as an integrated team in pursuit of those goals.

As at my previous posts, many employees in Benin are relatively inexperienced, including some who are new to the Foreign Service and others who are performing their current functions for the first time. In such a context, it is vital that employees receive the guidance, mentoring, feedback, training, and encouragement necessary to promote their professional development and to help them be as successful and happy in their jobs as possible.

From my previous experiences at difficult, remote posts like Benin, I have learned that it is equally important to attend to issues of community morale and cohesion: ensuring that working and living conditions for employees and family members are safe, secure, pleasant, and responsive to the hardships faced; meeting the health, educational, recreational, and spousal employment needs of the community to the fullest extent possible; and promoting opportunities for community members to benefit both professionally and personally from the dynamic host-country environment to which they have been posted.

Question. Though Benin is eligible for trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, U.S. imports from Benin are typically quite limited. Given your previous experience, in what ways would you seek to increase trade between

the United States and Benin, including efforts to increase U.S. exports to Benin and promote American business interests?

Answer. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is about more than trade preferences for African products. By creating tangible incentives for African countries like Benin to implement the sometimes difficult economic and political reforms needed to improve its investment climate, AGOA contributes to better market opportunities and stronger commercial partners in Africa for U.S. companies. In addition, AGOA advances African regional economic integration efforts and helps promote larger markets and creating trade opportunities for U.S. exports. While Benin alone is a relatively small market that might have difficulty attracting U.S. companies, the West African market as a whole is a very attractive destination for U.S. trade and investment.

Over the last several years, Benin has worked hard to increase trade and investment. If confirmed, I will work with my team at the Embassy to support U.S. business interests in Benin and work with the Government of Benin to promote an open business environment. Benin successfully completed its \$307 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact in October of 2011 and was selected as eligible to develop a second Compact. Benin's success with the MCC program demonstrates its commitment to providing an open and transparent business climate, protecting both rule of law and sanctity of contract. One major outcome of Benin's MCC Compact is the revitalization of its port in Cotonou. With improved efficiency and infrastructure at the port, we can expect Benin to increase trade regionally and hopefully attract more trade and investment from the United States.