

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

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**HEARINGS**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

**ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS**

**FIRST SESSION**

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**MARCH 16 THROUGH DECEMBER 8, 2011**  
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Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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S. HRG. 112-399

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U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

74-273 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2012

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
112TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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\*Note: WILLIAM C. DANVERS (assumed *Staff Director* position as of October 3, 2011)

## NOMINATIONS

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2011

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

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Daniel Benjamin Shapiro, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to Israel  
Stuart E. Jones, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
Hon. George Albert Krol, of New Jersey, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Uzbekistan  
Henry S. Ensher, of California, Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

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The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:42 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert P. Casey, Jr., presiding.

Present: Senators Casey, Risch, and Lee.

Senator CASEY. The hearing will come to order. I know we are starting maybe 3 minutes early, but that is not all that bad to do once in a while.

Today the Senate Foreign Relations Committee meets to examine the nominations of Daniel Shapiro for the position of Ambassador to Israel, Stuart Jones to be Ambassador to Jordan, George Krol to be Ambassador to Uzbekistan, and Henry Ensher to be Ambassador to Algeria.

I would like to, first of all, welcome Senator Bill Nelson of the State of Florida. I know we will be joined by Senator Lieberman as well, both of whom will provide introductions of Mr. Shapiro.

But in the interest of keeping the Senate on an efficient path of time this afternoon, I am going to forgo my opening statement, which is traditionally the start of a hearing, and give the floor to Senator Nelson so he can make his introductory remarks. And that way we can keep the Senate moving at a good pace.

But I am grateful to Senator Nelson for his appearance here today, and for his willingness to take time to help us have this hearing proceed. Senator Nelson, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA**

Senator NELSON. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your personal courtesies.

I must say that in the 11 years that I have been here, this is one of the prouder moments that I have had to introduce a nominee to any of our committees. There are times in life when you know that what is about to occur is exactly the right thing, and the position of Ambassador to Israel and Dan Shapiro is the right thing.

We have an extraordinary individual that I can commend to this committee because I know him very well. Dan was our legislative director for the first 6 years, my first term as Senator, and since I was then a member of this committee, Foreign Relations, as well as Armed Services, we traveled extensively. And of course, whenever we were traveling anywhere in the world, I had a walking encyclopedia with me, but that was magnified once we got anywhere into the Middle East and Central Asia.

Just for starters, he speaks fluent Hebrew and fluent Arabic, not a shabby start for an Ambassador to Israel. And his depth of knowledge, even back when he was with this little country boy from Florida, was extensive in his advice and counsel to me. You can imagine what that depth of knowledge is now that he has been a member of the National Security Council with the portfolio in that council of the Middle East. And so we have someone who is uniquely qualified for this position.

Second, I would point out that among all of the White House staff, when it comes to a matter of the Middle East, who does the President draw on for his advice, but the fellow who knows the Middle East backward and forward in order to give advice? That is an important component as well, so that as our representative in Israel, when Dan will speak as our Ambassador, everybody knows that he has got a direct pipeline to the Oval Office.

And third, let me say that as he represents America, he will represent all of America. It is true that among the Jewish community, he is probably as popular as Benjamin Netanyahu. But I said Dan represents all of America. I so well remember how he was so capable of putting the interest of the United States first in whatever interest group that it was that came in seeking legislation or a change in legislation or having to deal with our foreign policy. And I particularly watched Dan as he interacted with a group of our Muslim constituents, of which I have a sizable representation in the State of Florida, and he was just so adept with such graciousness as he would carry on the affairs of our office.

And so I give to this committee my unlimited recommendation, the highest recommendation, and I would ask that the committee—and I have already spoken to Chairman John Kerry—that you all proceed with this expeditiously so that we can have our new Ambassador in Israel.

Thank you very much, Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Senator Nelson, thank you very much. We are welcoming you back to this committee. We appreciate the words that you expressed here about the nominee, and you have given us an assignment and we appreciate that.

In furtherance of Senate courtesies before my opening, I wanted to also turn to Senator Lieberman who, of course, is the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee and has been a leader in the Senate for so many years. And we are grateful that he is here. We are honored by your presence as well, Senator Lieberman, and you have the floor.

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

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am honored to be here to help introduce Dan Shapiro to the committee and also to join with our colleague, Senator Bill Nelson, in praising him.

I cannot say that Dan ever worked for me as Bill could, but I am so proud to say that I have known Dan even longer for a much more important reason: his wife Julie taught my youngest child when she was very young. And we were very impressed with Julie. And, you know, Dan was not bad either. [Laughter.]

Of course, I did get to know Dan when he worked with Senator Feinstein before that. As the record will show, he worked with Chairman Lee Hamilton in the House of Representatives and then, of course, his time with Bill Nelson.

This is really a superb appointment. I endorse Dan's nomination wholeheartedly. He has an extraordinary background, as Bill said. When Bill said that Dan Shapiro was fluent in Hebrew and Arabic, I turned to him and wanted him to know that I knew that he was not bad in English either, and I know that will help him in his work. [Laughter.]

But more to the point, he brings expertise. He brings a very informed judgment. He also brings—and I want to stress a point that Bill Nelson made. At this moment of really extraordinary change in the Middle East, which has a tremendous potential for good but also creates uncertainty, Dan Shapiro will bring to this position his obviously close relationship with President Obama. And this is a moment when I think it is more important than ever for there to be close and direct communications and a relationship of deep trust between the Government of the United States and the Government of Israel and really more particularly between the Oval Office here in Washington and the Office of the Prime Minister in Jerusalem. And Dan Shapiro as Ambassador will guarantee, I think, that there is that kind of trust on both sides.

I always say to groups around the country who are concerned about Israel's security that since the founding of the modern state and the very rapid recognition of the State of Israel by then-President Harry Truman, which was so significant to Israel's immediate legitimacy among the nations of the world, that the United States has remained Israel's most steadfast ally and supporter, and it is a natural relationship because we are two great democracies. The relationship continues strong both from the White House and really broad bipartisan support for the United States-Israel relationship. I think Dan Shapiro understands all that and will bring all that with him.

I will say, just to echo what Bill Nelson said, that in the pro-Israel community in America—and in that community, there is a range of opinion. I was quite impressed by the range of endorse-

ments for this nomination after it was made, going on one side from the Zionist Organization of America to, on the other side, the Americans for Peace Now. And that covers quite a lot of real estate ideologically speaking. But it is a tribute to Dan's credibility and his accessibility and his personality that he enjoys that support.

So I know you have a lot of business. I want to leave it to that. But I will come back to what I said at the outset. Dan will make a great Ambassador and Julie will make a great wife of a great Ambassador, and together I know that they will strengthen our already remarkably strong relationship with Israel.

Thank you very much.

Senator CASEY. Senator Lieberman, thank you very much. We are grateful you are here with us today.

We will move to my opening statement and then, of course, we will go to our nominees.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA**

Senator CASEY. Let me speak first about our nominee for the post of Ambassador to Israel.

The United States relationship with Israel is a cornerstone of United States foreign policy, as we all know. It is all the more important during the current historic period of upheaval in the Middle East. The United States and Israel have an unbreakable and unshakeable bond based upon common values and a commitment to democratic institutions, and our strong relationship with Israel is in the national security interest of the United States.

The United States relationship with Israel is more important than ever, given the increasing unrest in the region. In recent weeks, I and others have voiced concern about the democratic transition process in Egypt, the threat posed by extremism in that country, and the prospects for the Camp David Peace Accords. Countries like Libya, Syria, Bahrain, and Yemen continue to experience significant unrest. The United States must lead with policies that reflect our national security interests as well as our values.

In light of all of these uncertainties, Israel's security in the region is of utmost concern. United States assistance to Israel is critical to supporting Israel's security and maintaining stability in the region. United States assistance for Israel's missile defense system has already proved successful in limiting attacks by terrorist groups, as demonstrated in Ashkelon last month, with the Iron Dome System which struck down eight short-range rockets fired by Hamas. In an ever-changing threat environment, the United States must ensure that Israel maintains its qualitative advantage over potential threats at home and abroad.

Iran poses a uniquely significant threat to both Israel and United States national security as a result of its ongoing pursuit of nuclear weapons, failure to abide by its international obligations, and rejection of Israel's right to exist. We have recently seen disturbing instances of Iranian force projection into the region, including support for terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah which continue to launch attacks on innocent Israeli citizens and civilians. The United States must stand firm in its commitment to Israel's security by steadily increasing pressure on the Iranian regime. It



is clear that stronger United States and multilateral sanctions have weakened Iran, but we must continue to work with our international partners to limit Iran's influence in the region.

The recent announcement of a Palestinian unification agreement between Fatah and Hamas has raised serious concerns over the fate of the peace process. As we know, Hamas is a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of Israel itself. The United States must stand firm in our opposition to any Hamas role in the Palestinian Government and discourage Palestinian efforts to work outside the parameters of direct peace negotiations. These efforts are counterproductive and will only serve to delay the day in which we see Israelis and Palestinians living side by side in peace and security.

Given Mr. Shapiro's extensive experience, I look forward to hearing from him about how he will manage this increasingly challenging environment in the region.

Mr. Shapiro currently serves as the NSC Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa and has been an adviser to President Obama since 2007.

I would like to welcome Mr. Shapiro's family members who are joining us today, his wife, Julie, and daughters, Leat and Marav and Shirak, and parents, Elizabeth and Michael. I do not want to embarrass them, but if they would like to stand, we would certainly like to acknowledge their presence.

Thanks very much.

I tell you why I do that. Because I know, as a public official, that when someone is putting themselves forward to provide public service, especially of the kind we are talking about here today with our nominees, I know a family serves with them in one way or another. So we are grateful for your commitment as well as members of a family.

Let me just move quickly to our second nominee, Mr. Jones.

Jordan, as we know, is an important partner in counterterrorism and has been a key ally in the Middle East peace process. Since signing a peace treaty with Israel in 1994, Jordan has provided a strategic buffer to more adversarial neighbors such as Syria. U.S. support has been critical to helping Jordan address internal and external challenges and, in turn, has helped ensure stability in an increasingly unstable region. Jordan has experienced a series of prodemocracy protests in recent months with youth-led groups calling for political reforms and criticizing the lack of government response to the demonstrations. As public criticism of the monarchy grows and the government crackdown in neighboring Syria worsens, the United States must assess how to best support the Jordanian Government's efforts to balance political and economic reforms with political stability. I look forward to hearing how Stuart Jones will navigate this complex political landscape.

Mr. Jones is currently serving as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Iraq, a tough assignment. He has previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Egypt, and Director for Iraq at the National Security Council. If confirmed, Mr. Jones' depth of experience in the Middle East will serve him well in this position.

And so I now invite Mr. Shapiro to provide his remarks.

Senator Risch.

Senator R<sup>ISCH</sup>. Yes, very briefly.

Senator C<sup>ASEY</sup>. Our ranking member, Senator Risch.

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

Senator R<sup>ISCH</sup>. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me associate myself with the remarks of both Senator Lieberman and Senator Casey. We get a lot of publicity here about partisan issues, and our relationship with Israel is truly a bipartisan affair and has been for some time. And in that regard, we are all pulling the wagon together.

Mr. Shapiro, thank you for taking the time to meet with me and with my staff. I sincerely appreciate it. I think this is a good appointment.

Mr. Jones, let me say this. You are going to a country that is a friend of the United States and has been a good partner of ours in the region. Probably one of the great success stories that we hear very little about in the media is the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. Certainly it is a model, and we obviously support that. It has worked very well, and I know that you will work to see that it continues to work. Obviously, there are going to be challenges with the recent matters that have arisen there. So we look forward to hearing from you as to how you are going to do that.

With that, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator C<sup>ASEY</sup>. Thank you, Senator Risch.

We are joined by Senator Lee from Utah as well, and we have time now or we can have comments later. But I think we will just move to the testimony and then questions.

**STATEMENT OF DANIEL BENJAMIN SHAPIRO, OF ILLINOIS,  
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL**

Mr. S<sup>HAPIRO</sup>. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the warm welcome.

I have submitted a written statement which I would ask be made part of the record, and in the interest of time, I will summarize my remarks.

Senator C<sup>ASEY</sup>. Your statement and all the statements will be made a part of the record.

Mr. S<sup>HAPIRO</sup>. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Risch, Senator Lee, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am humbled and honored by the trust President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton have placed in me with the nomination to serve as United States Ambassador to Israel. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to meet that trust and responsibility and to promote the interests of the United States.

I also recognize the vital role of this committee in our Nation's foreign policy as well. If confirmed, I look forward to close cooperation with its members and its staff and with the Congress as a whole on strengthening our close and unbreakable relationship with the State of Israel.

I am grateful, of course, to Senator Nelson for his introduction and for his support and guidance over the past decade, and I thank Senator Lieberman for his support and introduction as well.

Mr. Chairman, I have been involved with Israel most of my life. I lived in Israel as a young child during the 1973 war. I went there twice for university studies, and I worked here in the Congress for many years to support Middle East peace efforts, strengthen the United States-Israel relationship and combat terrorist threats against both our nations. I have gained through those experiences a deep understanding both of Israel's security needs and its people's justifiable concerns about the threats they face and Israel's strengths, and its people's dreams manifested in the building of a modern state and the unrelenting search for peace. And I have also gained a deep appreciation for the importance of the United States-Israel relationship for our own national security.

The United States has stood by Israel as its partner and ally since its creation. It is a bipartisan commitment, as Senator Risch says, and I have been privileged to serve President Obama as he has continued, deepened, and advanced that partnership. Israel has been and remains our most dependable ally in the Middle East. We share both common strategic interests and the values of open democratic societies. Our militaries train together and learn from one another. We share critical intelligence to counter terrorist threats, and our economic ties continue to grow.

The United States has an unwavering commitment to Israel's security and to ensuring Israel's qualitative military edge. With Congress' support, we have provided full funding for Israel's foreign military financing under the terms of the 10-year memorandum of understanding and helped achieve tangible success in the development of missile defense technologies such as Arrow and Iron Dome, and we have seen dramatic evidence of that success, Mr. Chairman, as you mentioned recently with the Iron Dome system. We conduct joint exercises and maintain very close, high-level consultations between our civilian and military leaders.

We coordinate closely with Israel also on the threat posed by Iran. President Obama is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Israel is a key partner in that effort, supporting the strong sanctions contained in the U.N. Security Council resolution 1929 and the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, and we maintain extremely close consultations with Israel at all times on the nature of this threat.

We firmly reject all attempts to delegitimize Israel. We consistently oppose anti-Israel resolutions in all U.N. bodies. We withdrew from the Durban Review Conference in 2009, and we supported Israel's right to defend itself in the wake of the deeply flawed Goldstone Report.

We also continue to seek a comprehensive peace between Israel and all its neighbors. President Obama believes that a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is essential to safeguarding Israel's future as a secure Jewish democratic state, as well as to achieving the Palestinian people's legitimate aspirations for independence in a viable state of their own. It is also profoundly in the United States own interests. We also believe that direct negotiations are the only way to achieve this goal, and we oppose unilat-

eral actions by any party that would prejudice the outcome of a negotiated settlement.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to strengthening and deepening the excellent cooperation between the United States and Israel.

Thank you very much. I will be pleased to answer any questions you and the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shapiro follows.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL BENJAMIN SHAPIRO

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you. I am humbled and honored by the trust President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton have placed in me with the nomination to serve as United States Ambassador to Israel. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to meet that trust and responsibility and to promote the interests of the United States.

I am truly honored by the opportunity to appear before this committee today. I have spent hundreds of hours in this room, but this is my first time in this seat. For more than a decade, I worked for Senator Feinstein and Senator Nelson, and sat on the staff benches behind the dais. From that experience, I have a deep appreciation for the vital role that this committee plays in the conduct and oversight of our Nation's foreign policy. If confirmed, I look forward to close cooperation and consultation with the members and staff of this committee and with the Congress as we pursue our shared commitment to strengthening our close and unbreakable relationship with the State of Israel.

I am grateful to Senator Nelson for his introduction, and for his support and guidance over the past decade. I owe much of my professional development to the opportunities he gave me. And I thank Senator Lieberman, with whom I have worked closely on our shared commitment to the closest of United States-Israel relations. I am grateful to him for coming here today and for his support and introduction.

Mr. Chairman, my own interaction with Israel has taken many forms over the years, each of which has helped me gain a greater appreciation of the unique experience and perspective of the Israeli people. I first went to Israel at the age of 4. My parents, who were academics, took our family there for a 6-month sabbatical. It was 1973, and I was there during the Yom Kippur war. There were air raid sirens, followed by hours spent in bomb shelters. I saw soldiers driving through the streets on their way to the front. This was very different from my life in Illinois, where we never experienced such visible and vivid threats to our security and way of life. I remember, at the same time, our family enjoying many examples of the warmth and generosity of the Israeli people, from the Israeli schools my siblings and I attended to long hours spent together with other families in our Jerusalem neighborhood.

I returned to Israel after high school and again during college. In 1988, as the country was reeling from the violence of the first intifada, rocks rained down on the bus I took to Hebrew University and my Israeli classmates intensely debated the meaning of these events for their country's future.

As a congressional staffer, I traveled to Israel as the hopes born of the Oslo Accords made peace seem within reach, celebrated the signing of the peace treaty with Jordan, mourned the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin days after he had returned to Israel from Washington, and worked to address the threats posed to our nations by Hamas and Hezbollah.

As my professional involvement with Israel has deepened, so too has my understanding of Israel's security needs and its people's justifiable concerns about Iran's nuclear weapons program, suicide bombers, missile attacks from Hamas and Hezbollah, and the ongoing efforts of some to delegitimize the Jewish state. But I have also grown more keenly aware of Israel's deep-rooted strengths and its people's dreams—manifested in the building of a modern state, the flowering of Jewish culture and democracy, the Start-up Nation, and the unrelenting search for peace.

The United States has stood by Israel as its partner and ally from the first minutes of its creation, and I have been proud to serve President Obama as he has continued, deepened, and advanced that relationship.

In a region beset by wars, terror, and autocracy, and in which we have much at stake, Israel has been our most dependable ally. Our militaries train together and learn from one another. We share critical intelligence to counter the threats of terrorist organizations that target the United States and the West, as well as Israel. Our economies have grown progressively more intertwined, particularly in the high-

tech and renewable energy sectors. And, perhaps most importantly, we share the fundamental tenets of open and democratic societies.

The United States security relationship with Israel has strengthened and deepened under President Obama. Our commitment to ensuring Israel's Qualitative Military Edge is reflected in our security assistance, joint exercises, and an extraordinarily close level of consultation and cooperation at the highest levels of our civilian and military leaderships. The Congress is our partner in this commitment, fulfilling the President's request to fully fund Israel's Foreign Military Financing even in tight budgetary times.

As a candidate, President Obama went to Sderot and saw a community damaged by rockets and people living in fear of the next attack. As President, he acted to see that Israeli defenses were significantly strengthened. With Congress' full support, there has been tangible and important success in the joint development of missile defense technologies. The Arrow missile defense program provides Israel with a significant strategic missile defense capability. More recently, the Iron Dome short-range missile defense system successfully intercepted several rockets fired from Gaza last month. The additional \$205 million the President requested and Congress provided for this program will help produce and deploy additional Iron Dome batteries to protect Israeli civilian lives in northern and southern Israel. If confirmed, I will work to provide continued support for United States-Israeli missile defense cooperation.

Our security relationship also encompasses close coordination on the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program. President Obama is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, and has dramatically ramped up pressure on Iran, passing in the U.N. Security Council the most sweeping and biting international sanctions ever enacted to increase Iran's isolation and cut off sources of funds and resources to advance their missile and nuclear programs. Israel is a key partner in that effort, supporting the strong sanctions contained in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929 and the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. If confirmed, I will seek to intensify our regular consultations, in which we share assessments and exchange ideas on ways to increase international pressure on Iran.

Defending Israel's security also means fighting attempts to delegitimize Israel. The Obama administration's record is one of unshakeable opposition to this campaign. We've been steadfast in our opposition to anti-Israel resolutions in the U.N. Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, the Security Council and other U.N. bodies; we withdrew from the Durban Review Conference in 2009; and we've supported Israel's right to defend itself in consideration of the deeply flawed Goldstone report.

Our agenda with Israel in these international fora is not purely defensive—we are working to ensure that Israel receives full and equal treatment in all international organizations. Israel has much to offer the world, and the United Nations and other international organizations would benefit from Israeli capabilities and expertise. If confirmed, one of my goals will be to work with the Israeli Government to identify further opportunities for Israeli participation in the international civil service, across the U.N. system, and in the governance of the bodies they serve.

Economic ties between the United States and Israel are also at their highest levels ever. As Silicon Valley taps into the amazing Israeli high-tech talent pool and startup culture, we see an astonishing \$32.3 billion in bilateral trade, despite the global economic slowdown. The Department of Energy and the Government of Israel have just renewed the bilateral Agreement that frames our joint research program on alternative energy, which promises to further enhance our ties in technology cooperation. If confirmed, I will work hard to expand these successes in areas such as energy production, green technologies, and defense and aerospace technologies.

No commitment to Israel's security is complete without absolute dedication to achieving a comprehensive peace between Israel and all its neighbors. The peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, which have brought so much stability to the region, are vital and must be protected and strengthened. The Obama administration believes that a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is essential to safeguarding Israel's future as a secure, Jewish, democratic state, as well as achieving the Palestinian people's legitimate aspirations for independence in a viable state of their own. It is also fundamentally in the United States own interest.

We have been consistent and clear in our call for direct negotiations as the only way to achieve this goal, and we have consistently opposed unilateral actions by either side that would prejudice a negotiated settlement.

We are closely following developments regarding the announced agreement between Fatah and Hamas. Many of the details remain unclear, and its implementation is uncertain. What is clear, however, is that Hamas is a terrorist organization

which targets civilians and calls for the destruction of Israel. To play a constructive role in achieving peace, any Palestinian Government that emerges must renounce violence, abide by past agreements, and recognize Israel's right to exist. As we have said many times, the United States strongly supports Palestinian reconciliation, but it must be on terms that support the cause of peace.

Mr. Chairman, it has been a deep honor to be part of President Obama's team working on these complex and critically important issues. If confirmed by the Senate to be the United States Ambassador to Israel, I will work to the best of my abilities to further strengthen and deepen the excellent cooperation and communication that already exists between our nations, as we work together toward a more peaceful, stable, democratic, and prosperous Middle East.

Thank you for your attention, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator CASEY. Thanks very much.

Mr. Jones.

**STATEMENT OF STUART E. JONES, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN**

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator Risch, and thank you, Senator Lee, for being here.

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to serve as Ambassador to Jordan. I am grateful to the President for this nomination and to Secretary Clinton for her confidence in me and for her leadership of the Department of State. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work as closely as possible with this committee to advance United States goals in Jordan.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my family. My wife, Barbara, is here, a former Foreign Service officer, and my two sons, Thaddeus and Woody, are here. My daughter, Dorothy, is unable to join us because of school obligations. I am grateful for their support, especially during this year while I have served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy in Baghdad.

Mr. Chairman, Jordan, as you said, is one of our closest partners in the Arab world. We share mutual interests and values. It is well known that Jordan has been a powerful agent for peace in the region, as one of only two Arab States to sign a peace treaty with Israel. Jordan is committed to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and to a two-state solution. Jordan has also been a valued partner on Iraq. It accepted hundreds of thousands of refugees and hosted them with dignity, opening its schools and its hospitals, and collaborating with the international community in providing humanitarian aid.

In this Arab Spring, as other countries have faltered, Jordan has undertaken important reforms. King Abdullah is a leader who has long listened to his people. In November 2010, Jordan held free and fair elections under procedures that met international standards. In February, we welcomed the new Jordanian Government with an ambitious mandate for political reform.

We support the King's and the government's efforts to respond to the aspirations of Jordan's citizens. Our efforts include working with Jordanian Government institutions and civil society to expand citizen participation in the country's political and economic systems, strengthen independent media, strengthen the judicial sys-

tem and the rights of women and laborers, and increase religious tolerance.

Our economic assistance programs are aimed at addressing structural challenges in the Jordanian economy. Our security assistance also strengthens Jordan's capabilities to support and contribute to Middle East peace efforts, international peacekeeping operations, counterterrorism efforts, and humanitarian assistance within the region. If confirmed, I will work with the Jordanian Government and people to ensure that all of our assistance advances a sustained and comprehensive partnership and to ensure that these programs create genuine benefits in the lives of the people of Jordan.

We have a large Embassy in Amman. I care deeply about the welfare and security of our personnel, American and Jordanian. If confirmed, I will also dedicate myself to ensuring efficient and cost effective stewardship of our programs.

I appreciate and value this committee's oversight of our mission in Jordan. If confirmed, I look forward to welcoming this committee's members and staff to Amman. Your presence and interest are a vital element in ensuring that we remain successfully engaged with the government and people of Jordan.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, again thank you for this opportunity. It is an honor to be here. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jones follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STUART E. JONES

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to serve as Ambassador to Jordan. I am grateful to the President for his nomination and to Secretary Clinton for her confidence in me and for her leadership of our Department. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work as closely as possible with this committee to advance U.S. goals in Jordan. I will also build on the excellent work of my predecessor and friend, Ambassador Steve Beecroft, to deepen our partnership with the government and people of Jordan.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my family. My wife, Barbara, a former Foreign Service officer, and my two sons, Thaddeus and Woody, are here today. My daughter, Dorothy, is unable to join us because of school obligations. I am grateful for their support, especially during this year while I have served as Deputy Chief of Mission at our Embassy in Baghdad.

Mr. Chairman, Jordan is one of our closest partners in the Arab world. We share mutual interests and values. It is well known that Jordan has been a powerful agent for peace in the region. As one of only two Arab States to sign a peace treaty with Israel, Jordan is committed to the achievement of comprehensive peace in the Middle East and to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Jordan has also been a valued partner on Iraq. It accepted hundreds of thousands of refugees and hosted them with dignity, opening its schools and hospitals and collaborating with the international community in providing humanitarian aid. The Jordanian Prime Minister was the first high-level visitor to Baghdad after Iraq's new government was formed in January.

As other countries have faltered, Jordan has undertaken important reforms. King Abdullah is a leader who has long listened to his people. In November 2010, Jordan held free and fair elections under procedures that met international standards according to both international and domestic election observers. In February, we welcomed a new Jordanian Government with an ambitious mandate for political reform. The King has also established a National Dialogue Commission with a 3-month timeline to enact electoral and political party reform.

We support the King's and the government's efforts to implement a reform agenda that responds to the aspirations of Jordan's citizens. Our efforts include working with Jordanian Government institutions and with Jordanian civil society to expand citizen participation in the country's political and economic systems; strengthen

independent media, the judicial system, and the rights of women and laborers; and increase religious tolerance.

Our economic assistance programs are also aimed at addressing structural challenges in the Jordanian economy. Jordan is one of the most water-starved nations in the world. The Millennium Challenge Corporation is funding a 5-year program on water management in Zarqa which we hope will provide a template for water management throughout the nation. Jordan has also been impacted by rising energy costs; we are now engaging the Government of Jordan to promote energy efficiency and explore the potential for shale gas production. These are just two examples of our extensive programs in Jordan. Assistance also strengthens Jordan's capabilities to support and contribute to Middle East peace efforts, international peacekeeping operations, counterterrorism efforts, and humanitarian assistance within the region.

If confirmed, I will work with the Jordanian Government and people to ensure that all of our assistance effectively and efficiently advances a sustained and comprehensive partnership and to ensure that these programs create genuine benefits in the lives of the people of Jordan.

We have a large Embassy in Amman. I care deeply about the welfare and security of our personnel—American and Jordanian. If confirmed, I will also dedicate myself to ensuring efficient and cost-effective stewardship of our programs.

I appreciate and value this committee's oversight of our mission in Jordan. If confirmed, I look forward to welcoming the committee's members and staff to Amman. Your presence and interest are a vital element in ensuring that we remain productively and successfully engaged with the government and people of Jordan.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to address the committee. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Jones, thanks very much. I should have provided the opportunity to introduce your family. If they would like to stand, I want to make sure that we give them that opportunity.

Mr. JONES. Thank you.

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much.

I would reiterate what I said before about a family serving with you in public service. We appreciate not only their presence here but also the work that they do to make it possible for you to serve.

Mr. JONES. Thank you.

Senator CASEY. And we commend both of you for your willingness to serve.

I will start the first round of questions. I wanted to start, Mr. Shapiro, with a rather difficult topic related to what has been happening just in the last couple of days and weeks: the decision of the Palestinian Authority to form a unity government with Hamas. We are aware of all of the difficulties and concerns that that presents. As you know, and as most Americans I think have a sense of, we have always, and I think the international community has always said, that the only way that Hamas could be a legitimate partner in any effort is if they do at least three things: that they recognize Israel and renounce violence and agree to abide by the previous obligations and agreements of the Palestinian Authority. They have not done that yet.

And I have profound and deep concerns about what is happening, and I wanted to get your sense of what our policy is or what it should be going forward, making sure that we are adhering to those conditions that we have always insisted upon as it relates to Hamas, which is a terrorist organization.

Mr. SHAPIRO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There is no question that we in the administration share many of the concerns that you have just articulated, and I know many of your colleagues share as well, about the reconciliation agreement that was announced and signed this morning in Cairo. We are closely following this in part because we need to learn more about



it. There are many details that are as yet unknown about this agreement. There are ambiguities in the language of it. There are deep uncertainties about its prospects for implementation. And so we will be following that very closely and staying in close touch with the Congress and also maintaining, as we always do, very close consultations with our colleagues and our partners in the Israeli Government to ensure that we have the closest possible common understanding of the meaning of these events.

We share the characterization that you provided of Hamas. Hamas is a terrorist organization that calls for Israel's destruction and that directs violence against civilians. We have no disagreement about that whatsoever.

Now, Palestinian reconciliation ultimately is a desirable goal, but it must take place on terms that support peace, and I think you have articulated them well. Only a Palestinian Government that recognizes Israel and renounces violence and abides by previous agreements between the PLO and Israel can really be a true partner for peace.

So those are the considerations. We will be watching very closely as we gain further understanding and facts about the agreement that was announced.

Senator CASEY. Well, I just want to reiterate what I know to be a bipartisan consensus, as you know, on that issue and want to remind—I am not saying it is necessary—but I want to remind the administration of that commitment that we have to Israel's security.

I have made a number of trips to the region. When I was in Israel in July 2010, I had the chance to tour part of Sderot, a community, among others, that has been assaulted for many years, to actually see the shrapnel and the results of the rockets that have landed there, to the point where children, as you know—and again, you know better than I, but it bears repeating—couldn't play in playgrounds. They literally built, as many people here know, a bomb-fortified indoor playground. So something as simple as playing in a community playground is virtually impossible, at least at various periods in recent history, because of those rockets. There have been thousands and thousands that have landed as a result of the violence perpetrated by Hamas.

I note that Hamas' leader—this is timely and I think it is important for the record—his response to the killing of Osama bin Laden referred to the assassination of an Arab holy warrior. I do not know what more we can say about the threat that Hamas poses to Israel and to the region.

So let me move to at least one more question before I turn to our ranking member, Senator Risch.

A lot of us have worked long and hard on making sure that we do everything possible to hold the Iranian regime in check, especially as it relates to the potential nuclear capability, but also to the ever-present and ongoing threat that is posed by the Iranian regime's support for extremists and terrorist organizations in the region, not the least of which are Hamas and Hezbollah. I spent some time last summer in Beirut, and you do not have to be on the ground in that country very long before you feel the overwhelming

sense of the power of Hezbollah in Lebanon, not to mention the impact it has on the region as a terrorist organization.

But because of that support that the Iranian regime has provided, we need to be determined and even more determined, I think, than we have been to make sure that the sanctions we have applied to the regime work. We are getting some results from that, but frankly not enough, and we need to consider tightening up or increasing the sanctions in my judgment.

I wanted to get your thoughts on that in terms of the impact as you see it of those sanctions and what other steps we can take to hold the Iranian regime in check.

Mr. SHAPIRO. Mr. Chairman, we share the concern and the assessment about the threat posed by Iran not just to Israel, but to the region—and of course, the threat is very real. It is articulated openly by the President of Iran who calls for Israel's destruction. It is a threat to the United States and it is a threat to our allies and our interests and, indeed, international stability throughout the region. It is posed both by Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and by its support for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah and like Hamas which it attempts to arm.

As I said, President Obama is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, and the sanctions enacted by the U.N. Security Council resolution, additional measures coordinated and taken by the European Union and a number of our other partners, and the sanctions passed by this Congress have all created several layers of economic sanctions against Iran that have had a real impact and that has made Iran struggle in ways economically that it has not previously done and begin to feel the pain of the result of its continued pursuit of these policies.

Now, obviously, we will look for additional measures that may be available to tighten those sanctions. We are in close consultations with a number of international partners about ways that can be done, whether it is countries acting on their own or in concert. It is something that my colleagues at the State Department will remain in close consultation with this committee about, but I can assure you it has our full and undivided attention.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

Mr. Jones, I will get to you in the next round, but Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much.

Mr. Shapiro, when you travel over there, you cannot help but be struck by the difference between what is happening in the West Bank and what is happening in Gaza. So I guess this new reconciliation pact raises the question in my mind—and I would like your personal view on this. With that reconciliation or whatever it turns out to be, is the population going to move more toward what is happening in the West Bank or is the West Bank going to move more backward toward what is happening in Gaza? What is your personal view on that?

Mr. SHAPIRO. Well, Senator Risch, I think it is hard to judge exactly how public opinion will react to this agreement. I would say there is strong support among Palestinians for reconciliation, and I think that was a driving factor in this agreement being reached at this time.

We agree with you. There have been tremendous gains made in the West Bank through an improved economy that is growing rapidly through improved security that is carried out both by the Israeli forces and by the Palestinian security forces and an improved governance under the reforms initiated by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. So there is much progress that has been made, and it is in our interest, as well as Israel's interest and the Palestinians' interest, that it be sustained.

That will certainly be a priority for us as we again evaluate the details of this agreement that has been announced and assess its prospects for implementation. We are very mindful of that progress and want to see it sustained.

Senator RISCH. You didn't really get to your personal view as to what you think is going to happen, but if you had to guess, what direction are they going to slide?

Mr. SHAPIRO. Senator, it is very hard not being on the ground to get a sense of the reaction. I think at least within the West Bank we have seen Palestinians appreciating the kinds of changes that they have experienced in their lives in the way I have just described. They certainly have other aspirations as well, as I mentioned, for statehood and for reconciliation. But I think we would certainly hope the Palestinians would try to support a government that would allow that progress to be sustained, and that is what we will be working toward.

Senator RISCH. One cannot help but think that those that live in Gaza have to look across and see what is happening in the West Bank and say, look, what they are doing is working and what we are doing is not working, how can we move more in that direction. One would hope that that is the thought process that an intelligent person would pursue.

Mr. Jones, your view, please if you would, about the instability in Syria and how that potential is affecting or could potentially affect things on the ground in Jordan.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Senator.

I think all of us are watching developments in Syria with real concern. People of Syria are demonstrating their frustration and their lack of satisfaction with the Government in Syria, and the response of the Assad regime has been extremely brutal. It is a source of concern from a humanitarian standpoint and, as you said, from a political standpoint.

I think that the situation in Jordan is quite distinct. The King has long listened to his people, as I said in my statement. He had already put in place a series of reforms to address people's concerns, and for the relatively minor demonstrations that we have seen in Jordan, there has been a completely different relationship between the people and the security forces where you see Jordanian security forces actually providing water and juice to the demonstrators.

Any instability in the region, of course, is a cause for concern and this is something we are going to have to continue to watch. But I think certainly our continued support for Jordan will be essential through this period.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that.

Back to you, Mr. Shapiro. You are at least modestly an expert on Syria. Do you agree with that assessment? We all understand the difference between the two governments, but do you agree with the assessment that that will carry the day?

Mr. SHAPIRO. I do. I do, sir.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Senator Risch.

Senator Lee.

Senator LEE. Thank you both for coming to join us today, and thank you for your willingness to serve your country.

Mr. Shapiro, I want to echo the comments that have been made by my colleagues, and I will echo what Senator Casey was saying a minute ago. I have visited that same village, Sderot, and visited the same playground. On the outskirts of that city, I visited this little lookout point where you could look out and see into Gaza. I have it on good authority that within about 72 hours after I visited that lookout spot, it was destroyed by rockets coming over from Gaza. So I am very sympathetic to the security risks that Israeli citizens face every single day and my heart goes out to them. I hope that we can be a support to Israel as we acknowledge that they are in a very vulnerable position and do everything we can to help them maintain defensible, secure borders.

In light of the involvement of Hamas and the Palestinian Organization, is that something that has caused you to consider whether we should withhold United States funding to the Palestinian Organization until such time as it clearly and thoroughly disassociates itself from Hamas?

Mr. SHAPIRO. Well, Senator, as I stated earlier, there are a lot of details about this agreement that has been announced that are still rather obscure, and many of them may not become clear until it is implemented or attempted to be implemented. And those details, I think, will bear very much on the question that you have raised about assistance. There are clear laws regarding our Palestinian assistance program. I can assure you that the administration will remain in full compliance with those laws, and I have already articulated the kinds of conditions that we think represent a Palestinian Authority that is committed to peace. So we will, obviously, be considering that question, but it requires a much greater and better understanding of an agreement that has not yet begun to be implemented.

Senator LEE. Sure, but there does come a point at which we turn that off. Do we not?

Mr. SHAPIRO. Well, the law is very clear. There are circumstances under which we would not be able to provide assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

Senator LEE. And so notwithstanding the fact that there is sometimes wiggle room—particularly in laws relating to foreign relations, there is sometimes wiggle room—you stand by the proposition that the law does have limits. This is a law. This is not just an aspirational statement.

Mr. SHAPIRO. Yes, I agree with that.

Senator LEE. I appreciate a statement made recently by Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who said it is clear that an Egypt that is anchored in democratic values would never be a

threat to peace, particularly a threat to peace in Israel. I hope that he is right. Do you agree with his assessment?

Mr. SHAPIRO. Well, we certainly support the transition that is underway in Egypt and believe it represents an incredible opportunity for the Egyptian people to experience the kind of self-rule and democracy and the realization of those aspirations. We think it is absolutely critical that Egypt remain, as it goes through that transition, the responsible regional leader that it has been, and a big component of that is the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt which has been not only so important to Israel's security but really an anchor of regional stability and key to our own interests. So we have been very pleased that the Egyptian transitional government has repeated its commitment to all of Egypt's international obligations, including that treaty, and we would certainly have the expectation that any Egyptian Government would live up to those obligations and maintain the treaty.

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

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Senator Lee.

Mr. Jones, I wanted to get back to you. I meant to do that in the first round and I ate up all my time and actually took more time. So I owe the committee a minute and 22 seconds or something like that.

You have been asked before and your answers, as well as your statement, acknowledge the challenge in the region and the impact on Jordan and obviously the reaction by King Abdullah, as well as Jordanian leaders other than he, have been of marked contrast to what we have seen in other places in the region.

I wanted to develop that a little further in the sense that we know that in this fight against terrorism we have had to develop new relationships and even stronger relationships. I think it can be said without contradiction that Jordan has been a strong counterterrorism partner. We appreciate that probably even more so in the last couple of days. We know that that fight has been and will continue to be against Islamist groups in the Middle East.

We also know that even as Jordan is a strong counterterrorism partner, its peace treaty with Israel has also played an important role in the Middle East as well.

But given the unrest in the region and given the increasing influence of terrorist organizations that I mentioned before like Hamas and Hezbollah, what measures should the United States take to support King Abdullah's reform efforts especially at this time?

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Senator. Thank you, Chairman.

As you know, the United States is an important provider of assistance to Jordan, both economic support funds and foreign military financing. The economic support funds I think can play a vital role in terms of helping grow the economy, helping it address some of its structural challenges. Jordan is an importer. It imports 96 percent of its fuel. We are involved in helping Jordan look for alternative fuel sources and look at nontraditional fuels.

We are also helping them address their water problem. Jordan is one of the most water-starved countries in the world, and through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, we have just issued a \$275 million grant over 5 years to work with the commu-

nity of Zarqa to develop water management techniques that we hope will be a model for the rest of the country.

So I think at this level, helping communities, helping create prosperity—that is a very important way to help combat terrorism.

Of course, the security side is also very important. Jordan has been an outstanding partner with us in the struggle against terrorism, and at all levels we should continue the work that we are doing with them, supporting their efforts and working closely with them as a partner.

Senator CASEY. I know we are almost ready to wrap up because we are going to move to our second panel, and we have had almost 50 minutes so far. So I do want to wrap up.

Senator Risch, do you have any questions?

Senator RISCH. No. I am going to pass. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Senator CASEY. I would thank our ranking member for being here.

After we move to our second panel, we may have to adjourn briefly because of a potential vote, but that is not certain yet.

I do, as well, want to offer each of you the opportunity to make any closing statement or any point that you want to emphasize that we did not ask about or something you did not have a chance to cover—not that we encourage closing statements, but if you really feel the need to say something else.

Mr. SHAPIRO. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to be here.

Senator CASEY. I do want to mention, which I should have earlier, that Mr. Jones, I am told you are a Pennsylvania native. That is what the record shows. You grew up in, and your mother still lives in, Lafayette Hill, PA?

Mr. JONES. Correct.

Senator CASEY. I want you to know that that will not have any impact on your confirmation. [Laughter.]

But it is possible it will have some impact on me.

Thank you very much to both of you and we will move to our second panel.

What I will do, as we are changing seats, so to speak, is I will begin a statement so that we can keep the hearing moving.

We have two more nominees today and I wanted to start with our nominee for Uzbekistan. As many people in this audience know, Uzbekistan is an important partner in the Northern Distribution Network which is a major strategic priority for the United States war in Afghanistan. The airbase in Uzbekistan provides a vital supply route for the United States and NATO efforts to defeat al-Qaeda and its allies in Afghanistan and western Pakistan. The Uzbek Government also cooperates with United States security forces on counterterrorism and drug trafficking, two serious international threats.

The United States, however, must balance our strategic interests in Uzbekistan with the need to hold the government accountable for serious human rights abuses, including the use of force to oppress its own citizens as demonstrated by the massacre in Andijan in the year 2005. According to the State Department's 2010 Human

Rights Report, the Uzbek Government continues to commit serious human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests and detention, restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly, and forced child labor in the cotton industry.

I would like to especially acknowledge Senator Harkin's efforts to expose child labor in Uzbekistan, which remains of critical concern.

I look forward to hearing how Mr. George Krol will encourage the Uzbek Government to abide by its international human rights commitments while maintaining our important security cooperation.

Ambassador Krol is Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs. He has served as United States Ambassador to Belarus from 2003 to 2006 and has served in several other challenging posts in Poland, India, Russia, and Ukraine. I am confident that his broad knowledge and experience working in the former Soviet Union will serve him well in this post if confirmed.

Algeria is an important strategic partner of the United States in the fight against al-Qaeda-linked groups in north Africa, most notably Al Qaeda in the Islamic Mahgreb, so-called AQIM. The Algerian Government has taken an active leadership role in the African Union's efforts to combat terrorism, and the recently announced U.S.-Algeria Bilateral Counterterrorism Contact Group will help to expand our existing cooperation to ensure greater security, peace, and development in the region.

Algeria's protest movement has remained limited compared to other countries in the region, but economic factors and long-standing political grievances have contributed to a series of strikes and demonstrations.

Algeria's decision in February to lift the 1992 state of emergency law was a welcomed step, but more needs to be done to address the human rights concerns such as freedom of assembly and association, prisoner abuse, and violence against women.

I look forward to hearing from Henry Ensher about how the United States can work with the Algerian Government to promote further democratic reforms while also strengthening our security relationship.

Mr. Ensher is currently serving as adviser to the Office of Afghanistan Affairs. He recently returned from southern Afghanistan where he served as Senior U.S. Civilian Representative. He has also served in our Embassies in Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Syria, Israel, Iraq, and was the Director of Political Affairs for Iraq in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs in 2006. That is a mouthful.

I would also like to welcome Mr. Ensher's wife, Mona, and two sons, Henry and Tariq, who are here with us today. And if they do not mind, we offer the chance, but we would love to have them stand up and be acknowledged. Thank you for being here today and thank you for your support for what I know is a family commitment to public service.

Mr. Krol, would you like to start? Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE ALBERT KROL, OF NEW JERSEY, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

Ambassador KROL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Risch.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to become Ambassador to Uzbekistan, and I am grateful for the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Clinton have placed in me with this nomination.

Unfortunately, my family is not here today. My wife is serving our Nation abroad, but she and I think my family are watching on the Webcast. So I say hello to them. You can stand up. Right? [Laughter.]

Senator CASEY. That is permitted. I want to give them a few minutes to stand up. [Laughter.]

Ambassador KROL. Since establishing diplomatic relations nearly 20 years ago, the United States has supported Uzbekistan's sovereignty and independence and encouraged its development as a prosperous, tolerant, internationally responsible, and democratic state at peace with its neighbors and the world. And those remain our fundamental goals to this day.

Most recently, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Asia, I came to appreciate firsthand Uzbekistan's unique importance to United States foreign policy interests.

Uzbekistan has provided crucial assistance to its neighbor Afghanistan and to international efforts to stabilize the situation there. Electricity from Uzbekistan keeps the lights on in Kabul. And Uzbekistan is also, as you noted, Mr. Chairman, an important part of the Northern Distribution Network, a major supply route for coalition forces. And if confirmed, I will encourage Uzbekistan to maintain this critical support.

As you also noted, illegal narcotics flows, trafficking in persons, terrorism, extremism, and weapons of mass destruction proliferation concerns plague Uzbekistan's neighborhood. Over recent years, our cooperation with Uzbekistan has grown in addressing these transnational challenges through engagement and vetted training programs, and if confirmed, I would work to strengthen our partnership with Uzbekistan in these areas.

With the largest population in Central Asia and huge energy and mineral resources and its strategic location, Uzbekistan has a great economic potential, and if confirmed, I will encourage Uzbekistan to take steps to attract United States companies to help develop and diversify its economy and to buy American goods and services.

Mr. Chairman, almost 30 years' experience in the Foreign Service has taught me that long-term peace and durable stability are only possible with respect for human rights, the rule of law, transparent and democratic institutions, a vibrant civil society, and an open and free media. If confirmed, I will engage the government and the people of Uzbekistan fully and forthrightly on human rights issues such as preventing arbitrary arrests, addressing the allegations of torture and mistreatment in prisons, ending forced child labor, and allowing the free practice of faiths.

If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Uzbekistan to increase space for civil society in Uzbekistan and for international



and domestic nongovernmental organizations to register and function freely.

In 2009, the administration established regular bilateral, inter-agency consultations with Tashkent, and in these high-level meetings, the full range of bilateral and multilateral interests, including political, security, economic, and commercial issues, as well as human rights, are discussed frankly and comprehensively. And flowing from these consultations, an ambitious work plan is being developed to make realistic progress in all these areas.

As Secretary Clinton stressed in Tashkent last December, we desire to move from words to actions. And if confirmed, I look forward to applying my energy and experience, creativity and leadership to constant, consistent engagement that meaningful action in these areas demands.

I know from past ambassadorial experience that being an Ambassador is not only an honor but a responsibility, and if confirmed, I will endeavor to be a responsible and accountable steward of the American people's trust and property, a caring leader for the entire embassy community, and a faithful representative of our values and word and deed. And I will ensure that our mission looks out for the interests of American citizens living and traveling in Uzbekistan.

If confirmed, I will aim not only to develop effective relationships with the government but also to get out among the people of Uzbekistan and engage all elements of Uzbek society. Public diplomacy is a critical element of our work, and I will encourage all members of the mission team to be ambassadors to the people of Uzbekistan, helping to increase understanding of American policies and values. And fostering greater exchanges and contacts between our peoples and communities and not just between our governments will be a major priority.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I know success depends on building and leading a strong, dedicated mission team and keeping it fully in step with Washington and not only with the executive branch but also with Congress, and if confirmed, I will want to work closely with Congress, with you and the committee and your staff to advance America's goals and interests in Uzbekistan, hosting congressional visits and briefing you.

Thank you, sir, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Krol follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE ALBERT KROL

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to become U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Uzbekistan. I am grateful for the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Clinton have placed in me with this nomination. If confirmed, I will work with this committee and the entire U.S. Congress to advance America's goals and interests in Uzbekistan.

Since recognizing Uzbekistan and establishing diplomatic relations nearly 20 years ago, the United States has supported Uzbekistan's sovereignty and independence and encouraged its development as a prosperous, tolerant, democratic society and internationally responsible state at peace with its neighbors and the world. Those remain our fundamental goals to this day.

Most recently, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Asia, I came to understand and appreciate the importance of Uzbekistan to U.S. foreign policy interests.

Uzbekistan has provided crucial assistance to its neighbor Afghanistan and to coalition efforts to stabilize the security situation there. Electricity from Uzbekistan keeps the lights burning in Kabul. Uzbekistan is also an important part of the Northern Distribution Network, a major supply route for coalition forces. If confirmed, I will encourage Uzbekistan to maintain this support.

Illegal narcotics, trafficking in persons, terrorism and extremism plague Uzbekistan's immediate neighborhood. Over the years, U.S. cooperation with Uzbekistan has grown in addressing these transnational challenges through engagement and vetted training programs. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our partnership with Uzbekistan in these areas.

Uzbekistan has the largest population in Central Asia and also is a major producer of energy and minerals. If confirmed, I will encourage Uzbekistan to take steps to attract U.S. companies to help develop and diversify its economy and to buy American goods and services.

Almost 30 years experience in the Foreign Service has taught me that long-term peace and durable stability are only possible with respect for human rights, the rule of law, transparent and democratic institutions, a vibrant civil society and an open and free media. If confirmed, I will engage the government and people of Uzbekistan fully and forthrightly, to increase not only our bilateral security and economic engagement, but also our engagement on human rights issues such as preventing arbitrary arrests, addressing allegations of torture and mistreatment in prisons, ending forced child labor, and allowing free practice of faiths.

If confirmed, I will encourage the government to make space for civil society in Uzbekistan and for international and domestic nongovernmental organizations to register and function freely. These steps can facilitate Uzbekistan achieving its self-declared goal to become a prosperous, tolerant, and stable society in full accord with its international commitments and rich heritage as a crossroads of cultures, education, and human values.

The Obama administration has established an atmosphere and a mechanism of constructive dialogue and trust with the government and people of Uzbekistan. In February of this year the second series of comprehensive annual bilateral consultations with Uzbekistan were held in Tashkent. Secretary Clinton visited Tashkent last December to elevate our engagement with Uzbekistan's leadership and civil society. In these consultations the full range of bilateral and multilateral interests including political, security, economic and commercial issues, as well as human rights, are discussed frankly and comprehensively.

An ambitious work plan is being developed to make realistic progress in all these areas. Many of these issues are not easy to resolve and will require great effort. The United States and, I believe, Uzbekistan are committed to this process and to achieving results. As Secretary Clinton stressed in Tashkent, we desire to move from words to actions. If confirmed, I look forward to applying my energy, experience, creativity, leadership and insight to the constant, consistent engagement that meaningful action in these areas demands.

I know from my past ambassadorial experience that being an American ambassador is not only a great honor but also a great responsibility. If confirmed, I will endeavor to be a good steward of the American people's trust and property, a caring leader for my embassy colleagues, and a faithful representative of our values and our interests. I will ensure that our mission looks out for the interests of American citizens living and traveling in Uzbekistan.

If confirmed, I will aim not only to develop effective relationships with the leadership and government authorities, but also to get out among the people of Uzbekistan and engage all elements of Uzbek society. To me, public diplomacy is a critical element of our diplomatic engagement. I will encourage all members of the mission team to be ambassadors to the people of Uzbekistan working to increase understanding of the United States, our policies and our values. Fostering greater exchanges and contacts between our peoples and communities, and not just between our governments, will be a major priority.

Finally, I know success depends on my leadership in encouraging and supporting a strong, dedicated mission team and keeping it fully synchronized with Washington, not only with the executive branch, but with the Congress as well. If confirmed, I would look forward to continuing an active dialogue with you as we seek to strengthen our relations with the people of Uzbekistan.

Thank you. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I will also note for the record that you were born in Pittsburgh. Is that correct?

Ambassador KROL. Yes, sir.

Senator CASEY. That will have some impact on me. OK.

Ambassador KROL. And I am a Pirate fan too I have to say.  
[Laughter.]

Senator RISCH. Do we have any Idaho appointees here, Mr. Chairman?

Senator CASEY. We are going to work on those. We are going to make that part of the next hearing.

Mr. Ensher, we want to welcome you as well and thank you for your commitment to public service. You can provide a summary. Both your full statements will be made part of the record.

**STATEMENT OF HENRY S. ENSHER, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**

Mr. ENSHER. This will be just a brief summary, Senator, if that is all right with you.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

Mr. ENSHER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored by President Obama's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to Algeria. I deeply appreciate the confidence he and Secretary Clinton have shown by making this nomination.

If confirmed, my No. 1 goal will be to protect all Americans living and working in Algeria. I will work to advance critical United States foreign policy and national security interests in Algeria by using the full range of our diplomatic tools to promote security and economic prosperity. Both the President and the Secretary have emphasized the importance of outreach to civil society in countries of the region, especially women's organizations, and if confirmed, doing so will be a priority.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to thank you very much for acknowledging my family, but I feel I would be remiss if I didn't add just a couple of words. So with permission, I will do that.

I have been away from the family for much of the last several years, 2 years, including time spent in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that would not have been possible particularly without Mona's unwavering love and support. She has done splendidly at home even while she was doing a very important job in service to the people of the United States. So I wanted to acknowledge that again.

Thank you, sir, for that.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ensher follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HENRY S. ENSHER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, members of the committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored by President Obama's nomination of me to be U.S. Ambassador to Algeria. I deeply appreciate the confidence President Obama and Secretary Clinton have shown by making this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, my No. 1 goal will be to protect the people who serve the United States at our mission in Algiers and to protect the Americans who live and work in Algeria. I will work to advance critical U.S. foreign policy and national security interests in Algeria by using the full range of our diplomatic tools to promote security and economic prosperity. Both the President and the Secretary have emphasized the importance of outreach to civil society in countries of the region and, if confirmed, doing so will be a priority.

With your permission, I would like to introduce my wife, Mona, and our two sons, Henry and Tariq. I would not be here today without their unwavering love and sup-

port. The service to our country in Iraq and Afghanistan that have kept me away from them for more than 2 years would not have been possible without Mona's steadiness and grace at home, even while she excelled at her own very important job.

The relationship between the United States and Algeria has never been stronger. As the third-most populous country in the Arab world, Algeria is the largest producer of oil and gas on the African Continent, and an important supplier of energy to both the United States and Europe. Algeria also plays a critical role on the front lines countering violent extremism, and knows firsthand how important it is to maintain constant vigilance against those who wish to do us harm.

Like other countries in the region, Algeria has been impacted by events of the "Arab Spring." President Bouteflika has recently announced important reforms of the Algerian system, and we look forward to their early implementation. Algerians will decide any next steps they wish to take and, if confirmed, I look forward to developing our relations with them as they continue to craft their own destiny.

Algeria exports nearly 2 million barrels of oil a day. The United States is by far Algeria's largest trading partner, accounting for nearly a quarter of all hydrocarbon sales. However, when it comes to Algeria's imports, the United States doesn't even make it into the top five. While maintaining a constant flow of oil is critical, if confirmed I will work with American companies to develop Algerian partners to help them make use of Algeria's considerable resources for their shared benefit.

Our relationship with Algeria is built on counterterrorism cooperation. President Bouteflika was the first Arab leader to call President Bush following the attacks on 9/11, which reflected our shared view of the dangers posed by terrorism and led to even greater cooperation. Algeria's fight against violent extremism in the 1990s cost tens of thousands of lives, imposing still more sacrifice on the Algerian people, who have such a long history of struggle to win and preserve their freedom and sovereignty. Actions of the government caused the level of violence to decrease, but Algeria knows as well as the United States that violent extremism remains a threat.

To further improve our bilateral cooperation, we recently kicked off a Counterterrorism Contact Group. Additionally, Algeria has taken a leading role in international cooperation on counterterrorism, and, if confirmed, I will encourage them to continue to do so.

Algeria has long had a significant role in Middle Eastern and African affairs. It is a key player in conflict resolution throughout the wider region. It is a leading member state of the Arab League, the African Union, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It is a longstanding member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and a founding member of the New Economic Partnership for African Development. Its mediating role in conflicts in the Sahel will remain vital to finding peaceful solutions there. The "frozen conflict" over Western Sahara cannot be resolved without Algerian involvement. Not least, Algeria is literally at the confluence of Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Arab world. It would gain from increasing trade within the region, and its willingness to lead in this area will be critical to realizing long-held dreams of regional integration.

Regarding the Embassy itself, our team has recently moved to a new, more secure facility, which is critical to our ability to promote our interests in an environment that still has the potential to be dangerous to us. To be clear, there has been a lot of improvement in our ability to operate freely in Algiers since I served there 11 years ago, but some necessary restrictions remain in place. If confirmed, I will have no higher priority than the security and safety of the entire American community in Algeria. Thank you for this opportunity to address you today. I would be pleased to address any questions that you may have.

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much and thanks for offering that personal note. That is probably not acknowledged enough in this city.

I wanted to start with Algeria and some of the challenges we have with our relationship. We know that we are partners in counterterrorism and we know that as Ambassador you would have the chance and the opportunity to build on what is the newly formed U.S.-Algeria Contact Group, the Counterterrorism Contact Group. I guess I would ask you first how you see that part of our relationship and how you would build on that foundation.

Mr. ENSHER. That is a great word, Senator. There is a strong foundation there that goes back some time, even into the 1990s,

and takes into account the fact that the Algerians were the first to acknowledge and express condolences after the events of 9/11 from the Arab world. Since then, we have engaged in a number of activities designed to improve that counterterrorism cooperation, of which the recent beginning of a contact group is only the latest example.

Sir, if confirmed, I would expect to intensify those relations across the full range of activities, including enhanced military cooperation and support for enhanced law enforcement cooperation and what can be done by improved relations with civil society as well. There are great opportunities here and we would look to exploit them fully, especially the Algerian desire to be a regional leader in this area, and we will look to support that in particular.

Thank you, sir.

Senator CASEY. I was going to ask you another question that relates to what we have seen play out over the last couple of months in the region, starting in Tunisia. I was struck by the contrast, just having been to the Middle East in July, and with Egypt being the last stop on our trip. We met with civil society leaders and their request at that time seemed so limited because of the circumstances that were at work then. In a meeting with three U.S. Senators, they requested that we and the U.S. Government provide more help for a freer election in Egypt—nothing about regime change or the kind of changes we have seen. In every country in that region, over many years, there have been civil society leaders, many of whom are now among the leaders and the activists for change.

In Algeria, the democratic movement or protest movement has been more limited compared to other countries in the region. There have been a series of prodemocracy protests and strikes and demonstrations that have their origins in economics. If you are confirmed, how would you work with Algeria's civil society leaders to make sure that the focus is on political reform? It is a two part question really. How do you see the reform movement and progress, if any, and two, how would you work with civil society leaders?

Mr. ENSHER. Thank you for that, Mr. Chairman.

It is a two-part response to your two-part question.

First of all, I could not agree more with my colleague, Ambassador Krol, on the importance of public diplomacy, simply being out there, making ourselves available as an embassy team to all aspects of society. We are supposed to be the embassy not just to the government but to the entire society, and we will do that under my leadership if I am confirmed, Senator. So that is one aspect of it.

The other is that we have a number of really excellent programs under the Middle East Partnership Initiative which enable us to help certain parts of civil society and, in fact, even the government develop their capacity better to improve their capability to advocate effectively for their rights, which already exist under the Algerian Constitution. And so I will continue and intensify those.

I would also point out that the Algerian people have long expressed a desire for broader participation in their own government, and we will support that as well.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

In my remaining time, I will turn to Ambassador Krol. Mr. Ambassador, like so many places where we have committed brave Americans serving in diplomatic posts, there are always tensions and conflicts that you have to try to resolve as Ambassador. And I do not envy the challenges that Ambassadors like you, and those who seek to serve, face.

You are going to have difficulties balancing two things, at least. One of the problems is the Northern Distribution Network. I am told that when we move supplies to our troops in Afghanistan, an estimated 98 percent of the traffic in that network passes through Uzbekistan. So it is a critical route to getting supplies to our troops in Afghanistan.

At the same time, we have got to be very tough and determined about making sure that Uzbekistan addresses the significant human rights abuses, the concerns that people have regarding a persecution of religious minority groups, forced child labor, restrictions on domestic and international nongovernmental organizations, torture, or illegal treatment in the criminal justice system. That is a long, long list.

How do you see that challenge and can you give us some indication about how you will address that priority, in the context of the necessity for us to get supplies to our troops through the Northern Distribution Network?

Ambassador KROL. Thank you, Senator. That is a very good question and certainly a very important one. It is a basic challenge that I will face, if confirmed, as have my predecessors.

However, I do not view it so much as an either/or. We have to pursue both of these matters together, and I would say on the matter of the Northern Distribution Network, which is all part of the effort to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan, that it is clearly in the interest of Uzbekistan. And in our conversations with the leadership of Uzbekistan, they clearly wish to see Afghanistan, their neighbor, stabilized. And so I think they see it very much in their interest to facilitate and support the international efforts in Afghanistan for their own merits and for their own security for Uzbekistan. So it is not a matter that they are just doing this for us. We are doing this together, and they understand it. They live in a tough neighborhood, and when we have discussions with them at the highest level, as when Secretary Clinton was there last December, this is quite clear that they join us in wishing to see success in Afghanistan, stability on their border so that it does not spread into their own country.

On human rights issues, that too is a security and a stability issue. And if confirmed, what I would like to do, as my predecessors have, is to develop an atmosphere of trust and confidence with the government and the people of Uzbekistan so that they understand that respect for human rights creates greater stability in a country in order to weather difficulties, whether they are economic and the like. And this is not something of simply because we like it to be done and simply because it is a matter of their obligations under their international commitments, but that having a respect for human rights in all the areas that you said do create a durable stability for a country, which is what is in everyone's inter-

est, the Uzbek authorities, the Uzbek people, and ourselves. And so I would like to be able to encourage them to take steps that broaden this sphere, this space for civil society, for broadening the choices that people have.

Another issue in Uzbekistan is that a very large percent of its population is young, very young, and they have aspirations. They need choices. And a lot of it will be finding jobs, what kind of a future that they have, and having a society that can provide those choices will stabilize that so you will not have resentments building up that could lead to some of the lessons we have seen elsewhere in the world of late.

Thank you, sir.

Senator CASEY. Thanks very much.

Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Well, thank you very much.

Mr. Ensher, let me start with you. My chief of staff was in Algiers for a week during the recent break. So I am modestly informed as to what is going on on the ground there. But I would like to get your views generally as to how the popular uprisings, for want of a better word, will move forward in Algiers. How will that resolve? How do you see it?

Mr. ENSHER. Thank you very much for that.

I have to say that because of the activities of your chief of staff, sir, you are well ahead of me. It has been 11 years since I have been in Algiers.

But with that in mind, I would say—

Senator RISCH. By the way, there are still sandstorms there in case you forgot.

Mr. ENSHER. There always are, yes.

It seems to me that there are a couple of ways that this could go. One way would be for the government to do, as it is apparently trying to do, which is to get out ahead of the demands of the population for greater openness, improved press freedom, broader access to the government, all those sorts of things. And they have done that by lifting the state of emergency that had been in place for 18 years and by promising—promising—the type of legislation necessary to achieve those goals to be passed sometime in fall of this year. So that would be the good course of action.

And here I will point out that so far in Algeria, there have been very few calls for a change of regime. It all has been about economic and social and political aspirations within the framework as it exists, not requiring the departure of any particular leader. That is a huge difference I think from some of the other places in the region.

The other way that it could go would be for the security situation to get out of control, and to lead to the sorts of things that we have seen elsewhere. I frankly do not expect that to happen. Algeria has a lot of resources to bring to bear. There is a longstanding demand, a tradition of democratic practice and a sense that democracy is already the right way to go. And so I am really quite optimistic about the future there.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Mr. Krol, you have covered the waterfront I think pretty well. I wonder if you could comment a little bit in general terms about the terrorism issue in Uzbekistan. We know that there are Islamic extremists there that pose security threats. Can you give us your view of that, please?

Ambassador KROL. Yes, Senator. That is again a very good question, a very pertinent one.

Unfortunately, Uzbekistan has been the victim of terrorist attacks. There are organizations such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, as well as the Islamic Jihad Union, that are comprised in part of people from Uzbekistan who may be operationally working in places further to their south, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the like. The Uzbeks are very concerned to keep that threat at bay. That is why they wish to maintain strong border controls, as well as controls within their country, to prevent these groupings from consolidating or taking action in Uzbekistan.

And it also requires working with their neighboring countries. I think they are concerned that the neighboring countries, particularly Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, that have long borders with Uzbekistan, that those countries are able to prevent terrorist groups from conducting or having a safe haven in these countries in order to have attacks on Uzbekistan or into Uzbekistan or in the whole region. This is certainly an area that is of great concern to everyone in the region and the United States even though we are not of the region, but as you know, we do have significant assets in Afghanistan as well. And so it is serious. It demands a great deal of attention, and it is certainly one of the areas that we wish to cooperate with Uzbekistan to address.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CASEY. Thanks very much, Senator Risch.

Ambassador Krol, I wanted to go back to the concerns we have about human rights, and I know you share these. I wanted to refer back to a particular statement you made in 2008, and to get your reaction to some of the information that surrounds this issue.

In a Voice of America interview in Uzbekistan in October 2008, you commended the Uzbek Government for "passing orders to enforce legislation about child labor." During the same year, during the 2008 cotton harvest, the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London found that approximately 2.4 million school children between the ages of 10 and 15 were forcibly recruited to harvest cotton. A followup study by the same group released in November 2010 noted that the practice remains ubiquitous. Our own U.S. Department of Labor last year included Uzbek cotton on the list of "goods produced by child labor and forced labor."

Clearly, it seems that the government has, in a real sense, thumbed its nose at the obligations under the ILO Convention 182. I want to have you comment on that based upon those studies and based upon a previous statement you made.

Ambassador KROL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a serious issue and a problem in Uzbekistan. It is one that we raise consistently with the Uzbek authorities, and if confirmed,



I know it will be one of the ones that I will be dealing with with them.

As you had mentioned, the Uzbek Government has acceded to all of the ILO Conventions dealing with child labor. The government and the President have passed and signed decrees that prohibit forced child labor in Uzbekistan. And so we commend them, as we say, for those actions that they have taken, at least in passing or at least adhering to these international conventions and signing the legislation.

But as you said, we need to move from the words to actually fulfilling the commitments made to the ILO Conventions, as well as fulfilling even the decrees of the President. And most recently, one could say that there was encouraging news because the Government of Uzbekistan—and their Embassy here passed us the information—has set up an interagency commission across the entire government authorities of Uzbekistan for the purpose of implementing these commitments made under the ILO and other things.

So again, it is welcoming to see that, but again, we will want to see that this goes beyond simply creating a commission to actually going to the action of addressing the children that are working in the fields. And I think our human rights report and other reports of our Embassy have made it clear that it does continue. So again, I would quote Secretary Clinton again when she was in Tashkent. “We need to move from the words which are welcoming and good to hear to the actions of actually ending this practice.”

Senator CASEY. Well, we would urge you to continue to press them very aggressively. We appreciate the commitment you have. Your statements today are important to that.

I will have a number of other questions for the record probably for both nominees and those that preceded you.

Ambassador Krol, I did not get to prisoners of conscience, the criminal justice system. There is a long list that we do not have time to get into today, but we will make sure that the questions and the answers are made part of the record of this hearing and your nomination.

We are grateful to both of you for your commitment to public service at a tough time internationally, and for the commitment of your families as well.

Unless there is anything else to come before the committee—Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Mr. Ensher, on a personal note, is your family, your wife and your children, going with you?

Mr. ENSHER. They will be back and forth a great deal I suspect. Mona does have a very important job. The boys are in school and doing other things. But this will be a big change from Iraq and Afghanistan where at least we have the option. Thank you for asking.

And, Senator, from those two experiences, the one thing that I have learned or a thing that I have learned is the absolute criticality of CODELs and STAFFDELS. It is so important to reinforce the message that they are getting from we diplomats out there. It is so important for them to understand the political environment that we operate in and that drives the things that we do. So I cannot urge you strongly enough. I cannot invite you more enthusiastically than to come to the Kasbah if confirmed.

Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Thank you.

Senator CASEY. Ambassador Krol, any closing statements?

Ambassador KROL. I would just echo my colleague Henry and welcome you all to Uzbekistan, the Great Silk Road, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva. It is a fascinating country and a very warm and hospitable people with long traditions and culture. I think having your staff and everyone coming out there makes a great deal of difference to the people.

Thank you.

Senator CASEY. Thank you both very much.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:05 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

#### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF DANIEL SHAPIRO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* 2011 has been a year of unprecedented change in the Middle East. How have the events in Egypt and Syria affected Israel's security situation? How do you see your role in supporting the Israeli-Egyptian relationship? What can the United States do to help ensure the integrity of the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty? What can the United States do to ensure that the turbulence in Syria does not spill over into Lebanon or threaten Israel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue our close cooperation and consultation with Israel regarding any developments that might pose a threat to Israel's security.

Egypt is undergoing a period of significant transition. Our relationship with Egypt remains strong, and we continue to work constructively and collaboratively with the Egyptian Government on a range of issues. We remain encouraged that the current Egyptian Government has repeatedly expressed its commitment to adhere to past agreements, including its Treaty of Peace with Israel.

The Department of State fully appreciates the significance of Egyptian-Israeli peace to our regional interests and to regional stability. In our discussions with Egyptian leadership across the political spectrum, we have and will continue to underscore the importance of upholding this and Egypt's other international obligations.

On Syria, our policy is that the abhorrent and deplorable actions of the Syrian Government against the Syrian people must end immediately. The Syrian Government must also immediately stop arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture.

*Question.* What can be done to counter efforts to delegitimize Israel? Are there steps that Israel could take that would decrease the popular pressures in Egypt and Jordan to recalibrate their relations with Israel?

*Answer.* In the U.N. system and in many international organizations, members devote disproportionate attention to Israel and consistently adopt biased resolutions, which too often divert attention from the world's most egregious human rights abuses. We will continue our ongoing effort in the full range of international organizations to ensure that Israel's legitimacy is beyond dispute and its security is never in doubt.

We will do all we can to ensure that Israel has the same rights and responsibilities as all states in these bodies—including membership in all appropriate regional groupings at the U.N.

The peace agreements between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Jordan, are fundamental for long-term regional peace and stability in the region. We strongly support Israeli, Jordanian, and Egyptian efforts ensure productive relations and strengthened connections between their governments and peoples in support of regional peace and stability.

*Question.* What is the administration's position on the Hamas-Fatah unity government? What factors will it use in determining the future relationship with, and financial support for, the Palestinian Authority?

Answer. We understand Fatah and Hamas have reached a reconciliation agreement. What is important now is that the Palestinians ensure implementation of that agreement advances the prospects of peace rather than undermines them.

We will continue to seek information on the details of the agreement and to consult with Palestinians and Israelis about these issues.

We understand the concerns of some Members of Congress. As a new Palestinian Government is formed, we will assess it based on its policies and will determine the implications for our assistance based on U.S. law.

We are confident President Abbas remains committed to the principles of non-violence, recognition of the state of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations between the parties.

To play a constructive role in achieving peace, any interim Palestinian Government formed in the period before elections must ensure its actions fully implement these principles. The U.S. stance toward such a government will be fully consistent with U.S. law.

Our position on Hamas has not changed; Hamas is a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.

*Question.* In August 2010, the President said that he believed it might be possible to reach an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement within a 1-year timeframe, a period which roughly corresponds with the end of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's 2-year institution-building program.

- Do you still believe a peace agreement is possible? How do you evaluate Salam Fayyad's program?

Answer. A comprehensive Middle East peace agreement remains a central U.S. policy objective. As we have said many times, the status quo between Israelis and Palestinians is not sustainable. Neither Israel's future as a democratic Jewish state, nor the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians can be secured without a two-state solution that is achieved through serious and credible negotiations that address issues of concerns to both sides.

The Palestinian Authority has set forth a clear vision for strengthening the institutions of a future Palestinian state, improving delivery of essential services, and implementing a reform agenda. Over the past year and a half, the PA has made steady progress in putting in place policies to reform the security sector, foster economic growth, expand public services, decrease reliance on donor assistance, effectively manage public expenditures and improve tax revenue collection. However, as we have often stated, the Palestinian institution-building program is mutually reinforcing with efforts on the political track; it cannot achieve a Palestinian state absent a negotiated outcome.

*Question.* On March 16, 2003, Rachel Corrie, an American citizen, was killed by an Israel Defense Forces bulldozer in Rafah, Gaza while protesting home demolitions. Both the Obama and Bush administrations have affirmed that Israel's investigation into Ms. Corrie's killing did not meet the standard of being "thorough, credible, and transparent" that was assured by the Israeli Government in 2003. On June 30, 2010, Department of State spokesperson P.J. Crowley stated, "We continue to stress to the Government of Israel at the highest levels to continue a thorough, transparent, and credible investigation of the circumstances concerning her death."

- Please provide information on steps taken under the current administration, including the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, to encourage the Government of Israel to undertake a thorough, credible, and transparent investigation into Ms. Corrie's death. What specific steps will the administration take to ensure accountability is obtained in the case? What specific steps will you commit to take, if confirmed, to encourage a reopening of a credible investigative process?

Answer. Since Rachel Corrie's death in March 2003, the Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv have been in close contact with the Corrie family to provide them with support and assistance. For 7 years, we have pressed the Government of Israel at the highest levels to conduct a thorough, transparent, and credible investigation into the circumstances of her death. The Israeli Government has responded that it considers this case closed and does not plan on reinvestigating the incident. In March 2010, an Israeli court began hearing the family's civil case against Israeli authorities. We hope that this venue will finally provide them with the answers that they seek.

We will continue to work with and assist the Corrie family as appropriate.

RESPONSES OF STUART JONES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* On February 20 King Abdullah of Jordan outlined an ambitious program for political and economic reform. What can the United States do to support these initiatives?

*Answer.* The United States enjoys a warm relationship with King Abdullah and with the people of Jordan. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting their efforts to implement political and economic reform. Maintaining our MOU assistance levels is the first priority in supporting the Government of Jordan's political, economic, and social reform agendas. U.S. economic assistance aims to help Jordan on its path to growth and development by enhancing private sector competitiveness, trade, employment opportunities, and workforce development to promote economic growth. Our USAID programs are providing technical assistance to strengthen Jordan's tax administration and improve efficiencies through results-based budgeting and a more effective financial management information system. Democracy and governance (DG) programs capitalize on the renewed energy within civil society to promote civic participation, judicial independence, legal reforms (including electoral reform), respect for human rights, and anti-corruption measures.

*Question.* An opening of the Jordanian political system could allow the Islamic Action Front to play a more prominent role in Jordanian politics. What is the United States policy toward the IAF?

*Answer.* The Islamic Action Front (IAF), an opposition, Islamist party, has been a part of the Jordanian political system since 1992. They are a well-established, legal opposition party that participates nonviolently in the mainstream political process. In the previous Parliament, the IAF held six seats. The movement boycotted October 2010 parliamentary elections and is therefore not represented in the current Parliament. The IAF continues to state its loyalty to the monarchy and allegiance to the system but has called for reforms to the system. The IAF opposed the appointment of the new Prime Minister in February 2011, refused to join the new Cabinet, and also boycotted the National Dialogue Committee. The IAF's specific statements are generally viewed as not representative of wider Jordanian popular opinion.

The Embassy continues to meet at the working level with IAF officials, however, the IAF is often not interested in meeting with Embassy officers.

*Question.* Jordan has expressed an interest in a bilateral agreement on peaceful nuclear cooperation. What is the status of these discussions?

*Answer.* Negotiations between the United States and Jordan regarding an agreement for civil nuclear cooperation are ongoing. Since Jordan currently imports 96 percent of its energy needs, it is vulnerable to world energy prices which continue to strain its economy. We would like to help Jordan with its energy security by assisting with development of peaceful energy alternatives.

Beyond the ongoing nuclear cooperation, we are also working on additional energy alternatives with Jordan. In order to promote the diversification of energy supply and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, the United States has engaged with the GOJ on unconventional natural gas resource development through the Global Shale Gas initiative (GSGI). A Jordanian delegation attended the inaugural GSGI Regulatory Conference in August 2010, and another GOJ delegation is scheduled to visit the United States at the end of 2011. Furthermore, in January 2011, a memorandum of understanding on shale gas development was signed between the United States and GOJ on shale gas development. This agreement set forth the framework under which the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) plans to conduct a resource assessment of Jordanian shale gas resource potential and help build capacity through technical level workshops.

*Question.* What has been Jordan's response to the Fatah-Hamas agreement signed in Cairo on March 4?

*Answer.* The Government of Jordan took note of the agreement, is watching its implementation closely, and continues to engage in supporting a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and remains committed partner to that end. We are confident that the Jordanian Government will continue to play a constructive role in emphasizing to all parties the importance of securing a comprehensive peace.

*Question.* As a result of the Arab Spring, there may be increasing pressure throughout the region to align policies more closely with public opinion. In the case of Jordan, there may be more pressure to recalibrate Jordan's relationship with Israel. What can the United States do to support this important relationship?

Answer. Jordan, like the United States, remains committed to the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, and Jordan has been a critical partner in our efforts to make progress toward comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Jordan is one of only two Arab countries that have signed peace treaties with Israel (in 1994), and it considers the achievement of comprehensive peace a top priority for the region and one that is crucial to the security and well-being of future generations living in the region. King Abdullah and successive Jordanian governments have consistently spoken out publicly in support of comprehensive Middle East peace based on a two-state solution. Jordan views its peace agreement with Israel as an important component of the comprehensive peace it seeks to achieve.

The United States will continue to encourage a strong bilateral relationship between Israel and Jordan by engaging both countries' leaders on the peace process, developments in the region, and regional security issues. We will continue to support ongoing programs that foster closer bilateral ties, especially between the two private sectors such as the Qualifying Industrial Zones program and encourage multilateral programming and partnership on resources, particularly on water use and science and technology.

RESPONSES OF GEORGE KROL TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* Uzbekistan has assumed an increasingly prominent role in the Northern Distribution Network (NDN), an important series of air and ground routes that carry supplies to our troops in Afghanistan. According to recent figures, the United States now ships over 1,000 containers each week to Afghanistan through the NDN, with an estimated 98 percent of that traffic passing through Uzbekistan.

- How are we balancing the need for reliable access to such routes with our responsibility to address Uzbekistan's significant human rights concerns, including persecution of religious minority groups, forced child labor, restrictions on domestic and international nongovernmental organizations, and torture and ill-treatment in its criminal justice system?

Answer. Encouraging Uzbekistan to continue its support for the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) and working with it to improve its respect for human rights are not mutually exclusive goals. Both increasing NDN capacity and respect for basic human rights are in Uzbekistan's and America's national security interests as they can lead to greater and more durable security and stability for Uzbekistan and the region. Uzbekistan understands that NDN helps address one of its major national security concerns: establishing a stable and secure Afghanistan on their southern border. On this basis, we seek to maintain Uzbekistan's support for NDN. At the same time, we argue that respect for human rights also establishes greater domestic stability and security, which also meets Uzbekistan's national interest. We will continue to encourage Uzbekistan's authorities at all levels privately and publicly, bilaterally and multilaterally, to meet its international obligations to respect the full range of universal human rights, including freeing prisoners of conscience, eliminating child labor, and ending torture and mistreatment in prisons. To these ends, we will engage multilaterally with other diplomatic missions in Tashkent, the European Union (EU) and in international organizations, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) to reinforce the message that the Government of Uzbekistan meet its human rights obligations. We will continue to vigorously assist, support, and take up the cause of civil society and victims of human rights abuses in Uzbekistan. We will continue to make clear to Uzbekistan's authorities that the type of partnership we can have with the Government of Uzbekistan and the assistance we can provide it under current congressional legislation depends on its respect for human rights in accordance with its international obligations. We have and will continue to be constant and consistent in this principled approach.

*Question.* In its FY 2012 budget, the administration has requested \$100,000 in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Uzbekistan. What specific conditions will Uzbekistan have to meet to be eligible for these funds?

Answer. The administration requested \$100,000 in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) assistance in the FY 2012 budget to help the Government of Uzbekistan protect the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) supply lines. The FMF request was made as a signal of our willingness to cooperate with Uzbekistan on security issues. The current conditions on Uzbekistan's eligibility for FMF assistance are included in the FY 2011 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Act and require

progress on respect for internationally recognized human rights and a credible investigation of events in Andijon in 2005. The administration is working with the Government of Uzbekistan, through Annual Bilateral Consultations and other processes, to facilitate improvement in the areas related to the conditions currently included in the law and will continue to push for improvements in the government's respect for human rights.

*Question.* On March 15, Human Rights Watch (HRW) announced that it was forced to end its 15-year presence in Uzbekistan after the government revoked its Tashkent office permit. HRW had maintained registration in the country after Andijon in 2005, but the Government of Uzbekistan constantly denied visas and accreditation for its staff.

The committee understands that the matter of HRW's "liquidation" is now before the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan. What steps is the administration taking to urge the Government of Uzbekistan to allow the organization's office to operate freely and with full accreditation for its staff?

*Answer.* We are raising the accreditation of Human Rights Watch and the legal proceeding to close its office in Tashkent vigorously at all levels of the Government of Uzbekistan. This issue, and the return of other reputable nongovernmental organizations supporting human rights in Uzbekistan, is one of the priority matters on our bilateral agenda with Uzbekistan, which is raised at our annual bilateral consultations and reviews. We also work with the European Union and in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to reinforce our efforts to press the Government of Uzbekistan to open its country to international NGOs and to increase space for all forms of civil society.

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2010 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Uzbekistan, "torture and abuse were common in prisons, pretrial facilities, and local police and security service precincts." What strategy will you employ to encourage the Government of Uzbekistan to end torture in its criminal justice system?

*Answer.* We will continue to raise the cases of torture and abuse that occur in prisons to all levels of the Government of Uzbekistan privately and, when warranted, publicly. We support programs implemented through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to train and educate Uzbekistani prison officials on respecting the human rights of prisoners and preventing abuse. We recently began a new USAID rule of law program that will work with defense lawyers and prosecutors to improve understanding and implementation of habeas corpus legislation, with the goal of reducing the overall number of citizens placed in pretrial detention where a significant portion of abuse occurs. We also are strongly encouraging the Uzbekistani authorities to continue to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) access to prisons run by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and to extend this access to individuals incarcerated in prisons run by the National Security Service. This issue continually is one of the priority agenda items in our bilateral consultations with the Uzbekistani Government and one that is part of our bilateral work plan. During her visit to Uzbekistan in December 2010, Secretary Clinton spoke with President Karimov on a number of human rights issues, including several specific cases of concern and prison conditions in general. She also met separately with representatives of Uzbek civil society, including human rights activists.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to press the Government of Uzbekistan to release the growing number of prisoners of conscience, both secular activists and religious believers, being held in prison in that country?

*Answer.* We will continue to vigorously raise the cases of prisoners of conscience at all levels of the Government of Uzbekistan both privately and when warranted publicly. Past efforts contributed to the release of some prisoners such as Mutabar Tadjibayeva; Sanjar Umarov, and Farhod Mukhtarov. We have made clear to the Uzbekistani authorities that the unjust imprisonment of religious believers and secular civil society activists severely restricts the extent of cooperation and assistance the United States can provide to the Government of Uzbekistan in many areas of potential joint endeavor. At the same time, the United States will support and champion the victims of unjust imprisonment and work multilaterally with other diplomatic missions, the European Union, and through international organizations including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for their release and for a change of approach by Uzbekistani authorities.

RESPONSES OF HENRY ENSHER TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* Some have been surprised that the wave of unrest that swept through North Africa in recent months has been relatively weak in Algeria. Why do you suppose Algerians have been relatively less vocal in demanding change than their Tunisian, Egyptian, and Libyan counterparts? How would you characterize the Algerian opposition and civil society?

*Answer.* While there have been numerous protests in Algeria since January, these have been more socioeconomic rather than political in nature, as various groups have called for higher wages, better housing, access to education, and stronger employment prospects. Algeria experienced horrific violence in the 1990s, with some estimating nearly 200,000 deaths during a 10-year civil war. Algerian citizens are, therefore, treading cautiously as change sweeps through the region, preferring to address issues at their own pace. They nevertheless remain committed to demanding improvements along these issues. Specifically, we have not seen widespread calls for President Bouteflika to step down, and his government has begun the process of reform.

In February, Algeria lifted the 19-year-old State of Emergency Law. The United States welcomed this action as a positive step and publicly reaffirmed our support for the universal rights of the Algerian people, including the freedom of assembly and expression. President Bouteflika on April 15 also announced a slate of democratic and economic reforms in response to popular protests, including the appointment of a commission to draw up amendments to the constitution. He proposed to submit to Parliament reform legislation on elections, political parties, NGOs, local government and women in government, and to revise the media laws so as to decriminalize press violations. We encourage the Government of Algeria to move swiftly toward the implementation of these measures, as we have encouraged other governments, including in Tunisia and Egypt, to do. We are committed to working with the Government of Algeria to ensure that it is responsive to the legitimate demands of its people.

*Question.* In February, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced the lifting of the Algerian emergency law, in place for almost two decades. Please describe the implementation of this and other reform gestures the government has announced. To what extent are restrictions on the freedoms of assembly, association, and expression enshrined elsewhere in Algerian law? Has the Algerian Government indicated a willingness to initiate a broader reform of these limitations?

*Answer.* Algeria's Government has repeatedly stated its commitment to democracy, and its most recent Presidential election in 2009 was certified by international observers as being generally free and fair—one of the few elections for a head of state in the Arab world to be conducted under such conditions. Algeria's independent press is also one of the more active and outspoken in the Arab world. That said, Algerian democracy would benefit from a more empowered and effective legislature, stronger and more democratically governed political parties, a more independent judiciary, and a more professional and better protected press, including electronic media. We have ongoing Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) programs of varying sizes and scopes that target our goals in each of these areas.

We welcome President Bouteflika's announced reforms as a significant step forward for Algeria and its people. The proposed measures are wide-ranging and address many legitimate concerns of Algerian citizens, including reforming laws regulating political parties, NGOs, local government and women in government. President Bouteflika also announced that his government will take steps to decriminalize press offenses, which should lead to more open and free media. As both President Obama and Secretary Clinton have said on many occasions, there is a need for political, social, and economic reform throughout the region, and President Bouteflika's April 15 speech touched on each of these areas. President Bouteflika has announced a September deadline for legislative action on these reforms. We look forward to the concrete implementation of these reforms by the Government of Algeria and will closely monitor their effects on the situation in Algeria and the region. It is too early to predict how these measures will impact Algeria and its people, but we are pleased that the Government of Algeria has begun the process of reform.

*Question.* How can the United States help foster a more conducive economic environment in Algeria that will successfully attract U.S. businesses to invest in the country, beyond the hydrocarbon industry?

*Answer.* We are encouraged by growing economic ties between our two countries. President Bouteflika, during his April 15 speech on reforms, recognized economic



enterprises—public as well as private—as key to job creation, and promised that the Government of Algeria would draft a “national investment program” for companies.

American companies are active in hydrocarbons, banking and finance, services, medical facilities, telecommunications, aviation, seawater desalination, energy production, and information technology sectors. Algeria is one of United States largest trading partners in the Middle East/North African region. We are supportive of Algeria’s efforts to diversify its economy by attracting foreign and domestic investment outside the energy sector. We are working with the Algerian Government to help create appealing business conditions in key areas for foreign and domestic investors, including the adoption of clear rules and regulations, streamlining administrative processes, and increasing access to government decisionmakers. Algeria has much potential, and U.S. firms could play an important role in realizing that potential.

Additionally, an annual international trade fair in Algiers each June draws significant U.S. participation and highlights the U.S. corporate presence very positively. A trade mission this spring is being organized by the U.S.-Algeria Business Council which will demonstrate the interest of the Algerian Government and business sectors in working with U.S. businesses.

*Question.* The Maghreb is arguably one of the world’s least integrated regions. What is the potential for Algeria to play a more significant regional role in security, economic and political matters? How can the United States foster better regional integration in the Maghreb?

*Answer.* Algeria has the ability to be a regional leader on a variety of fronts, including on economic, counterterrorism, and political issues. However, this capacity to lead is hampered by its cold relationship with its neighbor, Morocco. We consistently urge both Algeria and Morocco to recognize that better relations between their two countries will foster deeper regional integration, enable both countries to better address key bilateral and regional issues such as terrorism, illegal migration, drug trafficking, and trade promotion. While Algerian-Moroccan relations are uneven, we welcome the recent exchange of ministers and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Agricultural Development. Practical cooperation at the working level has often coexisted even with the unhelpful rhetoric at higher levels in the past. We have consistently encouraged both Algeria and Morocco to de-link the issue of Western Sahara from their bilateral relationship. The launching of the North African Partnership for Economic Opportunity at last December’s first U.S.-Maghreb Entrepreneurship Conference is just one example of the United States ability to foster closer regional cooperation among all the countries of North Africa.

Algerian law also makes certain forms of defense sales very difficult. Their laws require payment for items after they have been delivered. Since this goes against U.S. law, participating in Foreign Military Sales is not possible. Algeria does buy some defense items through Direct Commercial Sales and is negotiating with the United States on workarounds to its restrictive laws. They are also increasing the number of individuals they send to the United States for training, creating a closer relationship between our nations.

*Question.* In light of the Arab Spring, some observers have noted that American diplomats have tended to engage too narrowly on ruling elites and security officials in capital cities at the expense of broader civil society. Do you agree with this characterization? If confirmed, will you commit to encourage the Embassy in Algiers to engage with a diverse cross-section of Algerian society?

*Answer.* Through a variety of programs, both within and outside of the State Department’s Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), we are working with the Algerian Government and civil society to develop key elements of a democratic society such as the media, political parties, and the judiciary, as well as reforming critical systems such as the education, banking and financial sectors. We also work closely with independent human rights organizations, journalists, political parties, and other nongovernmental organizations. Human rights are a significant part of our ongoing dialogue with the Algerian Government, as with all other governments.

Additionally, while Algeria has traditionally been a country that afforded women considerable rights, we are always interested in ways in which we can help to further improve their status. Our educational programming, and in particular a judicial capacity-building program through the American Bar Association (ABA), have targeted building on Algeria’s historical openness to equal rights for women. Algeria’s women have an employment rate well above the average for the Arab world; several government ministers and leader of a large Algerian opposition party are women.



RESPONSES OF DANIEL SHAPIRO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
 SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

FATAH-HAMAS UNITY GOVERNMENT

*Question.* I am very concerned about the announcement that President Abbas has conceded to form a unity government with Hamas. Hamas rejects peaceful efforts to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and continues to call for the destruction of the State of Israel. While I welcome statements from the administration recognizing that Hamas is a **terrorist organization and requiring** that it accept the Quartet conditions of recognizing Israel's right to exist, **rejecting** violence, and **endorsing** previous Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements in order to participate in the transitional government and elections, I think this agreement is going to require more than supportive statements.

- What is your view on whether the United States should work with a Palestinian Authority government that includes an unreformed Hamas? Do you support, pursuant to U.S. law, suspending aid to the Palestinian Authority, if after reviewing the situation it is determined that Hamas will not comply with Quartet conditions?
- Where do you see the peace process heading in light of President Abbas' decision to reconcile with an **unchanged Hamas**? Do you really **expect** Israel to sit down and negotiate with a **Palestinian Government** which includes the terrorist group Hamas?
- Could you also comment on Egypt's role in bringing about the agreement and whether their involvement foreshadows a change in their longstanding relationship with Israel?

*Answer.* We understand Fatah and Hamas have reached a reconciliation agreement. What is important now is that the Palestinians ensure implementation of that agreement advances the prospects of peace rather than undermines them.

We will continue to seek information on the details of the agreement and to consult with Palestinians and Israelis about these issues.

We understand the concerns of some Members of Congress. As a new Palestinian Government is formed, we will assess it based on its policies and will determine the implications for our assistance based on U.S. law.

We are confident President Abbas remains committed to the principles of non-violence, recognition of the state of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations between the parties.

To play a constructive role in achieving peace, any interim Palestinian Government formed in the period before elections must ensure its actions fully implement these principles. The U.S. stance toward such a government will be fully consistent with U.S. law.

Our position on Hamas has not changed; Hamas is a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.

Egypt is undergoing a period of significant transition. Our relationship with Egypt remains strong, and we continue to work constructively and collaboratively with the Egyptian Government on a range of issues. We remain encouraged that the current Egyptian Government has repeatedly expressed its commitment to adhere to past agreements, including its Treaty of Peace with Israel.

The Department of State fully appreciates the significance of Egyptian-Israeli peace to our regional interests and to regional stability. In our discussions with Egyptian leadership across the political spectrum, we have and will continue to underscore the importance of upholding this and Egypt's other international obligations.

COUNTERING THE DELEGITIMIZATION OF ISRAEL

*Question.* Over the last several years there has been a noticeable increase in anti-Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment, even by close U.S. allies. As you are aware, there has also been a concerted effort at the United Nations to demonize Israel, as well as to use U.N. bodies to circumvent the peace process. As U.S. Ambassador to Israel it will be important for you to oppose these efforts and to work within the administration to ensure that we do everything we can to blunt these destructive efforts.

- What priority do you give to U.S. diplomatic efforts at the U.N. and on a bilateral basis to draw attention to growing anti-Israel bias and to efforts to jeopardize the peace talks by circumventing the negotiating table?
- If confirmed, how will you work to promote Israel's rightful inclusion in the region and more broadly in the international community?

Answer. U.N. members devote disproportionate attention to Israel and consistently adopt biased resolutions, which too often divert attention from the world's most egregious human rights abuses. We will continue our ongoing effort in the full range of international organizations to ensure that Israel's legitimacy is beyond dispute and its security is never in doubt.

We will do all we can to ensure that Israel has the same rights and responsibilities as all states—including membership in all appropriate regional groupings at the U.N. As the President said last September before the entire U.N. General Assembly, efforts to chip away at Israel's legitimacy will continue to be met by the unshakeable opposition of the United States.

If confirmed, I will work to promote full and equal Israeli participation in consultative groups throughout the U.N. system as one of our highest priorities across the U.N. system. I will work with my Department of State colleagues at the Security Council, the General Assembly, and at all specialized U.N. agencies as they work closely with their Israeli counterparts to find ways to maximize Israeli participation.

We strongly support Israel's continued election to U.N. bodies and leadership positions to which it has sought membership over the last decade. In December 2009, for instance, the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in New York succeeded in formally adding Israel to the JUSCANZ negotiating group for the U.N. Fifth Committee, which handles budgetary matters. The United States achieved another major step forward when the JUSCANZ consultative group at the Human Rights Council in Geneva decided by consensus in January 2010 to include Israel in the group.

In 2010 Israel chaired the Kimberly Process on conflict diamonds.

#### SYRIA

*Question.* Over the course of the last 2 years you have played a key role in the formulation and execution of U.S. policy toward Syria. You have travelled to Syria and met with President Assad. Now in the last month we have seen the Assad regime brutally crackdown on the Syrian people. Hundreds of innocent Syrians have been killed with many more arbitrarily arrested or beaten.

- Is it time to signal that it is time for Assad to go, as we did with Mubarak and Ghadaffi?
- How do you foresee events in Syria affecting Israel's outlook on the region?

Answer. I have been nominated to serve as the Ambassador to Israel. If confirmed, my responsibilities will not cover Syria. That said, the Obama administration's policy is that the abhorrent and deplorable actions of the Syrian Government against the Syrian people must end immediately. The Syrian Government must also immediately stop arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture.

Given the number of variables involved, it would not be prudent to speculate on future developments in Syria.

We are closely monitoring the constantly evolving situation throughout the region and consult with our Israeli counterparts on a regular basis on any developments that might pose a threat to Israel's security.

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#### RESPONSE OF STUART JONES TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Assistant Secretary Feltman is in Jordan this week to meet with King Abdullah and members of civil society to reportedly discuss the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the Libya conflict and Jordan's domestic reforms.

- Jordan, like many parts of the region has been the scene of protests calling for political and economic reform. What steps do you see the Kingdom taking to address the protestors concerns? How important will the reform agenda—supporting civil society actors, human rights activists, and independent journalist, be for you as Ambassador? Are you willing to foster moderate and peaceful communities who are seeking democratic change by providing assistance and standing in solidarity with their efforts? Are you concerned about the ambitions of extremist elements in Jordan or do you see that concern as a red herring being voiced by the King in order to limit reform?

Answer. King Abdullah has been responsive to the demands of the Jordanian people. In early February, he dissolved the Cabinet and appointed a new Prime Minister. He established a National Dialogue Committee in March with a 3-month mandate to write new political parties and elections laws. On April 26, King Abdullah formed a royal committee to propose constitutional amendments designed to promote political reform.

If confirmed, I hope to continue a strong U.S. assistance program for Jordan. U.S. economic assistance aims to help Jordan on its path to growth and development, while supporting the Government of Jordan's political, economic, and social reform agenda. Economic support funds promote economic growth/job creation by enhancing private sector competitiveness, trade, employment opportunities, and workforce development. Democracy and governance (DG) programs capitalize on the renewed energy within civil society to promote civic participation, judicial independence, legal reforms (including electoral reform), respect for human rights, and anticorruption measures. DG programs build the capacity of local governments, independent media, and political parties.

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RESPONSE OF GEORGE KROL TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Uzbekistan has emerged as one of the most repressive countries in the former Soviet Union. President Karimov has ruled the country with an iron fist for over 22 years and has a well-documented track record of persecuting individuals perceived to be his critics. Next Friday marks 6 years since forces directly accountable to President Karimov killed hundreds of unarmed people who participated in a demonstration on May 13, 2005, without warning as they ran from the square. Last year, Uzbek authorities intensified their crackdown on freedom of expression, prosecuting a correspondent for the U.S. Government-funded Voice of America news service. Well over a dozen human rights defenders, political activists, and journalists—many of whose cases the U.S. Embassy has quietly raised with the Uzbek Government for years—remain in prison. Torture is widely reported to be endemic in the criminal justice system. At the end of 2010, the Uzbek Government continued to suppress even tiny public demonstrations calling for more democratic freedoms, and denied accreditation to Human Rights Watch's representative, effectively expelling the last independent international NGO from Uzbekistan.

- The United States has raised many of these issues over the years, but has usually opted for private rather than public diplomacy, obtaining few results. What specific steps will you take if confirmed to more effectively promote human rights in Uzbekistan?
- Given Uzbekistan's lack of credibility on human and civil rights, how will you ensure that U.S. policy in Uzbekistan is consistent with its public support for the aspirations of democracy activists and peaceful protesters across the Middle East and North Africa?

*Answer.* Uzbekistan's harsh actions against civil society, the media, political, and religious figures and its policies restricting media, political, and religious freedoms have for a long time greatly concerned the United States. We have severely limited our assistance and cooperation with the Government of Uzbekistan since the 2005 Andijon events and subsequent severe crackdown. But concern is not a policy. We will relentlessly raise individual cases of repression both privately and publicly at all levels of the Uzbekistani Government and will seek to identify opportunities to support and expand space for civil society and human rights activists. We will seek out the voices of civil society in the country and we will do all we can to support, protect, and expand civil society. We will work multilaterally with diplomatic missions, the European Union, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the U.N. Human Rights Council, the International Labor Organization (ILO), and other relevant international organizations, institutions, and partners to promote human rights in Uzbekistan. We will continue vigorously and strongly to encourage the Uzbekistani Government to expand the space for civil society, media, political discourse and allow religious freedom for all peaceful believers. We will continue to advance the view that a robust and unfettered civil society and free media can provide greater stability and security for Uzbekistan lest popular resentments grow as choices become even more limited for the hugely growing youth sector of Uzbekistan. Regardless of regional, cultural, and historical differences between Central Asia and the Arab world, this is the major lesson we take from the recent events in the Arab world, which infuses our policy toward promoting human rights in Uzbekistan. We will continue to remind Uzbekistani authorities that there are, and will be, severe bilateral and international consequences for human rights abuses such as those maintained in current congressional legislation passed after the Andijon events restricting direct U.S. assistance to the Government of Uzbekistan and its designation as a Country of Particular Concern since 2006 for its restrictions on religious freedoms. At the same time we will continue to engage with and, if resources permit, expand our support for embattled civil society and

independent media in Uzbekistan and seek creative ways to provide that support more effectively under harsh and restrictive conditions.

RESPONSES OF DANIEL SHAPIRO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

*Question.* Events of recent months have highlighted the unique role Israel plays in the Middle East as a reliable, stable, and democratic U.S. ally who not only shares our interests, but also our values. That said, ongoing unrest in the region has raised questions about Israel's qualitative military edge (QME) and the future of longstanding peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan.

- How do you see the unfolding events in the region affecting Israel's security, and what new challenges may Israel face in the months ahead? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Israel's security remains a top priority for U.S. assistance funding?

*Answer.* Since the Reagan administration, the United States has remained committed to safeguarding Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME). This administration has consistently reaffirmed its unshakable support to Israel's QME. We have expanded the level and frequency of our QME consultations with the Israeli Government. If confirmed, I would continue to fully uphold the U.S. commitment to Israel's QME.

The United States also protects Israel's qualitative military edge through the provision of substantial security assistance. For roughly three decades, Israel has been the leading recipient of U.S. security assistance through the FMF program. Currently, Israel receives nearly \$3 billion per year.

The United States also grants Israel privileged access to advanced military equipment, such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, to help it deter potential aggressors and maintain its conventional military superiority. Israel will be the only state in the region flying the F-35.

We are closely monitoring the constantly evolving situation throughout the region. Any developments that in our judgment pose a threat to Israel's QME will be carefully considered in pending or future sales of arms or services in the region.

*Question.* The United States has clearly stated that the only path to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is direct negotiations based on the Quartet principles. However, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas continues to seek support at the U.N. for recognition of Palestinian statehood, thereby circumventing the direct peace process. These efforts are counterproductive and will only serve to delay the day in which we see two states living side by side in peace and security.

- Where do you see the peace process heading, particularly in light of President Abbas' decision to form a unity government with Hamas, a designated terrorist group? If confirmed, how will you work to discourage the Palestinians from working outside the parameters of direct peace negotiations?

*Answer.* We believe that President Abbas remains committed to peace. He supports PLO commitments renouncing violence and recognizing Israel. He has remained firm in his faith that an independent Palestine living side by side with Israel in peace and security is both possible and necessary.

As we have said many times publicly and privately, we object to attempts to resolve permanent status issues in international bodies like the U.N. The Israelis and Palestinians must work out the differences between them in direct negotiations. We are working closely with the parties to bring about a negotiated outcome that will lead to the establishment of an independent, viable state of Palestine and a secure future for an Israel that is fully accepted in the region.

We understand Fatah and Hamas have reached a reconciliation agreement. What is important now is that the Palestinians ensure implementation of that agreement advances the prospects of peace rather than undermines them.

We will continue to seek information on the details of the agreement and to consult with Palestinians and Israelis about these issues.

We understand the concerns of some Members of Congress. As a new Palestinian Government is formed, we will assess it based on its policies and will determine the implications for our assistance based on U.S. law.

We are confident President Abbas remains committed to the principles of non-violence, recognition of the state of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations between the parties.

To play a constructive role in achieving peace, any interim Palestinian Government formed in the period before elections must ensure its actions fully implement

these principles. The U.S. stance toward such a government will be fully consistent with U.S. law.

Our position on Hamas has not changed; Hamas is a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.

*Question.* As Hezbollah gains an increasing amount of political influence in Lebanon in the wake of the government collapse in January, how do you assess the U.S. role in Lebanon and what actions can the United States take to ensure that military assistance to Lebanon does not fall into the hands of Hezbollah forces?

*Answer.* I have been nominated to serve as the Ambassador to Israel. If confirmed, my responsibilities will not cover the U.S. relating with Lebanon. The Obama administration's policy is that we will do all we can to avoid a conflict between Hezbollah and Israel. As we saw in 2006, such a war would be devastating for civilians in both Lebanon and Israel.

The Government of Lebanon continues to state its support for the full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701—our primary security-related goal in Lebanon—and to cooperating with UNIFIL to maintain the calm and a weapons-free zone in south Lebanon. Ending our assistance to the LAF would contradict this commitment and be seen as a victory for Hezbollah and Iranian interests in Lebanon.

The Cabinet formation process is still underway in Lebanon. We continue to stress, both publicly and privately with the Government of Lebanon, that we expect that the next government will continue to meet Lebanon's international commitments, which include UNSCR 1559 and 1701, and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. When the new government is formed, we will review its composition, policies, and behavior, including Lebanon's commitment to its international commitments. Since the government has not yet been formed, it is premature to judge it and to make any determinations about the future of U.S. assistance to Lebanon. It is important that we continue to plan for ongoing assistance through FY 2012 in order to leave all options open.

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RESPONSE OF STUART JONES TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

*Question.* Jordan is an important counterterrorism partner in the fight against Islamic groups in the Middle East, and its 1994 peace treaty with Israel has played an important role in the Middle East peace process. Given the growing unrest in the region and increasing influence of terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, what measures should the United States take to support King Abdullah II's reform efforts? How might increased U.S. assistance to Jordan serve our interests in the region, particularly in regard to Israel's security?

*Answer.* The Secretary has stated that we have no better ally than Jordan in countering terrorism and in modernizing the Middle East. Foreign assistance supports the United States-Jordan bilateral relationship, a critical alliance that continues to further U.S. global, regional, and bilateral objectives. Jordan continues to be a top recipient of U.S. economic and military assistance. As a sign of the strong, continuing U.S. commitment to Jordan, and in an effort to further our strategic goals in Jordan and in the region, the U.S. Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Jordan in September 2008, expressing the U.S. Government's support for providing predictable levels of assistance to Jordan over 5 years beginning in FY 2010. The MOU stipulates the USG will provide \$360 million in ESF and \$300 million in FMF annually, subject to congressional appropriation and the availability of funds. The FY 2012 request reflects this commitment.

U.S. security assistance supports the Jordanian Armed Forces' (JAF) 5-year plan for modernization, readiness, and enhanced interoperability between the JAF, U.S., and NATO forces to advance regional and global security. In addition, our security assistance will support procurement and installation of technologies to enhance the Jordanian Government's control of its borders. This assistance strengthens Jordan's capabilities to support and contribute to Middle East peace efforts, international peacekeeping operations, counterterrorism efforts, and humanitarian assistance within the region.

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RESPONSE OF GEORGE KROL TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

*Question.* A young Uzbek psychologist, Maxim Popov, has been imprisoned for 7 years for his work distributing a manual on HIV/AIDS and harm reduction. Fund-

ing for the creation and translation of versions of this manual has come from international donors, including USAID.

- As Ambassador, what will you do to encourage the Uzbek Government to release Mr. Popov and the growing number of prisoners of conscience being held in the country's prisons?

Answer. We will continue to vigorously advocate at all levels of the Uzbekistani Government for the release of Mr. Popov. His case has been a priority issue discussed in our bilateral consultations, along with the cases of other prisoners of conscience. We have made clear that continued imprisonment of prisoners of conscience like Mr. Popov restricts U.S. cooperation with the Government of Uzbekistan in other areas of mutual interest. We also work multilaterally with other diplomatic missions, the European Union and through international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the U.N. Human Rights Council to encourage Uzbekistan to release immediately such prisoners of conscience as Mr. Popov.

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RESPONSE OF HENRY ENSHER TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

*Question.* Algeria's Berber community has experienced significant government discrimination and neglect, particularly in regard to language and cultural rights. For example, Berber activists continue to seek official language status for Tamazight, a Berber language, but President Bouteflika and other Algerian officials have opposed this change.

- If confirmed, how will you work with the Algerian Government to encourage enhanced respect for the rights of Berbers and other minority groups in Algeria?

Answer. The United States is committed to minority rights and freedom of religion in Algeria and around the world. The freedom of persons belonging to minority groups to practice their own customs and traditions, including learning and speaking a language, is a basic right that the United States supports. Algeria has allowed and supported the teaching of Tamazight in public schools and universities in Berber areas since 2001. Algeria must ensure that minorities are free to practice their religions and customs as they wish. We are in regular contact with a wide variety of religious and cultural leaders in Algeria, and maintain an active dialogue with the Algerian Government on religious and cultural freedom issues. With both we stress the need for the laws governing the operation of religious and cultural organizations in Algeria to be applied in an equal and transparent manner.

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RESPONSES OF DANIEL SHAPIRO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY  
SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* A top priority for the government and people of Israel is ensuring Iran is not allowed to achieve a nuclear weapons capability. I believe that from a U.S. perspective as well, allowing Iran to achieve such a capability would pose an unacceptable risk to the safety and security of the United States, Israel, and our other allies. With events unfolding rapidly in the region, with Libya at war, and Syria brutally cracking down on its people, it is easy to lose focus on the Iranian threat. Do you agree a nuclear weapons capability in the hands of Iran would pose an unacceptable risk to the United States and Israel? As Ambassador, will you ensure Israel's perspective and thinking on the Iranian threat is communicated effectively back to Washington?

Answer. A nuclear armed Iran poses an unacceptable risk to the United States, Israel, and globally. A strong international partnership including the United States and Israel stands united in opposition to Iran's illicit nuclear program. This coalition is determined to pressure Iran until it changes course. The clear message is that the Iranian leadership's continued defiance results in harsh political and economic penalties. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will ensure that Israel's perspective and thinking on Iran, and its nuclear program, is clearly conveyed to policymakers in Washington.

*Question.* Over the course of the last 2 years you have played a key role in the formulation and execution of U.S. policy toward Syria. You have travelled to Syria and met with President Assad. Now in the last month we have seen the Assad regime brutally crackdown on the Syrian people. Hundreds of innocent Syrians have been killed with many more arbitrarily arrested or beaten. Where should the United States go from here? Is it time to signal that it is time for Assad to go, as we did

with Mubarak and Ghadaffi? How do you foresee events in Syria affecting Israel's outlook on the region?

Answer. I have been nominated to serve as the Ambassador to Israel. If confirmed, my responsibilities will not cover Syria. That said, the Obama administration's policy is that the abhorrent and deplorable actions of the Syrian Government against the Syrian people must end immediately. The Syrian Government must also immediately stop arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture.

Given the number of variables involved, it would not be prudent to speculate on future developments in Syria.

*Question.* Israel is our strongest ally and the only democracy in the region. What is the administration doing to ensure respect for Israel and its security by the emerging new governments in Egypt and Tunisia?

Answer. Egypt is undergoing a period of significant transition. Our relationship with Egypt remains strong, and we continue to work constructively and collaboratively with the Egyptian Government on a range of issues. We remain encouraged that the current Egyptian Government has repeatedly expressed its commitment to adhere to past agreements, including its Treaty of Peace with Israel.

The Department of State fully appreciates the significance of Egyptian-Israeli peace to our regional interests and to regional stability. In our discussions with Egyptian leadership across the political spectrum, we have and will continue to underscore the importance of upholding this and Egypt's other international obligations.

Tunisia, like most Arab States, does not currently have diplomatic relations with Israel. The administration continues to actively pursue the full normalization of relations between Israel and all countries in the region as part of a comprehensive peace.

