

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

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**HEARINGS**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

—  
FEBRUARY 7 THROUGH NOVEMBER 28, 2012  
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
112TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

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**NOMINATIONS OF EDWARD ALFORD, MARK  
ASQUINO, DOUGLAS GRIFFITHS, AND DAVID  
LANE**

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**THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2012**

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

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Edward M. Alford, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic  
of The Gambia  
Mark L. Asquino, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to  
the Republic of Equatorial Guinea  
Douglas M. Griffiths, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic  
of Mozambique  
David J. Lane, of Florida, to serve as U.S. Representative to the  
United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, with the  
rank of Ambassador

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The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:36 p.m., in room  
SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher Coons,  
presiding.

Present: Senators Coons and Isakson.

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

Senator COONS. I am pleased to chair this hearing of the Senate  
Foreign Relations Committee and would like to welcome my good  
friend, Senator Isakson, as well as Senator Nelson, and our distin-  
guished nominees.

Today we will consider the nominees to be Ambassador to  
Mozambique, to Equatorial Guinea, and to The Gambia, as well as  
the U.S. Representative for the U.N. Agencies for Food and Agri-  
culture.

Turning first to the nomination of David Lane as the nominee for  
the U.N. Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome, I want to just  
briefly highlight the crucial role those agencies play in Africa and  
throughout the developing world. The World Food Programme pro-  
vides lifesaving nutrition in countries like Somalia, Sudan, Niger,  
and many other conflict and famine zones. The U.N. Food and  
Agricultural Organization is a key complement to our own Govern-  
ment's Feed the Future program.

We will also today consider nominations for Ambassador to three African countries that are all important to our national interests, including security, trade, investment, health, governance, and civil rights.

Douglas Griffiths is the nominee for Mozambique, a country that has recently emerged from a long civil war as a promising democracy with impressive economic growth. Like many African countries, it is rich in natural resources but suffers from high levels of poverty. The next Ambassador will have a number of challenges in working with the Mozambican Government to consolidate democratic gains, use resources wisely, and increase trade with the United States.

Equatorial Guinea where Mark Asquino is the ambassadorial nominee is an important producer of oil and natural gas with a GDP of more than \$14 billion, but the United States has serious concerns about human rights protections, lack of political freedoms, and widespread corruption. President Obiang is Africa's longest serving and most entrenched political leader, and opposition parties regularly complain of oppression issues we will take up today.

Our final nominee, Edward Alford, has been nominated to serve as Ambassador to The Gambia, a West African country almost entirely enveloped by Senegal which has few natural resources and relies on tourism and exporting for its economy. U.S. interests in The Gambia include concerns about drug trafficking, human rights, and governance. A number of Senators, including Senators Durbin and Casey, have repeatedly raised concerns about the lack of press freedom and the disappearance and death of journalists critical of the government. The Gambia is eligible for benefits under AGOA, and I encourage the next Ambassador to work closely with the government to increase trade and investment with the United States.

With that summary, I now turn it over to Senator Isakson for his opening remarks.

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

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Alford, Mr. Asquino, Mr. Griffiths, and Mr. Lane, congratulations on your nomination. We look forward to your testimony today.

And it is always good to see my dear friend, Bill Nelson, who is always out when there is a hometown boy being nominated for anything. So, Mr. Lane, you are fortunate that he is on your side.

And we welcome the family members of each of the nominees. Thank you for your support of them in their quest and their jobs.

This is an important—all three of the African countries are very important, and they are not the places you get when you are a big donor to the President. They are places you go when you care passionately about your country and about the future of the continent of Africa, and I commend each of you on your willingness to take those posts on.

And I think Senator Coons agrees with me that we look forward to being your conduit back here in America when you are out there on point and think everybody has forgotten about you. Please use us as a resource to try and help you in any way we can.

Mr. Lane, let me just say that food security in Africa is critically important to me. I have traveled to all four of the countries that will be at the G8 this weekend, Benin, Ghana, President Mills from Ghana, Tanzania, all coming in to testify on the issue of food security, which is so critical.

You come very highly recognized by two friends of mine, Beau Cutter and Helene Gale, and if you can pass that test, you ought to be pretty good at anything. But they are obviously delivering on the front through the U.N. Food Programme in Somalia, Dadaab, Darfur, and other places like that. And food security in Africa is a critical issue. In fact, there is a looming potential problem in the Sudan right now, which I am sure you are aware of as a hot bed. So I will be interested in hearing from you about those issues and your experience and hopefully the contribution you want to make to the program.

But I end where I began. Thank you all for your willingness to serve, and I look forward to being a supporter of each and every one of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

And I, too, would like to thank your families who will support you, have supported you, and whom I hope you will introduce when we get to each of your opening statements.

I would now like to turn it over to Senator Bill Nelson of Florida. I understand Senator Rubio will be introducing some comments for the record.

So, Senator Nelson, if you would please.

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

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Senator Isakson, you are right. When there is a home Florida person, it is my privilege to be here.

But I am particularly pleased not only that both David Lane and I are Melbourne High School Bulldogs, but all of his family that is here today is as well.

And he comes uniquely qualified for this position. You know, it is not all the time that we get to name an Ambassador who does not come from the ranks of the Foreign Service. This particular ambassadorship in Rome to all of the three U.N. organizations has been people who really have a heart for hunger and the poor.

Our former colleague from the House, Congressman Tony Hall, served with great distinction, and he was the one that came to national prominence when he had the Hunger Committee in the House and suddenly the House decided they were taking the funds away from the Hunger Committee and to highlight that that was the wrong decision in his opinion, he went on a hunger strike. And the House reversed itself after days and days. And of course, Tony became uniquely qualified to be in this position in a previous administration.

So too David is uniquely qualified. He has been coming to this position, if you all confirm—if we confirm in the Senate, which I think we will—he comes from the White House where he has been assistant to the President and counselor to the Chief of Staff.

Before that, he was over at the Bono organization, the ONE Campaign, where he was the CEO. And during that time, ONE managed to grow more than 2 million members in over 100 countries on all seven continents.

I think David's passion for poverty, to fight it, and preventable disease—I think it is remarkable, and I think he comes to you as an exceptionally qualified person. You know all the background, how this is a unique position that relates between the Department of State and those three U.N. humanitarian agencies. And as we project the interest of the United States around the globe, this is one of the areas that we are uniquely capable of distinguishing ourselves because of our big humanitarian heart to try to help people all across the globe. And I think David will be a fitting representative for the United States in leading that effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

And I understand Senator Rubio, also of Florida, had wanted to join us but is going to submit a statement for the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Rubio follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Chairman Kerry and Senator Lugar, thank you for the rare opportunity to introduce to the committee a fellow South Floridian, Mr. David Lane, for the position of United States Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. I ask that these remarks be included in the record.

David was born at Mercy Hospital, a storied institution in the Miami area. Both his parents, George and Mary Lou, were raised in Coral Gables, a beautiful community of tree-lined streets in the heart of Miami.

David has had the rare opportunity of participating at all levels of the policymaking process, from Senate advisor, to Chief of Staff in a Federal Agency (Commerce Department), to the executive branch as Assistant to the President and Counselor to the Chief of Staff.

Out of government, David served as President & CEO of the ONE Campaign from November 2007 to January 2011. ONE is a world-renown international advocacy organization focused on reforms to public policy to more effectively combat extreme poverty. At the ONE, he oversaw the team that sets strategic policy and main initiatives of the organization.

The combination of these experiences will serve him well as he takes on the challenge to represent U.S. views at the three leading U.N. agencies focusing on food security and agricultural development—the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Despite robust U.S. aid in bilateral and multilateral programs, food insecurity is a daily concern for millions of people around the world and a source of instability that impact U.S. interests abroad. As we speak, a severe food crisis is affecting, once again, the countries of the Sahel, with the potential to increase tensions in a region already affected by unrelated political and security challenges.

The U.N. agencies in which he will represent the United States serve as significant force multipliers to American bilateral efforts. It is my greatest hope that he will succeed in achieving consensus to implement the key FAO reforms as highlighted in the September 2011 Government and Accountability Office report on this matter.

In these challenging fiscal years, we all have an obligation to be good stewards of taxpayers' contributions. As president of ONE, David has firsthand experience of the need to strategically allocate precious resources to achieve the greatest results. I wish him every success in working with other U.S. missions at the U.N. and like-minded nations to increase fiscal accountability in U.N. programs and strengthen the agencies' mission with the adoption of free market policies that would reduce the occurrence of nutritional emergencies in vulnerable aid-recipient countries.

I appreciate the opportunity to welcome David to this committee, and I urge the committee to act swiftly on his nomination to be the next the U.S. Representative to United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture.



Senator COONS. Mr. Lane, I invite you to begin a series of four opening statements by our different nominees today, and I would encourage you to begin by introducing and recognizing your family.  
Mr. Lane.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID J. LANE, OF FLORIDA, TO SERVE AS U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Mr. LANE. Thank you, Senator, and thank you, Mr. Ranking Member.

I should say my four siblings and various nieces and nephews are here: Tom Lane, John Lane, Susan Davies, and Lisa Wright. And I am very grateful that they have been able to join me.

First of all, I should probably say I have a longer statement, a longer presentation, which as you know, has been presented for the record. So I am going to try to keep this as brief as possible.

I do want to thank Senator Nelson for those very kind words. I am very grateful for his generous introduction.

And I am honored to be the President's nominee for the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Agencies for Food and Agriculture. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have shown in me through this nomination.

I just pointed out that my four brothers and sisters are here and a few of my amazing nieces and nephews. In front of them, I would actually like to say a few words about our parents, George and Mary Lou Lane. They are too frail to travel to Washington, but I know they are proud that I am being considered for a position that can help the United States make a difference for millions of poor people around the world. They instilled in all of us a deep love of our country and a strong commitment to serve others. By their example, our parents taught us the true meaning of compassion, the importance of service, and the moral necessity of helping those who are less fortunate than we are. And I want to thank them for their primary role really in preparing me to serve my country in this important position, if confirmed by the Senate.

If you do confirm me, I would consider it a great privilege to serve the American people in pursuit of goals that I know we all hold dear: alleviating hunger and helping the poor lift themselves out of poverty through agricultural development. The United States has many important interests before the U.N. Food Agencies in Rome, and I am eager to help protect and advance those interests.

If confirmed, I am committed to helping the U.S. mission, which has representatives from the Department of State, the Department of Agriculture, USAID, advance our national interests in a whole-of-government approach while helping to make agriculture a major force for poverty alleviation and economic transformation around the world.

The Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development can and must play a critical role in continuing recent momentum behind food security. I believe now is the perfect time for these three important agencies to sharpen their focus, clarify their roles, and improve their coordination, and I am optimistic that the U.S.

mission in Rome can work with these agencies and align priorities in such a way that U.S. policies and investments can have the galvanizing effect that we all hope to see.

Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member, I know the fiscal challenge we face, which is why, if confirmed, I would work to ensure that U.S. taxpayer-provided resources are used to their fullest effect and in the most efficient way possible. Americans are the most generous donors in the fight against hunger and they deserve vigilance in making sure their tax dollars are well spent. If confirmed, I will work with the U.N. Food Agencies to ensure that every penny of U.S. taxpayer-provided assistance is well spent and that we are doing our utmost to avoid costly emergencies in the future.

I truly believe that there has never been a more important time for U.S. leadership on food and agriculture issues at the U.N. Agencies in Rome and around the world, and I would be honored to do my part to build on current momentum and help ensure that we make the most out of this historic opportunity.

I thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.  
[The prepared statement of Mr. Lane follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID J. LANE

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee. And thank you, Senators Nelson and Rubio, for your kind introductions.

I am honored to be the President's nominee for the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have shown in nominating me for this important post.

If confirmed by the Senate, I would consider it a great privilege to serve the American people in pursuit of goals I know we all hold dear: alleviating hunger and helping the world's poor lift themselves out of poverty through agricultural development. The United States has many important interests before the U.N. food and agriculture agencies in Rome, and I am eager to help protect and advance them. If confirmed, I am committed to helping the U.S. mission, which has representatives from the Department of State, USDA, and USAID, advance our national interest in a whole of government approach while helping to make agriculture a major force for poverty alleviation around the world.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, I believe there has never been a more important time for U.S. leadership on food and agriculture issues within the U.N. agencies in Rome and around the world. This is a time of unprecedented progress in food and nutrition security, and I want to do my part to sustain the momentum and help ensure that we make the most out of our historic opportunity. At the same time, the ongoing lack of food security in regions like the Horn of Africa and the Sahel continues to drive instability and slow progress in the development of these areas. With both the opportunity for accelerated progress and lingering challenges in mind, I appreciate this opportunity to share my views on how I would contribute to the fight against hunger, if confirmed.

I hope you will agree that my experience prepares me well for the responsibilities of the position for which I have been nominated. I have spent most of my career in nonprofit service, and from 2001 until 2011 I worked to help develop and promote public policies focused on enabling the world's poor to lift themselves out of poverty.

At the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation I established and led the organization's East Coast office in Washington, DC, for 6 years. In this role, I initiated and managed our collaboration with many of the key actors in the global development field. After we concluded that mobilizing public support for smart policies could be as important as making smart programmatic investments, I led the Foundation's senior leadership team in designing and implementing policy advocacy strategies. I believe strongly in the importance of data-driven public policy, and this conviction shaped my approach while leading the Gates Foundation's policy advocacy work. Driven by the strong evidence that improved agricultural productivity can have a transformative impact on rural communities, the Foundation chose to make agriculture

a top priority, and it continues to be a major force helping to improve lives in poor countries through improved agriculture.

From 2007 until 2011, I was president and CEO of ONE, a nonpartisan global organization committed to mobilizing public support for effective development and humanitarian policies. While there, I constantly heard how important the fight against poverty is to people all over the world and from all walks of life. In my experience, Americans from across our society—students, businesspeople, members of diverse faith communities, Republicans, Democrats—strongly support effective efforts—both in terms of cost and impact. Feeding the hungry is perhaps the most powerful charitable impulse of all. In every sector of development, people just want to know—and deserve to know—that the programs they support are making a difference. And they want to know that our focus is on creating long-term transformation and self-reliance, not only addressing short-term suffering.

I frequently traveled to Africa during my tenure at ONE. I saw for myself the critical linkages between agriculture and other aspects of economic and social development. These linkages confirmed my belief that smart policies and public investments from developed countries like ours must build on and work in concert with committed leadership from developing countries themselves. Without the two working in concert, investments will not be as effective or transformative.

I am also proud of other roles I've been given the opportunity to play in my career, especially those in the Federal Government. I believe my experience as a policy analyst, manager, convener, negotiator, and integrator of different perspectives would help me fulfill your expectations for this role.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the primary importance of my family in preparing me to serve my country in this important position, should the Senate confirm me. My parents, George and Mary Lou Lane, instilled in me a deep love of my country and a strong commitment to serve others. They were unable to travel to Washington, DC, but I know they are proud that I'm being considered for a position that can help the United States make a difference for millions of people. I have four wonderful brothers and sisters and nine amazing nieces and nephews, some of whom are here today, and they will all tell you the same thing: my parents—by their example—taught us the true meaning of compassion, the importance of service, and the moral necessity of helping those who are less fortunate than we are.

I am particularly pleased to join my colleagues today who have been nominated for posts in Africa. Although the U.N. food agencies are based in Rome, the focus of their work must be in the field, especially Africa, which remains both the region of greatest concern and a potential source of long-term solutions. As I'm sure my fellow panelists know better than I, Africa is the only continent where agricultural productivity has remained stagnant for the past 30 years. And yet, there are countries in Africa where agriculture is on the brink of taking off, responding to strong leadership, smart new policies, and increased investment. Many believe that if we apply key lessons learned from recent experience we can dramatically increase agricultural productivity in Africa in the coming decade. This may offer the best chance we have to help lift tens of millions out of poverty and chronic hunger.

In recent years, leaders in both developing and developed countries have, in fact, reaffirmed the importance of agricultural development and prioritized it as an area of policy focus and investment. Recent government-led initiatives—The G8's L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, The Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security, The AU's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program, the G20's Global Agriculture and Food Security Program—have given new momentum to the drive to feed the world's hungry and lift millions of smallholder farmers out of poverty, and these efforts are beginning to show results. And civil society/NGO initiatives have long played a critical role addressing food security. In fact, according to one estimate, in 2008 U.S. NGOs that engaged in development work managed \$11.8 billion in private contributions and gifts-in-kind resources.

Seventy-five percent of the world's poor live in rural settings and are dependent on agriculture, and most of these are women tending small plots of land. Studies have shown that growth in agriculture is three-to-six times more effective than growth in other sectors in raising the incomes of the very poor. The stakes are very high for getting this right, and I believe the U.N. food and agriculture agencies can play a vital role supporting and facilitating the transformation of agriculture around the world. At the end of the day, I am confident that the American people will support these efforts if they are having an impact in a cost effective way.

I would like to say a few words about the U.N. food and agriculture agencies—the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. I realize many of you approach these and other large multilateral organizations with a fair amount of skepticism, and I believe past inefficiencies and other shortcomings confirm that we should take a

firm approach to reform and renewal—something that the mission in Rome is pursuing. But I also believe that these organizations are in a better position than they've been in a long time to pursue their missions effectively and efficiently and serve as reliable partners in combating hunger.

These three agencies—with dynamic leadership and a renewed commitment to their important mandates—can and must play a critical role in continuing recent momentum behind food security. I believe now is the perfect time for these three agencies to sharpen their focus, clarify their roles, and improve their coordination, and I am very optimistic that the U.S. mission in Rome can work with these important agencies and align priorities in such a way that U.S. policies and investments have the shaping and even galvanizing influence we all hope to see.

While I am eager for your guidance on how best to advance U.S. policies and priorities in Rome, there are several issues that I believe will be important areas of focus if I am confirmed:

(1) Ensuring that the humanitarian responses of the multilateral agencies are effective and efficient, even in the most challenging circumstances, while fostering resilience so that affected populations emerge less vulnerable after emergencies with the goal of breaking the cycle of disaster and expensive relief.

(2) Building on the progress that has been made on food security in the past few years by ensuring that these agencies promote increased investments—both public and private, with a special emphasis on recruiting new donors—in initiatives and projects that contribute to developing resiliency and transform rural economies while fighting poverty.

(3) Ensuring that efforts to reform the Rome-based U.N. agencies result in modern institutions that reduce redundancies, and are agile and responsive as well as efficient and transparent.

(4) Using all the modern tools of public diplomacy to ensure that the leadership of the United States and great generosity of the American people in support of food and nutrition security and agricultural development is well understood around the world. This message is critical in underscoring our commitment to international peace, security, and development and can contribute to freedom, the development of democracy, and the promotion of good governance and market principles worldwide.

(5) Ensuring that all the important day-do-day work of the U.S. mission I've been nominated to lead—dealing with standards, norms, international agreements, etc.—is responsive to our national interests while generating positive results on the ground.

The work of the U.S. mission to the food and agriculture agencies in Rome is only possible because of the generosity of the American people you represent and we all serve. The United States leadership in this space has been in no small part the result of the continued determination by the branches of the United States Government to promote food security internationally. For instance, the United States contributed approximately \$1.428 billion to the World Food Programme in CY 2011, which alone made up 37 percent of WFP's budget. We were the single largest donor to the FAO in FY 2011, providing an assessed contribution of \$111 million—22 percent of the assessed budget—and an additional \$66.67 million to FAO in extra-budgetary funding, mostly for emergency programs. We are also the largest donor to IFAD, at \$30 million per year.

Distinguished members of the committee, I am filled with pride when I think of the determination of the American people and the ability of the United States Government—the legislative and executive branches alike—to join together to fight hunger worldwide. Since the emergency broke out last year in the Horn of Africa, in which drought affected parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti and famine was declared in five regions of Somalia, the United States has responded with more than \$1.1 billion in life-saving assistance, reaching an estimated 4.5 million people, many of whom would have otherwise died from starvation or related disease. As the specter of crisis rises once again, this time in the Sahel, I am sure the American people will continue to be in the vanguard of fighting it there as well.

As president of the G8 this year and host of the G8 summit taking place this weekend at Camp David, the United States has been working with its partners to focus on food and nutrition security in sub-Saharan Africa. Building on the success of the 2009 G8 L'Aquila Food Security Initiative and the U.S. Feed the Future initiative, the G8 effort will focus on continuing our commitments to the financial pledges made at L'Aquila and to following the Rome principles while also stimulating private investment in agriculture at all scales and across the agriculture value chain.

Working together, the actions taken by African Governments, the AU, international partners, private investors, and civil society will substantially accelerate agricultural growth across the continent and help more than 50 million people emerge from poverty over the next 10 years. We believe that collectively, we can achieve this goal based on strong evidence that investments in agriculture—including CAADP Country Investment Plans and G8 actions—will significantly spur agricultural growth. This will be accomplished by working with African leaders to increase private capital investments in African agriculture, take innovations that can enhance agricultural productivity to scale, and reduce the risk borne by vulnerable economies and communities. We know from history and experience that agriculture-led growth resulting from these types of actions, paying special attention to small-holder women farmers and to nutrition, is a powerful driver of broader economic growth and poverty reduction.

Clearly there is a role for the U.N. Rome-based agencies in G8 food and nutrition security efforts, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that the agencies' contribution is effective, complementary, and appropriate to their strengths.

Distinguished members of the committee, I know the fiscal challenges we face, which is why, if confirmed, I would work to ensure that U.S. taxpayer provided resources are used to their fullest and with the greatest possible efficiency.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Mr. Lane.  
Mr. Alford.

**STATEMENT OF EDWARD M. ALFORD, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE  
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA**

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you, Senator.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today. I wish to express my gratitude to the President and to the Secretary of State for the trust and confidence they have placed in me as the nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia.

I want to recognize my family, represented by my daughter, Sylvia, who is here to support me.

As a U.S. Foreign Service officer for more than 33 years, I enjoyed assignments which provided a variety of experiences in 11 different countries, including three assignments in Africa totaling almost 9 years. I have worked extensively with the interagency community, especially in recent assignments in Frankfurt and Baghdad. I have particularly enjoyed mentoring my younger colleagues and helping them develop their careers. If confirmed, I believe the variety of my experience and my record of leadership and fostering mission effectiveness and morale under often difficult circumstances, will enable me to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a U.S. Ambassador.

The United States has a close and historic relationship with The Gambia which has embraced the role of the Peace Corps in the country since 1967. With 83 Volunteers in-country, the Peace Corps is the central component of our public diplomacy and U.S. development assistance. Last year, President Jammeh showed his gratitude for the Peace Corps by hosting the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps and their 45 years in The Gambia.

The United States has a small diplomatic footprint in Banjul, but we arguably have more leverage than any other Western country, thanks to our positive bilateral relationship and continuing Peace Corps presence.

The U.S. Embassy closely followed the 2011 and 2012 electoral processes and worked to support credible and independent media and political parties, as well as democratic processes. Despite

shortcomings, the Presidential elections in November 2011 were adjudged free and fair by several international and domestic observation teams. While there was high voter turnout, several organizations expressed concern at the unlevel playing field for candidates in advance of the elections.

Promoting human rights remains the top U.S. priority in The Gambia. The U.S. mission in Banjul maintains a close dialogue with the government and civil society on the human rights situation. Continued engagement with Gambian authorities on press freedom and civil liberties will constitute a central piece of our bilateral relationship.

If confirmed, I will continue our economic and regional security partnership with The Gambia. Through The Gambia's contributions to peacekeeping missions, we have enjoyed a steadfast partnership in efforts to promote regional stability. The Gambia also plays a positive role in counternarcotics in the region, and sustaining these efforts, along with enhancing the country's maritime security capacity, is another focus of our diplomacy.

The U.S. Embassy must continue to work with the government and private sector to facilitate the growth of the tourism industry and the export of several commodities, including apparel and fish to the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

U.S. staffing in Banjul consists of 13 Embassy officials and two Peace Corps American staff. If confirmed, I would make my top concern the safety and security of the nearly 2,000 U.S. citizens in The Gambia, half of whom at any time are tourists.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear today. I would be pleased to respond to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Alford follows.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EDWARD M. ALFORD

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today. I wish to express my gratitude to the President and Secretary of State for the trust and confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia. I want to recognize my family, represented by my daughter, Sylvia, who is here to support me.

As a U.S. Foreign Service officer for more than 33 years, I enjoyed assignments which provided a variety of experiences in 11 different countries including three assignments in Africa totaling almost 9 years. I have worked extensively with the interagency community, especially in recent assignments in Frankfurt and Baghdad. I have particularly enjoyed mentoring my younger colleagues and helping them develop their careers. If confirmed, I believe the variety of my experience and my record of leadership in fostering mission effectiveness and morale under often difficult circumstances will enable me to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a U.S. Ambassador.

The United States has a close and historic relationship with Gambians, who have embraced the role of the Peace Corps in their country since 1967. With 83 Volunteers in country, the Peace Corps is the central component of our public diplomacy and U.S. development assistance. Last year, President Jammeh showed his gratitude for the Peace Corps by hosting the Golden Jubilee, which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps and their 45 years in The Gambia. The United States has a small diplomatic footprint in Banjul, but we arguably have more leverage than any other Western country thanks to our positive bilateral relationship and continuing Peace Corps presence.

The U.S. Embassy closely followed the 2011 and 2012 electoral processes and worked to support credible, independent media and political parties, as well as democratic practices. Despite shortcomings, the Presidential elections in November 2011 were judged free and fair by several international and domestic observation teams. While there was high voter turnout, several organizations expressed concern

at the "unlevel playing field" for candidates in advance of the elections. The March 2012 parliamentary elections were also deemed generally peaceful and fair, but opposition parties boycotted the election, leaving them with only 5 of the 48 elected seats in Parliament.

Promoting human rights remains the top U.S. priority in The Gambia. The U.S. mission in Banjul maintains a close dialogue with the government and civil society on the human rights situation. The Gambia has taken significant steps to address trafficking in persons through enforcement of legislation and the rescue and rehabilitation of victims. Continued engagement with Gambian authorities on press freedom and civil liberties will constitute a central piece of our bilateral relationship.

If confirmed, I will continue our economic and regional security partnership with the Gambia. Through The Gambia's contributions to peacekeeping missions, we have enjoyed a steadfast partnership in efforts to promote regional stability. The Gambia also plays a positive role in counter narcotics in the region and sustaining these efforts along with enhancing the country's maritime security capacity is another important focus of our diplomacy.

The U.S. Embassy must continue to work with the government and private sector to facilitate the growth of the tourism industry and the export of several commodities including apparel and fisheries to the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

U.S. staffing in Banjul consists of 13 Embassy officials and two Peace Corps American staff. If confirmed, I would make my top concern the safety and security of nearly 2,000 U.S. Citizens in The Gambia, half of whom at any time are tourists.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Mr. Alford.

I now turn to Mr. Asquino.

**STATEMENT OF MARK L. ASQUINO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA**

Mr. ASQUINO. Thank you, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson. It is a great honor for me to appear before you this afternoon as the nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. I am grateful for the confidence that President Obama and Secretary Clinton have placed in me, as well as for the support of Assistant Secretary of State Carson. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my best to uphold this trust.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to introduce my wife, Jane. She is here today. We met and were married almost 2 decades ago in Bucharest, Romania. Jane has been with me ever since then. I have been incredibly fortunate to have had her accompany, support, and inspire me in often difficult and dangerous postings.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent more than three decades as a Foreign Service officer, serving in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Presently I am the Executive Assistant and Chief of Staff in the Office of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. There I supervise a staff of 18 employees who work on these crucial issues.

I have served in countries including Spain and Romania, which were in transition to democracy, as well as in oil-rich nations such as Kazakhstan and Sudan. The knowledge and experience I have gained in such postings have resulted in my deep commitment to advancing democracy, human rights, and transparency.

Today I would like to speak to you briefly about the three major U.S. foreign policy issues that form the cornerstone of our bilateral relationship with Equatorial Guinea.

The first is good governance and democracy. Although Equatorial Guinea is nominally a multiparty constitutional republic, President Obiang's party controls all but one seat in the 100-member legisla-

ture. Equatorial Guinea is the third-largest producer of oil in sub-Saharan Africa, and has one of the continent's highest per capita income rates. Despite this, much of the population lives below the poverty level. Official corruption is widespread in a country that needs to spend more on the health and educational needs of its citizens.

Equatorial Guinea was unsuccessful in meeting the requirements to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, or EITI. However, it is considering applying again, and we support that action. Meeting the conditions to become an EITI candidate would be one positive signal by the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, or the GREG, that it intends to improve its fiscal transparency through revenue reporting.

The GREG is investing in major public works projects that are improving infrastructure. It is also funding public health programs that have lowered infant mortality and drastically reduced the incidence of malaria. These are encouraging steps, and if confirmed, I will urge the GREG to devote more attention to transparency and governance and continue to invest in its people.

The second issue is the protection of human rights. In 2010 and 2011, following urgings from the United States and the international community, the GREG released a significant number of political prisoners. The GREG in recent years has also made modest progress in prison conditions and in human rights training for security forces.

While Equatorial Guinea has taken measured actions to improve its human rights record, major problems remain. These include arbitrary arrests, restrictions on freedom of the press, assembly, and association. Since the 2008 visit of the U.N. Special Rapporteur for Torture at the invitation of the GREG, Equatorial Guinea has partnered with the International Committee of the Red Cross, or the ICRC, to speak out against torture and call for the prosecution of human rights abusers. One notable advance, the 2011 signing of a residency agreement between the ICRC and the GREG, culminated this year with the opening of the ICRC's fully functioning office in Malabo.

In addition, the GREG recently announced it will revive the Interagency Commission on Trafficking in Persons. The government deserves credit for these actions, but Equatorial Guinea must do more to promote respect for human rights and also for transparency.

The third issue, briefly, is U.S. national security and access to energy resources. With close to \$14 billion invested in Equatorial Guinea, United States oil companies are that country's largest investors, and they have the lead role in oil and gas exploration and extraction. The United States presently imports approximately 12 percent of its oil from African nations in the Gulf of Guinea. For this reason, we have an abiding interest in the security of this zone.

If confirmed, I will focus on these three issues—governance, human rights, and national security—and I will give them my utmost energy and attention. I promise to work closely with you and the members of this committee.



I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon, and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Asquino follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK L. ASQUINO

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, members of the committee, it is a great honor for me to appear before you this afternoon as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. I am grateful for the confidence that President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton have placed in me as well as for the support of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Carson. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my best to uphold this trust.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to introduce my wife, Jane, who is here today. We met and were married almost two decades ago in Bucharest, Romania. Jane was there as a Peace Corps Volunteer, and I was serving at the U.S. Embassy. Since then, I have been incredibly fortunate to have had Jane accompany, support, and inspire me, often in difficult and dangerous postings.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent more than three decades as a career Foreign Service officer, serving in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Presently, I am the Executive Assistant and Chief of Staff in the Office of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. There I supervise a staff of 18 foreign and civil service employees who work on these crucial issues. I have served in countries including Spain and Romania, which were in transition to democracy, as well as in oil rich nations such as Kazakhstan and Sudan. During my most recent overseas assignment as deputy chief of mission in Khartoum, I focused on human rights abuses in Sudan. The knowledge and experience I've gained in such postings have resulted in my deep commitment to advancing democracy, human rights, and transparency.

Today I would like to speak to you briefly about the three major U.S. foreign policy issues that form the cornerstone of our bilateral relationship with Equatorial Guinea.

The first issue is good governance and democracy. Equatorial Guinea, with a population of fewer than 1 million people, is located in west central Africa's Gulf of Guinea. Although the country is nominally a multiparty, constitutional republic, President Obiang Nguema's Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea controls all but one seat in the 100-member legislature. Equatorial Guinea is the third-largest producer of oil in sub-Saharan Africa, and has one of the highest per capita income rates in Africa. Despite this, much of its population lives below the poverty level; and official corruption is widespread, in a country that needs to spend more on the health and educational needs of its citizens.

Equatorial Guinea was unsuccessful in meeting the requirements to become compliant with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). However, it is considering applying once again, and we are encouraging this action. Meeting the conditions to become an EITI candidate country would be one positive signal by the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea (or, GREG) that it intends to improve its fiscal transparency through revenue reporting.

In regard to the welfare of its people, the GREG has invested in major public works projects that are improving the country's infrastructure, and it is also funding public health programs that have lowered the infant mortality rate and dramatically reduced the incidence of malaria. These are encouraging steps, and if confirmed, I will urge the GREG to devote more attention to transparency and governance and continue to invest in its people.

The second issue is the protection of human rights. In 2010 and 2011, following calls from the United States and the international community, the GREG released a significant number of its political prisoners. The GREG in recent years has also made modest progress in improving prison conditions and providing human rights training for its security forces.

While Equatorial Guinea has taken measured actions to improve its human rights record, major problems remain. These include arbitrary arrests, and restrictions on freedom of the press, assembly, and association. Since the 2008 visit of the U.N. Special Rapporteur for Torture, at the invitation of the GREG, Equatorial Guinea has partnered with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to speak out against torture and call for the prosecution of human rights abusers. One notable advance, the 2011 signing of a residency agreement between the ICRC and the GREG, culminated this year with the opening of ICRC's fully functioning and fully staffed office in Malabo.

In addition, the GREG has announced it will revive the Interagency Commission on Trafficking in Persons created to enforce its 2004 Trafficking in Persons Law. The government has requested Embassy Malabo's technical assistance on how best to structure the commission. This is the first time in recent history that the GREG has taken the initiative to request assistance to prevent human trafficking, which is a major problem in Equatorial Guinea. The government deserves credit for such positive actions, but Equatorial Guinea must do more to promote respect for human rights.

The third issue is U.S. national security, especially access to energy resources. During 2003–2006, I served as deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan. There I worked to protect the commercial interests of U.S. oil companies that were major oil consortium partners. With close to \$14 billion invested in Equatorial Guinea, U.S. oil companies are Equatorial Guinea's largest investors, and they have the lead role in oil and gas exploration and extraction. The United States presently imports approximately 12 percent of its oil from African nations in the Gulf of Guinea. For this reason, our country has an abiding interest in the maritime security of this vital, economic zone.

If confirmed, I will focus on this issue, as well as on the security and well-being of the 500 U.S. oil company employees and other American citizens in Equatorial Guinea. I will also be a strong advocate for U.S. commercial interests.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will give these three issues, governance, human rights, and national security interests, my utmost personal attention and energy. While our dialogue and engagement with Equatorial Guinea needs to respect its sovereignty and traditions, we also must be frank in discussing our concerns in each of these areas. If confirmed, I promise to work closely with you and the members of this committee.

Senator COONS. Thank you.  
Mr. Griffiths.

**STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS M. GRIFFITHS, OF TEXAS, TO BE  
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**

Mr. GRIFFITHS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Isakson. It is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee.

I am also thankful for the enduring support of my wife, Alicia, and our two daughters. Through evacuations, earthquakes, gunfire, and floods, they have been enthusiastic and adventurous partners in public service. It is finals week, so they were not able to travel to be with me, but I expect through the wonders of Internet, they are here virtually with me, and they are represented by our dear friends and the godparents of our children, John and Betty Shippe.

In my 24 years in the Foreign Service, I have served in Canada, Portugal, Mozambique, Morocco, Switzerland, Haiti, and Ecuador, gaining broad geographic exposure and solid experience in management, trade, and the promotion of good governance. While working in the Africa Bureau at the State Department, I covered economic issues across Southern Africa. In Haiti, Ecuador, and Geneva, I had the privilege to serve as chargé d'affaires for extended periods. Mr. Chairman, I believe that my current position as Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.S. mission to the United Nations in Geneva where we engage daily on public health, economic development, and humanitarian relief is excellent preparation to serve as American Ambassador to Mozambique.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the honorable members of this committee to advance American interests in Mozambique. Following three decades of conflict, Mozambique has enjoyed peace and stability since the early 1990s.

We commend Mozambique on its progress over the past two decades and on its more recent steps in addressing governance concerns since the 2009 elections. As development depends on good governance and a strong civil society, if confirmed, my top priority will be to work alongside the Mozambican people to continue to strengthen democracy and governance.

In recent years, Mozambique's economic growth has consistently been among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, averaging 6 to 8 percent per year. However, despite this sustained growth and the quadrupling of gross domestic product since 1992, the majority of Mozambique's 23 million people still live below the poverty line. Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will support growth-oriented policies to foster job creation and poverty reduction, while stimulating broad-based economic growth. I will also aggressively identify and pursue every opportunity for American firms.

Sound economic policies and transparent governance will be increasingly important in Mozambique as the country is poised to experience a boom in natural resource revenue in the coming years from recently discovered natural gas and newly developed coal deposits. For this reason, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will champion U.S. Government efforts that support sustainable economic growth throughout Mozambique with a focus on the poorest areas of the country.

The United States Government is helping Mozambicans boost the productivity of key crops, reform their agricultural policy, and improve maternal and child nutrition, with the ultimate goal of sustainably reducing hunger and poverty. The \$506.9 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact is focused on road construction, water projects, and the land tenure system.

The United States directs the bulk of our assistance to improving the health of Mozambicans. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Global Health Initiative, and the Peace Corps are working jointly toward this goal. If confirmed, I will advance our vision of creating an AIDS-free generation by reducing the transmission of HIV/AIDS, boosting the percentage of HIV-positive Mozambicans on treatment, and encouraging the Mozambican Government to commit more of its own resources to improving the health of its people.

Mozambique and the United States share a strong common interest in promoting regional stability. Mozambique will assume the Presidency of the Southern African Development Community this August, significantly elevating its role in promoting regional stability and economic integration. Securing the country's long land borders and coastline are indispensable to economic development in Mozambique and the region at large. Facilitating the legal flow of goods, services, and people is a major driver for economic growth, but it must be coupled with sustained efforts to curb maritime piracy and illegal trade flows. I will, if confirmed, build upon our partnership with the Mozambican authorities to promote regional maritime and border security.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. If confirmed, I welcome the challenge of protecting and advancing American

interests in Mozambique and accept the corresponding responsibilities of that duty.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Griffiths follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS M. GRIFFITHS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor for me to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee. I am also thankful for the enduring support of my wife, Alicia, and my two daughters. Through evacuations, earthquakes, gunfire and floods they have been enthusiastic and adventurous partners in public service.

In my 24 years in the Foreign Service, I have served in countries of vastly different economic and social circumstances. Through postings in Canada, Portugal, Mozambique, Morocco, Switzerland, Haiti, and Ecuador I have gained broad geographic exposure and solid experience in management, trade, and the promotion of good governance. I also worked in the Office of Southern African Affairs at the State Department, gaining invaluable insight into regional issues. In Haiti, Ecuador, and Geneva, I have had the opportunity to serve as chargé d'affaires, a.i. for extended periods. Mr. Chairman, I believe that my current position as Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, where we engage daily on public health, economic development, and humanitarian relief, is excellent preparation to serve as American Ambassador to Mozambique.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the honorable members of this committee to advance U.S. interests in Mozambique. Following three decades of conflict, Mozambique has enjoyed peace and stability since the early 1990s. We commend Mozambique on its overall progress over the past two decades and on its more recent steps in addressing governance concerns since the 2009 elections. The upcoming 2014 Presidential and parliamentary elections will be key barometers of democratic freedoms. As development depends on good governance, if confirmed, my top priority will be to work alongside the Mozambican people to continue to strengthen democracy and governance in advance of these elections.

Mozambique's economic growth has consistently been among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa in recent years, averaging 6 to 8 percent. However, despite this sustained growth and the quadrupling of Gross Domestic Product since 1992, the majority of Mozambique's 23 million people live below the poverty line, some well below that line. Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will support growth-oriented policies to foster job creation and poverty reduction, while stimulating broad-based economic growth. I will also aggressively identify and pursue every opportunity for American firms.

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Mozambique and the United States share a strong common interest in promoting regional stability. Mozambique will assume the Presidency of the Southern African Development Community in August 2012, significantly elevating its role in promoting regional stability and economic integration. Securing the country's long land

borders and coastline are indispensable to economic development in Mozambique and the region at large. Facilitating the legal flow of goods, services and people is a major driver for economic growth, but it must be coupled with sustained efforts to curb maritime piracy and illegal trade flows. I will, if confirmed, build upon our partnership with the Mozambican authorities to promote regional maritime and border security.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. If confirmed, I welcome the challenge of protecting and advancing the interests of the United States in Mozambique and accept the corresponding responsibilities of that duty.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Griffiths, and thank you to our whole panel.

You have attracted, Mr. Lane, interest and support from a wide range of acquaintances of mine from Max Finberg and John Doerr, who both send their best, to Dr. Raj Shah, Administrator of the USAID, who has joined us in the back. There are very exciting developments over the next few days that Dr. Shah and I have been in communication about that I know all of us are eager to hear more about.

So let me begin, if I could, a first round of questioning by focusing on food and agriculture and food security across the whole panel.

First, if I might, Mr. Lane, in a difficult international financial environment and because Dr. Shah is here, how should the United States and other G8 members, given the impending conversations, approach the issue of global food security? And as the largest contributor to the Food and Agricultural Organization, World Food Programme, International Fund for Agricultural Development, what factors should we be seeking as we try and balance building long-term resilience in food security against emergency humanitarian needs?

Mr. LANE. Senator, thank you. And I want to thank Dr. Shah for coming. I am pleasantly surprised that he is here.

It has been estimated that by the year 2050, the world population will be 9 billion people and that agricultural productivity will have to increase by somewhere between 50 to maybe 70 percent in order to meet the world's needs for food. You mentioned the resource constraint that we face, the fiscal constraint. We cannot get there from here in terms of donor country providing the investment that is going to be necessary to achieve those kinds of productivity gains. It is going to be important for especially developing countries themselves to step forward with their own prioritization of agriculture investment but also for the private sector.

And it is not my place to preview the G8 initiatives of the next couple days. I have, as a nominee, been asked to stay out of those things. But perhaps Raj would like to come up and elaborate. [Laughter.]

But I think it is fair to say that the foundation was set at the Locula summit for public investment. There was, I think, a \$22 billion donor, G8 and other wealthy country commitment and a commitment that this Senate and Congress has supported by the United States of \$3.5 billion that I think is starting to show benefits.

But the really, to me, very important part that I saw from my time at the Gates Foundation and from ONE is country-owned plans and country leadership, and that those countries are now

starting to step up. And I think in my role in Rome, it is going to be important for me to work with my counterparts to be sure that they are doing their part to meet their own targets of 10 percent budget for agriculture spending, which is part of the Maputo targets, but even more importantly, the private sector investment that is going to be necessary to transform agriculture. And I have a feeling, a strong sense honestly that in the next few days that we are going to be hearing much more about the private sector side of agricultural development, and I think that is really going to be necessary to get done what we need done.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Lane.

If we might, the countries of The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea, both relatively small countries, but one is, Equatorial Guinea, resource-rich. In both cases, they need to strengthen the priority of their focus on meeting basic human needs and on agriculture. And Mozambique, a very large country, with a lot of potential in terms of arable land—the targets you referenced were established in Maputo.

If you might each in turn just speak to how AGOA has or has not been used successfully by the country to which you have been nominated to serve as an Ambassador, in what sectors other than natural resources, extractive industries we might see some private sector investment from the United States, and in particular, how we might prioritize food security going forward in each of your respective countries.

Mr. Alford.

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you for the question, Senator.

Food security in The Gambia depends very much year-to-year on the crop. Eighty percent of the people are involved in agriculture, although agriculture is only 38 percent of the GNP. I am pleased to note that our Peace Corps is involved in increasing the productivity there. USAID, working with the University of Rhode Island and with the World Wildlife Foundation, is working to improve fisheries. And the U.S. Department of Agriculture has a project to improve cashew production, and that is a combined project with Senegal and The Gambia.

That being said, since 2008, The Gambia's exports have been limited to clothing and fisheries. And there may be other sectors in the future, primarily agricultural-based sectors where we could increase exports. Industry there is minimal now. Our exports to the country are about \$30 million a year and we import less than \$1 million a year. So the scope for increasing the imports there but primarily agriculture, fisheries, and of course tourism is a big, big industry there, primarily European tourists but a lot of Americans go there too.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Alford.

Mr. Asquino. Are there sectors other than oil and gas that might be attractive for U.S. investment and how does food security play into the future for Equatorial Guinea?

Mr. ASQUINO. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

As you noted, Equatorial Guinea is a very small country. It has less than a million people. And yet, it is not independent in terms of food production. Only 2.2 percent of this GDP comes from agricultural production. And yet, if you look at the history of the coun-

try, in 1968 when it became independent from Spain, it was a major producer of cocoa, and it had a thriving agricultural sector.

So I think to answer your question, AGOA is not running a program in Equatorial Guinea and we do not have USAID programs there. But there is great interest, including from U.S. companies, in developing the agricultural sector. The Chinese as well have been involved in various projects. And I really do feel that this is an area where Equatorial Guinea can improve its production. Almost everything right now is imported. Inflation runs at 9 or 10 percent every year. So this makes it very hard for the people of that country, and because of that, you have nutritional issues as well that are raised.

So if I were confirmed, sir, I certainly would focus on agricultural investment. I think it is an area where we can, and we should, be doing more in Equatorial Guinea. Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Mr. Griffiths, Mozambique is an enormous country with lots of natural resources. What is the prospect for food security? They are an MCC compact partner. What are the major areas of investment or activity in Feed the Future and in other agricultural sectors?

Mr. GRIFFITHS. Great. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

And I fully agree that for Mozambique, this is one of the most important issues, and if confirmed, it is something that I will devote a lot of attention to.

As in The Gambia, 80 percent of Mozambicans work in the agriculture sector. Yet, it only makes up 29 percent of GDP. So Feed the Future is the centerpiece very much for U.S. Government engagement in this process, and we have already had some successes and I think we will continue to have more.

You were talking about, or Mr. Lane was talking about, private sector investment, and we have an example in Mozambique, an American investor. He is working on agricultural extension products and in helping families with crop rotation and with growing food crops interspersed with cash crops like tobacco that are having an impact. I think we also have to note the importance of Mozambique to regional food security. Transport corridors to landlocked countries pass through Mozambique. So it is important that we focus on these issues.

As to AGOA, they have not made significant use of it. I would like to highlight two areas. One is cashews where USAID has worked for a long time in helping Mozambicans take advantage of processing cashews. They are not sending out raw nuts. And the second is the Embassy has been very engaged in working with Mozambique to get turtle excluder devices into their fisheries so that shrimp can be exported to the United States.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. I will turn it over to my friend, Senator Isakson, and note that both of us come from States with long and broad experience in poultry both in the science of poultry and in the export of poultry. And so if there is any way we could be helpful as to the respective countries you will be serving in, we would be happy to be drawn upon as a resource.

Senator ISAKSON.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Senator Coons.

Each of you made very positive remarks, which I am going to try and refer to and your awareness of some of the important roles that you are going to have in the next couple years.

Starting with you, Mr. Lane, you made an acknowledgment of the American taxpayers need accountability in terms of U.S. funds that go into food programs and U.N. programs. As you probably are aware—I can speak for myself; I cannot speak for Senator Coons—but in our part of the world in the southern United States, there has been a growing resentment for the amount of disproportionate funding of the U.N. that the United States does through its dues. Now, that is not my statement, but that is a statement that I deal with.

In terms of U.N. food programs and the three agencies within the U.N.—I think you said there were three—who deal with food, what percentage of the cost of that food does the U.S. taxpayer pay?

Mr. LANE. Sir, as you have indicated in a very good question, we are the leading funder of all three. In the case of the World Food Programme, which is a voluntary set of contributions as opposed to an assessment, usually based on need, usually based on campaigns for emergency food relief, this year, in the current year, it is estimated that we will be 37 percent of global funding to the WFP. The FAO slightly less, and 22 percent of the assessed amount plus different amounts depending on particular programmatic requirements. It can vary. And in the case of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, it is \$30 million a year which I think is 11 or 12 percent, but still significant and the leading amount. So it is quite significant.

I take it as one of my important responsibilities, if I am confirmed, is to try to leverage our contribution to be sure that other donor countries are doing their part and to be sure that developing countries themselves are starting to take responsibility for their own food assistance.

Senator ISAKSON. I was recently in Uganda, and I was asked the question by an NGO with reference to funding of the foreign affairs budget, what was going to be the top priority. I said, you know, the foreign affairs budget and the United States aid overseas is going to go from a compassion-driven appropriation to a politically driven appropriation. And I do not mean that in a crass way, but I mean it in a way that I think the American people are looking for our programs to do more than just feed the people for a day, but help to teach them to feed themselves for a lifetime.

I am wondering if you had any ideas on taking that concept and making it a part or a contingency of the United States contribution.

Mr. LANE. I do, sir, and I appreciate very much the question. In fact, I feel badly that Senator Coons has left because he mentioned this term “resiliency,” which is a new and emerging concept in food policy which I think is extremely important.

Just if I can take a step back, the WFP provides humanitarian and emergency relief in situations of conflict or emergency disaster. The FAO has a different mission which is more focused on agricultural development, sharing of information, best practices so that countries can develop their agricultural sectors and ultimately transform their economies through economic growth. And I am sure you know, sir, that agricultural productivity is one of the most



effective areas of economic growth as a stimulus for growth across the economy.

While, on the one hand, my mission in many ways is to keep the different agencies sticking to their knitting and responsible to their own areas of responsibility, the blend between emergency response and development is this concept called resiliency, which is becoming much more important. and I think Dr. Shah, Gail Smith from the White House, a number of others, were in East Africa just this spring where they launched a new initiative with other international donors focused on this concept.

So the idea is when we go in, in the case, for instance, of Somalia to help feed people in a dire situation, are we doing everything we can from a joint planning point of view and from a programmatic point of view to prepare for the recovery and averting a disaster and the next disaster. And there are things we can do. There are tools we have in terms of livestock preservation, vaccination, getting livestock to safety, crop insurance, drought resistant seeds, water management that can be much more effective because I think from a cost-effective point of view, as you have indicated, it is the disaster in humanitarian relief which is the most expensive and is giving a man a fish as opposed to helping a man to learn to fish. And I think making this transition will be very important.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I want you to understand clearly that I am well aware of some of our food security and our food effort go to countries where we have displaced individuals in a host country who have left a place like Somalia or southern Sudan or someplace like that.

But I do think everywhere the American people can be aware that there is a contingency tie—I think Mr. Alford referred to country-owned plans where we can have a part of that be a part of our mission. We want to feed the people that are hungry, but we also want to help the countries to develop agricultural programs where it will lessen the pressure on the American taxpayer and improve the plight of that African country.

So you recognized this in your remarks. I wanted to accentuate the importance of doing that.

And I will go to Mr. Alford for a minute. I think we are going to do a second round anyway.

And I appreciate your mentioning AGOA. For all of your benefit, the chairman and I offered an amendment to the bill we passed earlier this week on the EXIM Bank, which we did not call up, but we did it to send the signal that America needs to renew the AGOA act quick, sooner rather than later, and we think the African Growth and Opportunity Act is an important partnership between the United States and the entire continent of Africa. So I appreciate your mentioning it. I know Mr. Griffiths mentioned it and I appreciate it very much that you did.

Mr. Asquino, we talked about the new Embassy that is being built. Is that right?

Mr. ASQUINO. Yes, sir, that is correct. I would be happy to speak about that if you would like.

Senator ISAKSON. I would mainly because my last trip to Equatorial Guinea, there was a 10-foot hole in the ceiling of the rented U.S. Embassy and it was raining the day I was there. [Laughter.]

And I worked hard to try and get the State Department to raise the priority level of that Embassy. So I would love to have a report on it.

Mr. ASQUINO. Well, first of all, thank you for the question. But I also want to thank you for the support. As you know from that visit, we have been working out of facilities that are woefully inadequate and housing that is really terrible.

We expect that the new Embassy complex, which will include workspace, a chancery, as well as housing, will be completed by the summer of 2013. And that is important for a couple of reasons, sir. In addition to providing people with decent workspace, there were security issues in that Embassy. We had to have certain security waivers from our diplomatic security office in order for us to continue working there. So we will have far better security when we open the new Embassy.

And the other issue that I would like to raise is our provision of American citizen services. We have over 500 American citizens, mostly who are connected with the oil industry, who live and work in Equatorial Guinea. So having a decent consular section where they can come, where we can assist them across the board, is enormously important.

So I will end by thanking you, and I will also end by offering an invitation. We would be deeply honored, sir, if you could come to the inauguration in the summer of 2013. Thank you again.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I will try and do that, but you should know my interest is more about your lovely wife having a good place to stay than it was you having a nice Embassy. [Laughter.]

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

It is striking and just a reminder of his dedication to this work that the good Senator can say on my most recent trip to Equatorial Guinea, a sentence I suspect is not one widely said here on this panel. And I agree that keeping your family and your coworkers secure and providing appropriate support for Americans and their activities abroad, whether in the Peace Corps or private sector, is a critical part.

Let me turn, if I could, to some governance and human rights questions. In The Gambia, there is a troubling and long pattern of press harassment. There have been some real challenges in terms of human rights. And current and former members of this committee, most principally Senator Durbin, but also Senators Casey and Feingold who previously was the chair, have been urging the government to allow greater press freedoms and to account for a missing Gambian journalist, Ebrima Manneh. The plight of this journalist is widely seen as symbolic of press harassment there. I did not know if you could comment on this particular case or if you could tell us something about what sorts of messages about human rights and press freedoms you would carry forward as Ambassador.

And then last, it seems to me that Gambia's questionable human rights records and press freedom has raised real issues for them in terms of eligibility for Millennium Challenge Corporation funds. Is there a positive possibility of a positive outcome here or do you think this will be a challenging issue for your new service as Ambassador?

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you for the question, Senator. It will be challenging. If confirmed, I intend to consistently speak for press freedom. I do note that the case of the disappearance of Mr. Manneh—the President Jammeh has agreed to have a U.N. study group look into that, and I would look forward, if confirmed, on cooperating with the U.N. and with NGOs and with the Government of The Gambia to see if we can get clarity in that case. And press freedom is one of our fundamental beliefs. If confirmed as American Ambassador, of course, I would speak consistently and forcefully for press freedom in every case.

Senator COONS. Thank you. We would appreciate your persistent engagement on that and your reporting back to us any progress on that particular case and then whether the MCC provides some positive leverage as well.

If I could to Mr. Asquino, President Obiang is now the world's longest ruling leader after 33 years, and the Government of Equatorial Guinea has recently amended its constitution in ways that many observers believe are designed to pave the way for his son to succeed him as President. In a number of other countries throughout the continent, we have recently seen constitutional changes that similarly led to a lack of full and fair and open elections.

What sorts of messages as Ambassador would you deliver about democracy and rule of law?

And last, their most prominent human rights activist was recently sentenced to 3 years in prison after what seemed to be a politically motivated trial. What role would you play in advancing human rights more broadly?

Mr. ASQUINO. Thank you. You have touched on some very important issues, Senator.

In terms of President Obiang, what we would seek is for him to view as his legacy to his country bringing about democratic reform. This is a country that is faced with some very serious challenges, both economic and political. And as he looks at his long time in office, what we have urged him to do, and what we have offered to partner, is to look at ways to open political space that will leave for his people a better life in terms of provision of services, fairer distribution of resources and also a society in which basic freedoms and liberties are respected.

I would agree with you certainly on the constitutional package. It created the position of Vice President, and there is widespread concern that that referendum was held solely in order to create that position. So certainly as we look to municipal elections, which are the next elections coming up in 2013, if confirmed, I would certainly urge for more openness, giving the one political party there that really is in the opposition, the Convergence for Social Democracy, a true level playing field.

And I will finish by talking about Dr. Wenceslao Mansogo, whom you referred to. He is the Secretary General for Human Rights within the Convergence for Social Democracy Party. He was convicted of malpractice. We had an Embassy observer at that trial. Ambassador Fernandez met with the government and urged that he be treated fairly and humanely. And when that sentence was issued on May 7, shortly after that, the U.S. Embassy and the

State Department issued a statement expressing major concerns about due process for Dr. Mansogo and also for guarantees of his rights under the constitution of Equatorial Guinea, which many observers felt he was not afforded.

So if I were confirmed, sir, I would certainly urge that the President look to his legacy, that he look to ways to leave a country that is more democratic, and one that provides better for its people, and also that the opposition be given a chance to compete in the political sphere.

Thank you, sir.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Asquino.

If I might, Mr. Griffiths. Former President Chissano was the first recipient of the Mo Ibrahim Prize, as you may know. Dr. Ibrahim recently testified in a hearing that we held on openness, transitions, governance, democracy. And to what extent has Chissano's legacy helped shape a more positive political environment for Mozambique and how durable do you think is the path forward toward multiparty democracy in Mozambique?

Mr. GRIFFITHS. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

That is correct. And sort of in terms of legacy, he was succeeded by President Guebuza who as finishing his second mandate and recently there were reports in the press that President Guebuza had confirmed that he would not seek another term. I think that is an excellent sign for not only Mozambique's democracy and stability but also is a symbol to the region where we have seen Presidents extend their mandates.

I underscored that this would be, if confirmed, my top priority, and that is not only because of the importance we put toward governance, but I think as Senator Isakson was pointing out, the importance of ensuring that people know how to fish. Institutions matter which is why the Embassy has been focusing a lot on building up civil society, having a plethora of voices, people who can express pressure on the executive so that there are various sources of power. And I think it is very important to continue working as we have been with decentralized governments—some of the mayors now are from opposition powers—to continue working with business groups so that they too can articulate different points of views.

And civil society has been key in Mozambique in pushing forward a recently passed series of anticorruption legislation, which I think puts the country in the right direction. They have whistleblower protection, which is very important not only for government but also for trafficking in persons protection. And there was recent legislation where civil servants have to declare their revenue.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you.

Nelson Mandela to South Africa, George Washington to our own country, having founding executives, Presidents, Prime Ministers who voluntarily relinquish their elected role is a critical piece in most countries' transition to democracy. And I hope that you will be able to build regionally on Chissano's contributions.

Senator ISAKSON.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Griffiths, I mentioned that each of you made comments that impressed me, and the one that you made in your presentation about the PEPFAR program was the need for the countries to use more of their own resources in the delivery of that program.

You know, PEPFAR is a program a lot of people do not understand why we are making the investment we are making in it. But I am reminded of the fact that AIDS came to America through a flight attendant on a flight from Africa. And if we had had the type of CDC-type attention in Africa at the time, maybe that would not have happened, and think of the dollars it would have saved the American taxpayer and the world. So I think it is important that we do what we are doing through the PEPFAR program, but it is essential, as I said to Mr. Lane, that I can say to the American taxpayer in Georgia that that program is paying a dividend to the United States of America and that the countries in Africa are taking more ownership of it.

I was in Tanzania a few years ago in 2009. They then—now, this may have changed, but then they were a pretty shining example. Ambassador Green had been there for a couple of years. They had taken over most all of the testing, most all of the delivery, and what we were really doing was providing the retrovirals, but they were delivering the manpower and everything else.

I would like for you to comment on your vision of that as far as your country is going to be.

Mr. GRIFFITHS. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

And indeed, I think that is exactly the vision we have for Mozambique, and I will talk a bit about the program, but if I may just make a point on the transition. I spoke about the resource boom that is coming Mozambique's way, and I think it is essential that we do have these strong institutions in place so that we can see this transition, as you pointed out, when the government has more of its own resources that it can put it to benefit its own people.

We do have a number of very impressive successes in our PEPFAR program in Mozambique. If I may just cite a few statistics. In 2003, fewer than 5,000 patients were on antiretroviral treatment. In 2011, we had 273,000. One other of those numbers, people on treatment increased 89 percent between September 2009 and March 2012.

And what our Embassy is focusing on through the interagency work of the PEPFAR program is really building up the health care system which was destroyed during the civil war, and that is going to have a huge impact on rural societies.

We talked a bit about the importance of agriculture, and if you have a rural health care system that can address the needs of the population, they can be vectors of growth within the community as well. And I think our partnerships with faith-based organizations which have a great deal of credibility in their communities, our partnership with the Peace Corps, our partnership with the Department of Defense in helping to ensure that the military is ready to fulfill its mandate to protect the long land and sea borders, all of this comes together and the aim is very much what you signaled, Senator, that we will be able to transition the responsibility and the funding to the host government.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, one thing a lot of people do not understand is because of PEPFAR, we have gone from a situation where we were supplying retrovirals to try and prevent to where now people are living a lifetime of relatively normal and productive lifetimes on those retrovirals. And so you are going to have a continuum of care, not just taking care of a pregnant mother for a few years and having a child born to that pregnant mother passing away in a few months. That continuum of care is going to have to be hosted by the countries in which those people reside because the United States, in a macrosense and in a longitudinal way, cannot continue to fund all of that. But if we have turned that paradigm and those countries are taking more of the ownership of the continuum of care, then it would be a great legacy for our entire country and what we did for mankind.

Mr. Asquino, just do me one favor. The next time you see Mr. Obiang—we had a conversation when I was over there about the—you know, Marathon Oil helped develop the—I forgot the wildcatter who found the gas in the Gulf of Guinea, but Marathon helped do the liquefaction plant. Am I not right?

Mr. ASQUINO. That is correct, sir. There is a \$1.5 billion gas liquefaction plant that Marathon funded.

Senator ISAKSON. Is the son that everybody suspects is the one the constitution was amended for, the good son that does the gas and oil or the one that is Malibu on the beach?

Mr. ASQUINO. Malibu on the beach, sir. [Laughter.]

The other son's name is Gabriel.

Senator ISAKSON. I have met him. He is a pretty competent guy, seemed to be anyway.

Mr. ASQUINO. Yes. That is what everyone says.

Senator ISAKSON. But I talked to President Obiang about the fear of the Dutch disease infecting Equatorial Guinea because they were the poorest. But prior to the discovery of that gas and oil, they were, I think, the poorest country on the face of this earth, now as the chairman said, one of the richest growing economies. But if they are just investing that money in things and not investing it in their people, then they are going to have the same thing happen that has happened in most of the Middle East where they suffer from the Dutch disease and they do not develop their infrastructure themselves. So tell him I have not forgotten that conversation, and I encourage him to invest in his people.

Mr. ASQUINO. Sir, if confirmed, I certainly will do so. Thank you.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

If I might, just a last question or two. I am interested in and concerned about across all three countries—there were in the background materials concerns about piracy, about maritime security, about regional cooperation. And we have varying degrees of partnership or relationship both military and diplomatic, relatively modest relations, in one case relatively broad and strong.

What will you be doing and what do you see as our role in addressing what is an increasingly regional challenge, all the way down from Somalia in the case of Mozambique, all the way across the Gulf of Guinea, in your case in Equatorial Guinea, and then

regionally with narco-trafficking into Europe with The Gambia? What role can we as a country constructively play in improving maritime security and in contributing to regional security across the continent? If you might, Mr. Alford, first.

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you for the question, Senator.

The Gambia is a relatively poor and resource-poor country. However, they have been engaged militarily in peacekeeping operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and they have over 400 troops in Darfur now. I think building on this perhaps through IMET and through training—we are sending the first trainees down to Botswana for some INL-funded training. I think we can enhance their capabilities by using our expertise, by working with them on this. I do note that they are a committed regional player. They are very active in ECOWAS. I think with a little more training, maybe a little more resources down the road, I think they can play an even more constructive role on this.

I would note that they recently seized, within the past 2 years, \$1 billion in cocaine with the assistance of the British, and I think that was the largest cocaine seizure ever in West Africa. So that is something else we can build on.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Alford.

Mr. Asquino.

Mr. ASQUINO. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question.

Certainly piracy and the rise of militancy in the Gulf of Guinea are of major concerns to the United States. I had mentioned in my testimony that some 12 percent of our oil imports now come from the Gulf of Guinea.

In terms of what the United States is doing in the Gulf of Guinea, we are working very closely with regional countries, specifically Cameroon, Gabon, and Nigeria through the Africa Partnership Station. And this provides training to those countries, helps them to develop the capacity, but also helps them to coordinate in terms of their response to those sorts of threats.

Given the fact, as I said in my testimony, that human rights really is a top priority in Equatorial Guinea, we do not have military assistance programs with Equatorial Guinea. But Equatorial Guinea has worked with us, and we do guide them in terms of these issues. They themselves started a regional naval academy in 2009, which is the first regional naval academy for training on the African Continent. And so they themselves have been addressing these issues.

Although we do not have programs with them, we have encouraged them to look to contractors who can help them, and in recent years, they have improved their own capacity for naval security.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Mr. Griffiths, I was struck to see that Somali pirates seemed to be an issue in Mozambique, and certainly regional integration and security collaboration, something you referred to in your opening statement—what role can we possibly play to strengthen that security regionally?

Mr. GRIFFITHS. Thank you, Senator. Mozambique has the fourth-largest coastline in Africa. So it is a very important issue, and not only on the issue of piracy but also in its capacity to interdict illegal trafficking both of people and of drugs and other contraband,

but also in protecting their fisheries and protecting the offshore gas exploration that will be continuing in the northern part of the country. So we have been working with the Mozambican Navy and we have given 17 rigid hull inflatable boats, providing training, and other equipment to help them be able to patrol more and have a higher surveillance of the Mozambican channel. As you mentioned, helpfully they are working with Tanzania and South Africa so that the three countries can jointly assist in controlling the waters off the coast. If confirmed, I would certainly focus on these issues and see how we could further deepen our relationships with the Mozambican Government.

Senator COONS. Terrific. Thank you.

Senator Isakson, no further questions?

Senator ISAKSON. No.

Senator COONS. I just want to thank all four of you for appearing before us today. I want to thank your families for supporting you across what has collectively been more than a century of public service across quite difficult postings all over the world. I am confident that you will represent the United States well and that you will advocate for our interest as a nation and help move forward the values that I think are our greatest resource in our engagement with the world.

There may be members of the committee who were not able to join us today who would like to submit questions for the record. I will keep the record open through next Friday, but in the absence of any further questions, thank you very much for your appearance before this committee.

And this hearing is hereby adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:39 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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

RESPONSES OF EDWARD M. ALFORD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED  
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* Given your previous experience as a management officer in multiple posts around the world, what lessons have most significantly shaped your approach to managing a post like The Gambia?

*Answer.* Many years of supervising and leading large and diverse staffs have prepared me well to lead this small Embassy in a hardship environment. I have learned the importance of mentoring younger employees and fostering their career development and the importance of treating the locally employed staff with respect. I believe in the importance of integrating State Department Direct Hire employees, local employees, family member employees, and other agency employees into a team focused on our mission objectives and that the morale and well-being of family members is a vital component to managing any mission, but especially so in a hardship post. On the programmatic side, my experience in prioritizing finite resources to meet the most critical mission objectives will serve me well as we focus on democracy, human rights, and development agendas in tough budgetary times.

*Question.* According to the State Department Country Report on Human Rights, Gambia's challenges include restrictions on freedom of speech and press. Are there ways to utilize new media as a way of increasing outreach to advance U.S. goals? In your past experience, have you seen examples of effective uses of new media to support U.S. priorities?

*Answer.* The State Department is adapting our statecraft by reshaping our development and diplomatic processes to meet old challenges in new ways. New media complements traditional foreign policy tools by using new technology to reach more people and reach them in a more direct and targeted way. In response to the challenges outlined in the State Department Human Rights Report for The Gambia, we



are using new media as a means of bolstering freedom of speech and press while also increasing outreach to The Gambian youth, who constitute over 60 percent of the population.

Embassy Banjul's Facebook Page is an excellent example of an effective use of new media to support U.S. priorities. According to the page statistics, the page is most popular with 25–34 year olds with broad participation including civil society organizations, universities, local musicians, even The Gambian talk shows.

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RESPONSES OF MARK L. ASQUINO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED  
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* Given your most recent position as Executive Assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, and your previous experience, what lessons have most significantly shaped your approach to managing a post like Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* My present position as Executive Assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights has provided me with comprehensive knowledge of the various programs, resources, and tools the State Department has at its disposal to promote democracy and address human rights abuses. This knowledge, plus my overseas experience in engaging constructively on such issues with tough, nondemocratic governments, would form the basis of the firm, honest, and goal-oriented approach I would use to direct Embassy Malabo's interactions with the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea (GREG) if I were confirmed.

In Kazakhstan, I emphasized to the government the importance the United States places on transparency in reporting earnings from extractive industries, especially oil and gas. During my tenure as deputy chief of mission and Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., in Almaty, Kazakhstan applied to be a candidate for membership in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). My productive experience in working on this key issue with Government of Kazakhstan officials would shape how I envision leading Embassy Malabo's efforts to encourage the GREG to create the conditions that would make a reapplication for EITI membership possible.

*Question.* In your testimony, you noted that during your most recent overseas assignment as deputy chief of mission in Khartoum, you focused on human rights abuses in Sudan. Though State Department human rights reports have noted some human rights improvements in Equatorial Guinea in recent years, serious issues continue to exist. Given your previous experience, and considering the very limited U.S. aid to Equatorial Guinea, are there ways to engage the government to support greater improvements and how would you characterize your approach?

*Answer.* In Khartoum, I was a forceful advocate with the Government of Sudan (GOS) on the need for it to allow nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society organizations to expand their humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in Darfur. If confirmed, I would draw on this experience and provide the Equatoguinean Government (GREG) with specific areas in which it needed improvement in its respect for human rights. I would advocate that the government ease restrictions on international and domestic organizations to allow them, with government cooperation, to continue to improve prison conditions, denounce human rights abuses, and ensure that Equatoguinean citizens are accorded their basic rights, including due process.

Equatorial Guinea is ranked Tier 3 in the Trafficking in Persons Report. But on a positive note, the GREG has recently asked for the United States technical assistance in restructuring the country's dormant Interagency Commission on the Trafficking in Persons. If I am confirmed, I would like to further the GREG's restructuring of the Commission. As noted above, I would raise specific areas for improvement and inform the GREG what it needs to accomplish to improve its TIP ranking.

Just as was the case in Sudan, my approach on such issues would be one of respectful, but firm and deliberate, engagement with Equatorial Guinea.

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RESPONSES OF DOUGLAS M. GRIFFITHS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED  
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

*Question.* Mozambique is home to a wide array of natural resources, but over half its population lives on less than 50 cents a day. Based on your experience in other posts, how can a government most effectively try to bridge those gaps rather than falling victim to the so-called resource curse that has plagued so many other coun-

tries? How can the U.S. Government most effectively assist that sort of genuinely democratic economic development?

*Answer.* Strengthening democracy and governance is one of the highest priorities for the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique. If confirmed, I will continue to focus on U.S. Government efforts in this area to include the development of civil society and implementation of anticorruption legislation. Building strong local institutions and host government administrative capacity are crucial to Mozambique's long-term stability and economic growth. Specific to natural resources, I will continue to encourage Mozambique in its ongoing application process to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). Moving beyond transparency, I will encourage the Mozambican Government to adopt a fiscal regime that will govern the responsible management of natural resource revenues.

Making progress toward more broad-based growth will be a significant challenge during my tenure, if confirmed. Broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction are also top priorities of the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique and U.S. Government initiatives are already working toward this goal. Through Feed the Future, the U.S. Government and Mozambique are working to sustainably reduce poverty by improving key agricultural value chains and supporting the policy enabling environment for agricultural development. Mozambique will soon take part in the "New Alliance to Increase Food Security and Nutrition," launched at the Camp David G8 summit in May, which aims to increase responsible private investments in agriculture. Promoting a more dynamic private sector is an integral aspect of Feed the Future and the "New Alliance," and will create new jobs and improve livelihoods across Mozambique.

Additionally, the Millennium Challenge Corporation is working in the less developed northern provinces of Mozambique—where many of the natural resources are found—to improve the road and water supply infrastructure, support farmers, and formalize land tenure administration. These improvements will create an environment more conducive to growth across all socioeconomic levels.

*Question.* Given your previous experience, what management lessons will shape your approach if confirmed as chief of mission of the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique?

*Answer.* My previous postings in places such as Haiti and Geneva have taught me the true value of the "whole of government" approach. While these postings starkly contrasted in many ways, the teamwork required to tackle complex crises across U.S. agencies remained at the core. If confirmed, I plan to harness all of the U.S. Government resources available at post and in Washington to achieve our mission goals.

The U.S. Embassy in Mozambique is a fast-growing mission with employees from seven U.S. agencies spread out across the city in a number of annexes. If confirmed, I will lead by example in fostering interagency cooperation by encouraging cross-cutting projects and activities across the mission.

RESPONSES OF EDWARD M. ALFORD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED  
BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2011 Trafficking In Persons Report, The Gambia is a Tier 2 Watch List country for human trafficking for its failure to demonstrate increasing its efforts to address human trafficking over the previous year.

- If confirmed, what would be your strategy to encourage the Government of The Gambia to institute stronger human trafficking policies?

*Answer.* Gambia is a "Tier 2 Watchlist" source, transit, and destination country for children and women subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically forced labor and forced prostitution. If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of The Gambia to increase efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses and convict trafficking offenders. I will also urge the government to develop an educational module for police and government officials to distinguish smuggling from trafficking as well as encourage the government to train its law enforcement to improve victim identification efforts. In addition, I will work to support the development of the newly created National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons to become a strong partner in combating trafficking in persons in The Gambia. I will also urge it to complete the promised database that tracks the government's antitrafficking efforts.

*Question.* The 2007 Trafficking in Persons Act mandated the formation of the National Agency Against Trafficking In Persons. This agency has not entered into formal existence and has not received its allocated funds from the government.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the government fulfills its obligation for the creation of this agency?

Answer. Despite limited resources, the Government of The Gambia is making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons (TIP). In December 2011, the Ministry of Justice launched the National Agency Against Trafficking. This was in direct response to the 2011 Trafficking In Persons Report, which expressed concerns about the delayed formation of a national agency as mandated in the 2007 Trafficking in Persons Act. The new agency has the lead role in coordinating anti-TIP efforts and its boards of directors includes representatives from most of the government agencies that cover TIP-related issues as well as from local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that are active in antitrafficking efforts. The agency itself has staff and budget assigned to it. If confirmed, I will work to support the development of this nascent agency to become a strong partner in combating trafficking in persons in The Gambia.

RESPONSES OF MARK L. ASQUINO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED  
BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2011 Trafficking In Persons Report, Equatorial Guinea is a Tier 3 country for human trafficking for its failure to make significant efforts to combat trafficking, despite the government's substantial financial resources.

- If confirmed, what is your strategy to engage the Government of Equatorial Guinea to enact a strong antitrafficking policy which will address prosecution, protection and prevention?

Answer. Our Embassy in Malabo is working with the Equatoguinean Government to strengthen Equatorial Guinea's efforts to combat and prevent trafficking in persons and to assist trafficking victims. Our mission regularly engages with the Ministries of Social Affairs, Interior, National Security, Defense and Foreign Affairs, and has raised the importance of combating human trafficking directly with Equatorial Guinea (EG) President Obiang. In part due to our intervention, EG's Director General for Immigration has recently informed our Embassy that EG will revive its Interagency Commission for Trafficking in Persons, which was formed when EG passed its trafficking in persons law in 2004, but which has not met in over 2 years. The Director General also intends to update EG's National Plan to Fight Human Trafficking and to begin steps to implement it. He has asked for U.S. advice on how to revive and structure the Commission. The State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons is actively working with the Embassy on the request. Last week the Equatoguinean Government cohosted a seminar on trafficking in persons with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). While these first steps indicate a renewed commitment to trafficking issues, I believe that we must remain engaged with the Equatoguinean Government and continue to urge the government to take a holistic approach to combat trafficking. The Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights (J) is responsible for overseeing the work of the Office to Monitor and Combat the Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP). As Chief of Staff in this Under Secretariat, I am directly involved in discussions of TIP issues on a day-to-day basis. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with J/TIP and continue the Embassy's dialogue with the Equatoguinean Government to encourage it to take concrete steps to combat human trafficking. I will strongly urge it to adopt a robust antitrafficking policy that addresses prosecution, protection, and prevention.

*Question.* Public officials are often engaged in human trafficking and smuggling operations in Equatorial Guinea, which is principally a destination for children subjected to forced labor.

- If confirmed, how would you engage the Equatoguinean Government in a dialogue on the sensitive subject of government officials engaging in trafficking?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy in Malabo has maintained a frank dialogue with the Equatoguinean Government on a range of sensitive issues, including human rights and trafficking in persons. Our candid relationship extends to the highest levels, and previous ambassadors have been able to deliver tough human rights messages to President Obiang; if confirmed, I will continue this practice. When faced with credible accusations of official complicity in human trafficking, I will draw on my extensive experience in combating trafficking in persons in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Sudan to raise the issue at the highest levels of government. I understand that the Equatoguinean Government has generally been receptive to U.S. messages on

the trafficking issue, and has some interest in ending official complicity in human smuggling and trafficking. In June 2010, an Equatoguinean court convicted an army officer and two others guilty of human trafficking and sentenced them to 15 years in prison in connection with the deaths of several foreign nationals who died of asphyxiation while being smuggled into Equatorial Guinea.

RESPONSES OF DOUGLAS M. GRIFFITHS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED  
BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2011 Trafficking in Persons Report, Mozambique is a Tier 2 country for human trafficking. There are loose Mozambican and South African trafficking networks and also larger Chinese and Nigerian trafficking syndicates active in Mozambique.

- If confirmed, how would you encourage the Mozambican Government to investigate the transnational organization crime element of human trafficking?

*Answer.* In the 2011 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, the Government of Mozambique received an upgrade to Tier 2 from Tier 2 Watch List following progress made through its efforts to combat TIP in 2010. Continuing its strong efforts, in 2011 the Mozambican Government initiated 15 new investigations of trafficking-in-persons cases, and 11 new prosecutions. Eight cases were completed, seven of those resulting in convictions. These law enforcement efforts occurred under its strong 2008 antitrafficking act and demonstrate the capacity of the Mozambican Government to address transnational crime.

The Mozambican Government has implemented TIP training programs for border guards, customs officials, and police officers to help them recognize and prevent trafficking. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage U.S. support for this type of training, as well as for other programs that combat these illegal activities. I will also continue to encourage progress, specifically to finalize Mozambique's implementing regulations for the 2008 legislation, develop a formal system to refer victims to care, and continue to build the capacity of the antitrafficking police unit.

The Mozambican Government recently began to compile data on trafficking cases nationwide, a first and significant step toward understanding TIP crime networks and trends. Parallel to this effort, Mozambique began drafting a national antitrafficking action plan. The U.S. Embassy in Mozambique has been assisting in these ongoing efforts. If confirmed, I will continue to make our assistance in these areas a priority.

Our International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) assistance to Mozambique has historically focused on border security. State is coordinating with USAID to expand the scope of our assistance to the Attorney General's office with a focus on strengthening prosecutorial capacity. We also are planning to target assistance to strengthening the enforcement of customs, antimoney laundering laws, and detecting and deterring drug trafficking—all initiatives with direct links to combating human trafficking networks.

*Question.* The Mozambican Government deports foreign trafficking victims without screening them for possible victimization.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that foreign trafficking victim cases are investigated and that the victims are treated as victims instead of criminals?

*Answer.* There are increasing numbers of migrants arriving in Mozambique from a number of other countries in Africa, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia, as well as from South Asian nations. The overwhelming majority of these are economic migrants voluntarily transiting Mozambique on their way to South Africa.

The government has a national system of Women and Children's Victim Assistance Units, operating in over 200 police stations throughout the country, and these Units assist trafficking victims as well as victims of domestic violence. If confirmed, I will encourage the Mozambican Government to meet its responsibilities under international conventions to erect comprehensive screening procedures at its borders, as well as to increase the capacity of the Victims Assistance Units for the benefit of foreign trafficking victims.

The Mozambican Parliament recently passed a comprehensive Witness and Victims Protection Act, which will offer a broad range of protective measures, including physical protection and foreign and domestic relocation. This law will have direct application to Trafficking in Persons (TIP) cases. If confirmed, I will encourage the Mozambican Government to devote adequate resources to this new act.