

NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

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BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION—MARCH 10 THROUGH DECEMBER 2, 2015
SECOND SESSION—FEBRUARY 11 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2016

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

Hon. Geeta Pasi, of New York, nominated to be Ambassador to the Republic of Chad
Hon. Mary Beth Leonard, of Massachusetts, nominated to be Representative of the United States of America to the African Union
Anne S. Casper, of Nevada, nominated to be Ambassador to the Republic of Burundi

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:40 p.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jeff Flake, presiding.

Present: Senators Flake [presiding] and Markey.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF FLAKE, U.S. SENATOR FROM ARIZONA

Senator FLAKE. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Today the committee will consider the nominations of three experienced career Foreign Service officers to be U.S. Ambassadors to Chad, the African Union, and Burundi. I was happy to meet each of the nominees in my office earlier. I appreciate their appreciation of the challenges ahead and their willingness to undertake this.

Chad remains an important partner on a number of fronts, especially in the efforts against Boko Haram. Popular protests in the run-up to recent elections and economic stress due in part to low global oil prices highlight internal problems, and the government will need to grapple with these in the months and years to come.

The African Union plays an important role in promoting peace, good governance, and economic development on the continent. As Senator Markey mentioned, we were able to visit that body last year with President, Obama. Managing our relationship with the AU will continue to be a vital part of our regional engagement.

Finally, since last year, Burundi's escalating violence and instability has made for a complex situation that requires sustained attention, careful handling by our next Ambassador who will face many challenges in pursuing U.S. objectives.

I thank each of you for your time and sharing your experience and expertise with us here. I want to pass along our thanks to your family. I am sure you will want to introduce family members who are here. Particularly with these assignments, I know often it is a great sacrifice to yourself and your families for you to be able to serve, and it is very much appreciated.

With that, Senator Markey, do you have comments?

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

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

The three nominees we have here today are highly accomplished Foreign Service officers who have dedicated their lives to the service of our country, sometimes in difficult places and away from loved ones. They understand that America needs to be out there in tough places working for our country and our partners for the mutual benefit of our governments and our people, and for that we are very grateful.

Countries in sub-Saharan Africa have tremendous promise and potential. Unfortunately, some of these countries are doing better at realizing this potential than others.

If confirmed, two of three nominees, the nominee for Ambassador to Burundi, Ms. Anne Casper, and the nominee for Ambassador to Chad, Ambassador Geeta Pasi, will face the difficult task of urging the leaders of those countries away from violence, instability, and corruption and towards democracy, good governance, and accountability.

The third is Ambassador Mary Beth Leonard, who I am proud to note is a fellow native of Massachusetts and a graduate of Dougherty High School in Worcester, Massachusetts. Her task as our representative to the African Union will be to lead our efforts to help strengthen that organization's ability to make Africa a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous place. Accomplishing those goals means working with African governments and regional bodies to make sure that there is democratic space that allows for free expression and non-violent dissent.

You are three wonderful candidates. We welcome you here today. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Senator Markey.

We will now turn to the nominees. Ms. Geeta Pasi recently served as Director of the Office of Career Development and assignments in the State's Bureau of Human Resources. Previous positions included ambassadorship to Djibouti, Director of the Office of East African Affairs, and postings in Cameroon and Ghana.

The second nominee, Mary Beth Leonard, career Foreign Service member of the Department of State faculty advisors with the U.S. Naval War College. Previously she served as U.S. Ambassador to Mali, Director of the Office of West African Affairs. She has also held positions in South Africa, Cameroon, Namibia, and Togo. [Foreign language spoken.]

Senator FLAKE. I just said she is the only one here that speaks Afrikaans, so we will have this meeting in Afrikaans. [Laughter.]

Senator FLAKE. Last but not least, Anne Casper, who currently serves as Senior Advisor in the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Partnership for the State Department's Global Engagement Center. Previous postings included Saudi Arabia, Rwanda, Albania, and Syria.

A highly accomplished group here. We, again, thank you for your willingness to serve.

Ms. Pasi?

STATEMENT OF HON. GEETA PASI, OF NEW YORK, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD

Ambassador PASI. Good afternoon, 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 Chad. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me.

First, Mr. Chairman, please permit me to acknowledge family members here today. My sisters, Usha and Rita, and my niece Minaka have joined me this afternoon.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to tell you a bit about myself. My career has included challenging assignments around the world and at home. I have served in Africa three times, as you noted, including as Ambassador to Djibouti. In Washington, I served in numerous positions, including as the Afghanistan Desk Officer where I was working on September 11, 2001, and I am proud to be in the Bureau of Human Resources.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy N'Djamena in advancing U.S. interests with our Foreign and Civil Service personnel, military staff, and local employees. Our main interests in Chad are peace and security, good governance, human rights, and economic development. Chad shares borders with Libya, Sudan, the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger. Chad is an important partner in the fight against violent extremist groups, including Boko Haram. The United States aims to strengthen the productive partnership we enjoy with Chad. As we advance our mutual interests on the security front, we also seek to promote democracy and good governance. If confirmed, I will work with you to represent the interests and values of the American people to the government and people of Chad at a moment when Chad's partnership with the United States and our allies is on the ascendancy.

Mr. Chairman, regional threats and instability have contributed to domestic challenges in Chad, including by threatening key trade routes and markets. This has weakened Chad's economy, which has already been impacted by a decline of oil prices globally. International investment in Chad is severely constrained by its geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, human capital challenges, high import duties, and corruption. Chad's human rights record is problematic although there has been some improvement. If confirmed, I will continue to press the Government of Chad on democracy and human rights.

Chad is host to over 380,000 refugees from Sudan, Nigeria, and the Central African Republic and approximately 100,000 internally displaced persons largely in the Lake Chad region. Ongoing insecurity

rity related to Boko Haram has resulted in decreased food production, reduced market activity, and complicated the delivery of humanitarian assistance. As a result, over 100,000 people are food insecure. Internally displaced persons and refugees lack access to food, shelter, and sanitation, and their huge numbers have taxed Chad's limited infrastructure.

If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will remain focused on using all elements of the USG to support Chad in its efforts to counter the threat of Boko Haram, including closely monitoring Boko Haram's linkages to ISIL under its new name, ISIL West Africa Province. I will encourage the Government of Chad to focus not only on the immediate security threat, but also the root causes of violence in the region.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the protection of mission personnel, as well as all Americans living and traveling in Chad and American business interests. Within the next year, the mission will move to a newly constructed embassy compound, meaning that all mission personnel will work in the safest and most secure facilities available. Maintaining this technologically advanced building in Chad will be a challenge, and I am committed to good stewardship of the significant USG investment.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. If confirmed, I would welcome the challenge of protecting and advancing the interests of the United States in Chad. It is a duty and responsibility I would be honored to accept. Thank you and I would welcome any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Pasi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEETA PASI

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 Chad. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me. First, Mr. Chairman, please permit me to acknowledge family members here today. My sisters, Usha and Rita, my brother Peter, my sister in law Hallie Lewis, my brother in law Subir Sachdev, and my nieces who have joined me today.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to tell you about myself. My career has included challenging assignments around the world and at home. I have served in Africa three times, including as Ambassador to Djibouti. In Washington, I served in numerous positions, including as the Afghanistan Desk Officer where I was working on September 11, 2001. I currently serve in the Bureau of Human Resources.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy N'Djamena in advancing U.S. interests with our team of Foreign and Civil Service personnel, military staff, and local employees. Our main interests in Chad are peace and security, good governance, human rights, and economic development. Chad shares borders with Libya, Sudan, the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger. Chad is an important partner in the fight against violent extremist groups, including Boko Haram. The United States aims to strengthen the productive partnership we enjoy with Chad. As we advance our mutual interests on the security front, we also seek to promote democracy and good governance. If confirmed, I will work with you to represent the interests and values of the American people to the government and people of Chad, at a moment when Chad's partnership with the United States and its allies is in the ascendancy.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, Chad is committed to regional stability. Chad plays a critical role in the region and is an important partner in combatting violent extremism.

Mr. Chairman, regional threats and instability have contributed to domestic challenges in Chad, including by threatening key trade routes and markets. This has weakened Chad's economy, which has already been impacted by a decline of oil

prices globally. International investment in Chad is severely constrained by its geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, human capital challenges, high import duties, and corruption. Chad's human rights record is problematic although there has been improvement. If confirmed, I will continue to press the Government of Chad on democracy and human rights.

Given its location in a troubled region, Chad is host to over 380,000 refugees—from Sudan, Nigeria and the Central African Republic—and approximately 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDP), largely in the Lake Chad region. Ongoing insecurity related to Boko Haram attacks has led to decreased food production, reduced market activity, and complicated the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Over 100,000 people are food insecure in Boko Haram-affected areas of the country. Boko Haram has repeatedly attacked villages, burned homes, killed village leaders, and targeted both civilians and security forces. IDPs and refugees lack access to food, shelter, sanitation, and hygiene services, and their large numbers have taxed Chad's already limited resources.

If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will remain focused on using all elements of the USG to support Chad in its efforts to counter the threat of Boko Haram, including closely monitoring Boko Haram's linkages to ISIL under its new name—ISIL West Africa Province. I will encourage the Government of Chad to focus not only on the immediate security threat, but also the root causes of violence in the region.

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. If confirmed, I would welcome the challenge of protecting and advancing the interests of the United States in Chad; it is a duty and responsibility I would be honored to accept. Thank you and I would welcome any questions you might have.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you for being here. Your family members know more about African sanctions than they wanted to know probably. [Laughter.]

Senator FLAKE. Thank you for being here as well.

Ms. Leonard?

STATEMENT OF HON. MARY BETH LEONARD, OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AFRICAN UNION

Ambassador LEONARD. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Markey, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union and as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

I joined the Foreign Service 28 years ago nearly to this day in the same class as today's co-panelist, Geeta Pasi, I might add, with a newly minted master's degree in African studies. I remember vividly my excitement that the State Department would agree to send me to live and work in Africa. Sitting here today, after six tours in Africa and two domestic Africa-related tours, my excitement is equally palpable, as I contemplate the prospect that, if confirmed, I will marshal those professional experiences in directing U.S. relations with the African Union. These experiences culminated with the honor of serving as Ambassador in Mali, where the U.S. mission was at the forefront of a closely coordinated multilateral effort to support that country in emerging from multidimensional security and governance crisis.

I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence that the President and Secretary Kerry have shown in me with this nomination, and if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the members of the committee and your staffs to promote and protect U.S. interests across Africa by strengthening and expanding our ties with the continent's premier multilateral institution.

I am pleased to welcome family members who are with me today, including my sister, Ann Marie Stoica, and niece, Mary Ann Manning, as well as my cousin, Brian Johnson.

Nothing I could say today would underscore the importance of our relationship with the African Union more than President Obama did by his historic visit to Addis Ababa last July. As the first U.S. President to visit the AU, President Obama delivered a strong message on our commitment to Africa. This is a relationship rooted in shared goals, which are reflected in President Obama's 2012 policy directive for sub-Saharan Africa and the AU's Constitutive Act, i.e., their founding document: peace and security; democracy and governance; opportunity and development; and economic growth, trade, and investment. If confirmed, I look forward to strengthening our close collaboration in all four areas.

U.S. resource contributions to AU peace and security efforts have included both capacity building and operational support. Capacity building has assisted with AU peacekeeping and conflict early warning work, and operational support has included equipment, training, and logistics planning. The AU and its member states have made substantial progress in being able to step up to their security challenges, but additional work is needed, including in counterterrorism and maritime security.

The realization that international largesse is not without its limits has led to discussions about new partnerships to provide both more reliable support and greater financial responsibility from the AU and its member states in U.N.-authorized peace operations in Africa. If confirmed, I would look forward to next steps as we work together with the AU, the U.N., and others in the international community to bring new proposals to fruition.

The United States and the AU share a commitment to democratic principles, including free and fair elections, peaceful transitions of power, and sound governance. More broadly, we look to the AU as a respected voice on the continent that builds consensus on African issues among member states and stakeholders. I will continue this dialogue if I am confirmed, including frank discussions about how to address situations where democracy and governance are falling short. As President Obama made clear during his AU visit last year, the United States does not believe that governments should change their constitutions to benefit the incumbent in power. Our diplomatic efforts to resolve or prevent such crises are multifaceted and, indeed, multilateral. The African Union has been and will continue to be important partners in this regard.

On the development front, the AU's Agenda 2063 in the words of AU Commission Chairperson Dr. Dlamini Zuma encapsulates the aspirations of Africa's people for themselves and for their continent." From PEPFAR to the President's Power Africa initiative, the United States has been at the forefront of helping Africa and Africans realize those aspirations. We need to help Africans build

sustainable livelihoods and better opportunities, particularly for this continent's strikingly young population. Congress' 2015 renewal of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act for another 10 years will enable more African entrepreneurs and exporters to build their businesses via stronger and more open trade relationships with the United States, another area I look forward to supporting, if confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, baie dankie, and I thank both members for the opportunity to appear before you and look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Leonard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY BETH LEONARD,

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Markey, and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union and as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). I joined the Foreign Service 28 years ago nearly to this day—in the same class as today's co-panelist Geeta Pasi, I might add—with a newly minted Master's Degree in African studies. I remember vividly my excitement that the State Department would agree to send me to live and work in Africa. Sitting here today, after six tours in Africa and two domestic Africa-related tours, my excitement is equally palpable as I contemplate the prospect that, if confirmed, I will marshal those professional experiences in directing U.S. relations with the African Union. These experiences culminated with the honor of serving as Ambassador in Mali, where the U.S. mission was at the forefront of a closely coordinated multilateral effort to support that country in emerging from a multi-dimensional security and governance crisis. I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence that the President and Secretary Kerry have shown in me with this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the members of this committee and your staffs to promote and protect U.S. interests across Africa by strengthening and expanding our ties with the continent's premier multilateral institution.

I am pleased to welcome family members who are with me today including my sister Ann Marie Stoica and niece Mary Ann Manning.

Nothing I could say today would underscore the importance of our relationship with the African Union more than President Obama did by his historic visit to Addis Ababa last July. As the first U.S. President to visit the AU, President Obama delivered a strong message on our commitment to Africa—to democracy, to opportunity, to prosperity, and to the promotion of and respect for human rights for all people. This is a relationship rooted in shared goals, which are reflected in President Obama's 2012 Policy Directive for sub-Saharan Africa and the AU's Constitutive Act (the AU's founding document): Peace and Security; Democracy and Governance; Opportunity and Development; and Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment. If confirmed, I look forward to strengthening our close collaboration in all four areas.

U.S. resource contributions to AU peace and security efforts have included both capacity building and operational support. Capacity building has assisted with AU peacekeeping and conflict early warning work and operational support has included equipment, training, and logistics planning. Most recently, U.S. support has enabled AU efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army, support the AU Mission in Somalia, and bolster the Lake Chad Basin Commission's efforts to counter Boko Haram. The AU and its member states have made substantial progress in being able to step up to their security challenges but additional work is needed, including in counterterrorism and maritime security. The realization that international largesse is not without its limits has led to discussions about new partnerships to provide both more reliable support and greater financial responsibility from the AU and its member states in UN-authorized peace operations in Africa. We welcomed the AU's appointment this January of Dr. Donald Kaberuka as the AU High Representative for the Peace Fund, highlighting the AU's commitment to this issue. If confirmed, I would look forward to next steps as we work together with the AU, the UN, and others in the international community to bring new proposals to fruition.

The United States and the AU share a commitment to democratic principles, including free and fair elections, peaceful transitions of power, and sound governance. More broadly, we look to the AU as a respected voice on the continent that builds

consensus on African issues among member states and stakeholders. I will continue this dialogue if I am confirmed, including frank discussions about how to address situations where democracy and governance are falling short. As President Obama made clear during his AU visit last year, the United States does not believe that governments should change their constitutions to benefit the incumbent in power. Our diplomatic efforts to resolve or prevent such crises are multi-faceted, and indeed multilateral; the African Union, along with sub-regional African organizations such as the East African Community, has been and will continue to be important partners in this regard.

On the development front, the AU's "Agenda 2063" in the words of AU Commission Chairperson Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, "encapsulates the aspirations of Africa's people for themselves and for their continent." From PEPFAR to the President's Power Africa initiative, the United States has been at the forefront of helping Africa and Africans realize those aspirations. We need to help Africans build sustainable livelihoods and better opportunities, particularly for this continent's strikingly young population. Congress' 2015 renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act for another ten years will enable more African entrepreneurs and exporters to build their businesses via stronger and more open trade relationships with the United States, another area I look forward to supporting, if confirmed.

I cannot close without a word about the global response to the Ebola crisis, where our U.S. military and medical personnel worked alongside counterparts from Africa, Europe, China, and elsewhere to treat the ill and build institutional resilience in the Ebola-affected countries. We could not have succeeded without the critical contributions of the African Union, which deployed medical personnel and helped to coordinate a very effective response. If confirmed, it would be my honor to continue to pursue our efforts to support the nascent Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, partially modeled on our own CDC, as framed in the April 2015 memorandum of cooperation signed by Secretary Kerry and Chairperson Dlamini Zuma.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and the other members of the committee, and look forward to your questions.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Ms. Casper?

STATEMENT OF ANNE S. CASPER, OF NEVADA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

Ms. CASPER. Chairman Flake, Ranking Member Markey, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Burundi. I am extremely grateful to the President and Secretary Kerry for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I will work closely with this committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance U.S. interests in Burundi and help Burundians achieve the bright future they deserve.

Accompanying me here today is my husband, Karl Deringer, who has served in U.S. missions overseas as a nurse and in 2012 won the Secretary of State's award for volunteerism in Africa. I would also like to mention my mother Ilene Casper who taught me the value of education, my brother Larry, an assistant U.S. attorney, and my late father, Charles Casper, a self-made man and proud veteran who modeled service to our country and a father who pushed his daughter to follow her dreams.

Mr. Chairman, Burundi has been a friend of the United States since its founding as a republic in 1962. Roughly the size of New Hampshire and located in the heart of Africa, Burundi is home to 10 million citizens.

After decades of ethnic conflict, political violence, one-party rule, and a civil war that killed over 300,000 people, the signing of the Arusha Agreement in 2000 established a framework for peaceful political competition and ushered in a decade of hope. However,

events over the past year have led Burundi away from the spirit and promise of Arusha.

Since April 2015, when the Burundi Government signaled its intent to disregard term limits in violation of the Arusha Agreement, over 400 people have been killed and 260,000 have fled to neighboring countries. Targeted violence, assassinations, sexual and gender-based violence, and retaliatory attacks have continued with impunity, further threatening Burundi's fragile peace. Mr. Chairman, this killing must stop. Ending this crisis and restoring stability to Burundi requires leadership and it requires courage. Peace that binds all parties is essential for a return to a positive trajectory in Burundi.

The United States remains seized with resolving this crisis through direct engagement. We are pressing all sides to stop the violence and commit to participating in the East African Community-led dialogue process, which most recently convened last month. Additionally, the United States is supporting the deployment and important work of U.N. and African Union human rights monitors and continues to engage the U.N., AU, and regional partners on contingency planning.

Mr. Chairman, young people make up over half of all Burundian citizens, and they are seeking education and jobs in ever greater numbers. Given the dearth of opportunity, however, they are particularly vulnerable to recruitment into militias. The U.S. Government runs programs with local partners to develop opportunities for young people, strengthen conflict resolution, monitor for hate speech, and promote peaceful messaging. If I am confirmed, embassy staff and I will continue to reach out broadly to strengthen these efforts and expand opportunities.

Mr. Chairman, Burundi's fragile economy continues to deteriorate, increasing Burundians' health and nutritional challenges. The U.S. Government provides \$50 million annually in USAID-funded assistance programs, primarily to the health sector. We have also contributed \$86 million in humanitarian assistance for refugees and others affected by the current crisis. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that this assistance remains effective.

I also would note that Burundi has made important contributions to peacekeeping, particularly countering Al Shabaab in Somalia.

Finally, our mission in Bujumbura has performed admirably under very difficult circumstances over the past year. I look forward, if confirmed, to working with every one of our embassy staff, American and locally engaged alike. Ensuring the continued safety of American citizens residing in Burundi and the security of our staff are my highest priorities.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will bring the collective experiences of my 23 years in the Foreign Service to advance U.S. interests. I will also help Burundi's people restore their nation and their lives so that they export products, not people, and so that when the world thinks of Burundi and the center of Africa, we will not dwell on their fears but we will share with Burundians the promise of their hopes.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Casper follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANNE S. CASPER

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Burundi. I am extremely grateful to the President and Secretary Kerry for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I will work closely with this committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance U.S. interests in Burundi and help Burundians achieve the bright future they deserve.

Accompanying me here today is my husband, Karl Deringer, who has served in U.S. missions overseas as a nurse and in 2012 won the Secretary of State's award for volunteerism in Africa. I would not be here today without his support. I would also like to mention my mother, Ilene Casper, who taught me the value of education, my brother Larry, an assistant U.S. attorney, and my late father, Charles Casper, a self-made man and proud veteran who modeled service to our country and a father who pushed his daughter to follow her dreams.

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I would also note that Burundi has made important contributions to peacekeeping, particularly countering Al Shabaab in Somalia. Finally, our Mission in Bujumbura has performed admirably under very difficult circumstances over the past year. I look forward, if confirmed, to working with every one of our Embassy staff, American and locally employed alike.

Ensuring the continued safety of American citizens residing in Burundi and the security of our staff are my highest priorities. Here in Washington, just the other day, I saw a high-value, single-source coffee for sale, from Burundi. Its quality, and pledge that a good price had been paid to the farmer, reminded me of Burundi's promising prospects.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will bring the collective experiences of my 23 years in the Foreign Service to advance U.S. interests; I will also help Burundi's people restore their nation and their lives so that they export products, not people, and so that when the world thinks of Burundi and the center of Africa, we will not dwell on their fears, but share with Burundians the promise of their hopes.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, all of you.

Ambassador Pasi, with regard to Chad, you mentioned protecting U.S. business interests as a top priority. What U.S. business interests are there in Chad right now?

Ambassador PASI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have U.S. business interest that is limited to the oil investment, the oil sector. Exxon Mobil and some partners are there. They run the pipeline from Chad to Cameroon. With the decline in oil prices, however, the associated companies in the oil industry have largely reduced their holdings or actually left Chad. So the actual American business presence is fairly small.

Senator FLAKE. And in terms of the future, likely investment likely in the oil and gas industry?

Ambassador PASI. I think the oil and gas sector, obviously, depends on the price of the oil and gas around the world. If it does increase, Chad will have more promise in terms of partners. There are Canadian firms also in the oil sector, as well as Chinese companies and others.

There are a few other sectors. Most Chadians are actually engaged in agriculture. They raise cotton. They export vegetables. We provide assistance to help them do a better job with that.

Senator FLAKE. Talk about USAID assistance with regard to development in agriculture.

Ambassador PASI. Yes. So USAID is engaged in a number of regional projects in Chad. We do not have a USAID presence in Chad. We have one representative but not a standard USAID office as we do in many other countries. But we have regional programs, and one is a seed program to provide more resilient seeds to Chadians so that crops are more effective in that drought-affected country. Second, there is a cotton collective program for the surrounding countries, those that raise cotton, to promote the sale of cotton. So they are mostly regionally based agricultural activities from USAID, in addition to the Countering Violent Extremism programs that we have there.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Ms. Leonard, the last panel—you heard them talk about sanctions. One of the panelists talked about U.N. sanctions really only being effective if they get AU support first. The African countries can come together. What do you see as part of your role there in this regard. For example, if we want to impose sanctions on the DRC, U.N. sanctions, your role in getting African countries through the AU to support these kind of actions?

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I listened to the exchange of the previous panelists with great interest, and I noted not only their interest in the tool of sanctions but their generally shared conviction that sanctions as a tool works best when it is accompanied by a very broad strategy and shared strategy.

And I think that what is particularly interesting about our relationship with the African Union is the ability to help build regional consensus on the founding goals that are so near and dear to our own goals in Africa, mainly democracy and governance in the context of the conversation that you just had. And I have quoted the President's words in my statement about his attachment to that issue, and whatever the merits of an individual discussion, clearly

if a government—it is destabilizing insofar as political opponents are being attacked or aspirations are not met. And so, therefore, this question of democracy and governance is very much at the heart of peace and stability goals that are dear to the African Union, as well as democracy and governance.

So if I am confirmed, I would very much see my role as helping to forge that consensus. The places where international efforts have been very successful in Africa have been when the United Nations, the African Union, and international partners worked closely together to a shared goal. My previous posting in Mali was a very good example of that, one which did not include the particular tool of sanctions, but I think the larger point remains and I would look forward to interacting with the African Union on those issues.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Ms. Casper, the government in Burundi has resisted efforts to force them or encourage them to engage in peace talks with other entities and in regional peace talks as well. What can we do to encourage them to move in that direction? What do you see your role being?

Ms. CASPER. Thank you, Senator. A very important question.

Having the Burundian Government engage in peace talks, along with all parties in the crisis is critical to moving forward Burundi in the spirit and fashion that it needs to go. Our Special Envoy Perriello succeeded last month in getting a range of actors to the table under the leadership of the East African Community and former Tanzania President Mkaba, and that is an important step that has been taken and one that we will continue to build on.

If I am confirmed, I will work directly with the government, the highest levels of government, to continue to press them to engage, as well as all actors that need to come to the table.

Senator FLAKE. Good. That is obviously important. We do not want this conflict to escalate. So you have got an important role there. So thank you.

Senator Markey?

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

Ms. Casper, if I can come back to you and just follow up where the chairman was going in terms of this Burundi problem state, which it really has become.

Last year, the president decided just to run for reelection, forget the constitution, and to ultimately just begin to set a real trend, which we are seeing in Congo and my fear is in Kenya and other countries in terms of just disregarding the constitution. The United States and the EU then imposed sanctions. My question to you is, how important was it that the United States and the EU imposed sanctions on Burundi from your perspective?

Ms. CASPER. Thank you, Senator.

First of all, let me say how important I thought that the discussion we had in the last hour about sanctions was. Sanctions are part in Burundi of a broader strategy that is ongoing, and that I think is a critical piece of this. So sanctions are one piece, but it is really part of a broader package.

In the Burundi case, in particular, sanctions have made clear that we, the U.S. Government, are committed to holding people who have engaged in human rights abuses and who are threat-

ening peace and security in Burundi, that they are accountable. It is also important that we have implemented those sanctions impartially so that there are people on all sides of the spectrum who have been sanctioned, and it is based purely on the abuses that they have committed.

As I noted, it is part of a broader strategy, including bringing people to the table, including the direct outreach that has occurred not just by the U.S. Government but also by our regional partners, the African Union, the U.N., and others.

And finally, I would say I think it is important that people know generally that our sanctions are targeted against specific people, that they do not penalize the population in general, and that the United States Government stands for the people of Burundi, not for any particular group. And really, our main goal is to bring them back, help them come back to the spirit of Arusha, the spirit of compromise, and the spirit of peace.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

Ms. Leonard, the AU has been very slow to put pressure on President Kabila to adhere to the DRC constitution, and the chairman and I and Senator Coons—we were at the AU when President Obama spoke very forcefully about the need to have an adherence to the constitutions of the countries of Africa with regard to elections.

The AU has expressed support, very dismayingly, to President Kabila's, quote, national dialogue, which I think is just widely seen as just a stall tactic. And so from my perspective, how do you explain the hesitancy of the AU to just cut right through this national dialogue and get right down to the bottom line, which is that he is trying to avoid having an election and he wants to perpetuate himself in office? So analyze the AU for us and why they are not stepping up.

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I think that anyone who looks at the current events in Africa today and who understands the spirit of international coordination or regional coordination on peace and security matters as involving questions of prevention, as well as solving problems, looks at developments in the Congo and sees that that particular attention is very much required there now.

I think it is often the case that the African Union has several subregional organizations within them, and while it is often true that your close neighbors are best able to diagnose and deal with problems, it also creates certain sensitivities for neighbors as well.

The idea of dialogue is not something as a diplomat that I am going to object to. I do think it would be useful, for example, to expand those discussions very much in the spirit of my previous answer to the question that the world solves the problems best when the African Union and, for example, the United Nations are working together to pressure sides in a useful direction, in a positive direction, and one that does not raise the near-term prospect of dealing with later instability. And that would be very much the spirit of my interactions with the African Union, if I am confirmed.

Senator MARKEY. Great.

Ambassador Pasi, we had a hearing last month where we were talking about Africa, and I raised specifically a question about the

sale of American combat aircraft to Nigeria with arched eyebrows almost at the ceiling when I did so. But I could have just as easily been talking about our security partnership with Chad, another partner in our fight against Boko Haram.

Can you talk to us a little bit about what you think the appropriate balance is between governments that are just authoritarian, such as we see in Chad, and our partnership with them and the aid which we provide them which sometimes sends the wrong message to I think the people in their own country and to the rest of the region?

Ambassador PASI. Thank you, Mr. Senator. It is a question I have thought a lot about. I was Ambassador to Djibouti where we also provided a huge amount of military assistance. We have a base there. Chad is, of course, very different. We do not have a military base, but we provide security assistance to Chad in order to help them combat Boko Haram, a threat to the region and now with their affiliation with ISIL, a threat that goes far beyond West Africa and in fact might reach other regions of the world.

It is a challenging problem. I am very proud that the U.S. Government, when we give assistance, whether it is from DOD, the State Department, or whichever agency it comes from, includes human rights and other kinds of training for those we are training. The human rights training, of course, helps soldiers and others, police, understand the basic requirements if they are going to be using U.S. assistance wherever they are going.

We do need to provide military hardware or Chad will not be able to do the job that we have asked them to do, that they need to do. And I think we have to be careful about what we are giving, the messages that accompany it, and if confirmed, it will be a priority for me to reinforce hopefully with the U.S. military that is providing so much assistance in Chad, training and other kinds of assistance, that while we are providing for your security, the goal is to have a better democracy in Chad and in the region.

Senator MARKEY. Can you just expand just a little bit? Because I think it is important for these words to be heard. Boko Haram has changed its name.

Ambassador PASI. Yes.

Senator MARKEY. And it has changed its name to—I heard you say it—ISIL West Africa Province in your verbal testimony. What is the significance of that name change? What does that mean from the perspective of regional security and a U.S. perspective of this metastasizing ISIL threat in the region?

Ambassador PASI. Yes. Thank you, Senator.

I think it is a very significant change. Boko Haram, in fact, just attacked a small town, a city, in Niger, and Chad has immediately dispatched 2,000 troops. So the name change, I think, shows that they want to affiliate themselves with something much bigger, much broader, an organization that has a reach into Europe and beyond. And I think it goes to show how a group that once was thought of as just a threat to one country or a small group has become the deadliest terrorist organization on the planet, killing thousands and thousands and thousands with relatively limited technology at their behest.

Chad is, of course, very focused on regional security, and Boko Haram has tremendously threatened its economy, its trade routes, its ability with a limited economy that is very challenged to thrive. I think we are very lucky to have partners in Africa like Chad who are willing to be at the tip of the spear in dealing with this group, but I believe given its location, surrounded by many, many difficult countries, including Libya, that Chad will have many challenges to come. And we will be working even more closely with them on security as we move forward.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FLAKE. Well, we appreciate your being here and for having this confirmation hearing. We appreciate the family for being here as well.

The hearing record will remain open until Friday. Again, if you get questions from other members who are not here, if you could please answer them as quickly as possible, it would be appreciated.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve and thank you to the family members for being here and for enduring the hearing before as well. So we appreciate it. Thanks for your service.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:20 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF HON. GRETA PASI, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE PASI'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CORKER CARDIN

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

Answer. Promoting human rights and democracy has been a theme throughout my career. As a political officer in Ghana in the mid-1990s (1995-1997), I led U.S. efforts to promote political dialogue, including hosting political salon meetings that allowed political party representatives from dozens of parties to engage in meaningful dialogue in a neutral environment. This ensured that no parties would be marginalized in the pre-election period. U.S. engagement with all parties sent a powerful signal to the country and the government.

Then, while serving in Dhaka as Deputy Chief of Mission and Charge (2006-2009), I led our efforts to convince the Caretaker Government (CTG) to first set and then adhere to a schedule for restoring democracy through free, fair and credible elections. At the same time, we advocated forcefully that the CTG should be held to high standards in respecting human rights during the state of emergency. The CTG implemented changes that benefited society and led to an elected government on the timetable agreed upon by the international community.

Finally, as ambassador to Djibouti from 2011-2014, I collaborated with ambassadors from like-minded countries to engage with the opposition and coordinated on messaging to press the Government of Djibouti on democracy and governance concerns. Our collective efforts led to a dialogue with the opposition and their inclusion in political discussions.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Chad? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Chad? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most significant human rights problems Chad faces are security force abuse, poor prison conditions, and discrimination and violence against women and children. Other human rights abuses of concern include arbitrary killings by se-

curity forces and use of torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, and infringement on freedoms of expression and assembly.

If confirmed, the most important steps I will take to promote human rights and democracy will be to seek opportunities to bolster the capacity of civil society and increase civic space and encourage the Government of Chad (GOC) to protect and defend the human rights of all citizens; as well as emphasize building and strengthening institutional capacity. I will press GOC interlocutors on the need for security forces to abide by international standards for human rights in its efforts to combat Boko Haram, strengthen civilian forces role in providing citizen security, investigate allegations of abuse, and hold human rights violators accountable. I will encourage the GOC to focus not only on addressing the immediate security threat posed by Boko Haram, but also the root causes of violence in the region. I will continue to support and push to expand USG programs to provide human rights training for Chadian security forces deemed eligible under the Leahy Law, International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) to provide Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and management training for Chad's prison officials, and Anti-Terrorism Training funded programs on rule of law for law enforcement agencies.

I will also urge passage of the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) legislation, which remains pending, and seek continued anti-trafficking training for judicial sector personnel to increase protection for victims. Finally, I will also seek opportunities to engage and support Chadian civil society organizations in order to help guarantee increased civic and political space in Chad, including engagement with organizations that promote the protection of women and children, such as the House of the Woman which offers skills training to victims of domestic violence.

In addition to supporting the promotion of human rights and democracy, by supporting these activities I hope to help foster greater transparency in government and elevation of citizen awareness and peaceful participation in formulating public policy.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I am prepared to take on an ambitious agenda when it comes to human rights, but I am also prepared for obstacles and possible resistance. We noted with concern reports of abuse and targeting of opposition supporters following April's presidential election. It will be necessary to continue impressing upon the GOC the importance of upholding freedoms of expression and assembly and inclusion of all citizens in the political process, while simultaneously continuing to demonstrate our support for civil society.

Within the confines of existing U.S. government resources, if confirmed, I will press the GOC to improve detention conditions in the prison system to address gross overcrowding and physical abuse. I will also ask other donors to collaborate with us toward this end. The recent addition of a regional legal advisor in N'Djamena will enable the Mission to begin looking at the systematic improvements to the judicial system and to provide an American subject matter expert to engage on these issues with the GOC.

With assistance from UNICEF, Chad is engaged in a program to combat TIP and improve protection of women and children. Chad's current financial difficulties, due to low oil prices and reduced livestock and agricultural exports, have reduced governmental ability to sustain programs. We will continue to encourage Chad to carry out programs in place and will continue to include training on TIP in security and law enforcement training the USG provides.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Chad? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. I am highly committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local NGOs in Chad and will maintain an ongoing dialogue with the government, civil society organizations and international organizations in order to increase civic and political space in Chad. Uppermost in my mind will be promoting inclusivity and engaging with groups that traditionally have been marginalized such as the LGBT community.

Embassy N'Djamena has a Leahy committee which actively coordinates responses for Leahy vetting for any Chadian security forces requesting to receive U.S. govern-

ment-funded training. The Government of Chad is proud to include human rights training in its security force training programs, and I will urge the Government to continue pursuing training for eligible units.

Question. If confirmed, will you and your embassy team actively engage with Chad to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the Chadian government?

Answer. If confirmed, my Embassy team and I will continue to actively engage with the Government of Chad at all levels to successfully redress cases of any political prisoners or persons unjustly targeted by the Government.

Question. If confirmed, will you engage with Chad on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, protecting human rights, supporting the rights of civil society, and emphasizing the vital importance of good governance will be high priorities for the entire Mission and be interwoven into all aspects of our efforts in Chad.

Good Governance

The countries of the Lake Chad Basin have acknowledged the need for a comprehensive plan to defeat Boko Haram, including providing civil administration and economic opportunities to prevent radicalization. While Chad does not have the same interreligious tensions as Nigeria, the existence of marginalized and underdeveloped communities could pose a challenge to national stability.

Question. If confirmed, how do you plan to engage the Chadian government regarding the need for inclusive governance? What programs to support democracy and governance do we currently have in Chad? Please specify dollar amounts and accounts. What do you see as the greatest opportunity for the U.S. to support improvements in democratic practices and institutions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will urge the Government of Chad to fully permit all political parties and civil society organizations to exercise their rights of assembly and free speech as well as its respect of the legal, civil, and human rights of all its citizens, and allow, encourage, and support Chadian citizens who exercise their constitutional rights peacefully. While there was no bilateral democracy and governance funding in Chad in FY 2015, we obligated a total of \$426.174 in FY 2014 ESF to support regional Trans Saharan Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) activities in Chad, including, for example, to provide work skills training to students in Koranic schools.

Refugees

As you referenced in your testimony, Chad is host to more than 380,000 refugees from Nigeria, Sudan, and the Central African Republic. Many of these individuals are living in remote areas in which host populations face enormous economic challenges.

Question. Are sufficient resources available to meet the needs of the Sudanese and Central African refugees in Chad? If not, if confirmed, how will you work with Chadian and United Nations officials to ensure that they are?

Answer. The international donor community has been responding on a sustained basis to the humanitarian crisis that started when Sudanese refugees began crossing into eastern Chad from Darfur over a decade ago. Humanitarian assistance continues to be required to assist the GOC to respond to recurrent crises while also strengthening the long-term capacity of vulnerable populations to cope with these events. However, donor fatigue and a record number of needs elsewhere in the world have reduced international assistance.

If confirmed, I will promote programs to increase self-sufficiency of refugee populations. I will support ongoing discussions between the UN, the GOC, and local authorities to further expand refugee access to arable land. Furthermore, I will urge donors to fund agricultural extension services to refugees who farm and also urge additional funding for education and training programs for refugees. To date in FY 2016, the Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has provided \$21.3 million to international organizations to address humanitarian needs in the Lake Chad Basin.

Regional Coordination

Coordination mechanisms have proliferated in the Sahel as a result of the Boko Haram violence and the subsequent regional humanitarian crisis. The U.N. has appointed a regional humanitarian coordinator and the United States has a coordinator for counter-Boko Haram operations.

Question. If confirmed, what do you see as your role within the context of the Lake Chad Basin coordination mechanism?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage closely with the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to help ensure that these organizations are supporting efforts by the Lake Chad Basin countries (Chad, Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon) and Benin to work together to defeat Boko Haram. I believe the MNJTF, which is headquartered in N'Djamena, has an important, constructive role to fill in defeating Boko Haram. Specifically, the MNJTF can provide a venue for planning and coordination of security operations against Boko Haram, intelligence sharing, and oversight of security operations to ensure they are conducted in accordance with international human rights standards. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE)-Lake Chad Basin and the U.S. Department of State Senior Coordinator on Boko Haram to promote effective U.S. support to the MNJTF and its member states.

In addition, if confirmed, I will coordinate counterterrorism (CT) and countering violent extremism (CVE) policies and programs through the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Specifically, I will ensure all U.S. funded CT and CVE programs in and affecting Chad are coordinated through existing TSCTP synchronization processes—closely involving my development and defense colleagues at Post, in Germany, in Washington, and in the Sahel and Maghreb regions. These coordination efforts through TSCTP will also help us design and implement CT and CVE investments complementary to our French, EU, and other foreign colleagues' related efforts.

Question. What mechanism exists for international regional coordination on humanitarian and counterterrorism issues across the Sahel and Maghreb?

Answer. One mechanism for coordination of counterterrorism efforts across the Sahel is continued partnership with the French. The French government has placed its headquarters for all military operations in the Sahel and Maghreb in N'Djamena. This French military effort is named OPERATION BARKHANE. Through the Defense Attache Office and other military components under AFRICOM's purview, we are supporting French operations across the Sahel in shared initiatives to combat trans-regional terrorism. Many of these initiatives involve combined intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance efforts, to share more intelligence on nefarious actors, as well as training anti-terrorism units.

In addition to the security benefits noted above, the MNJTF, in close coordination with the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), has been developing a Civil-Military capability to address the humanitarian aspects of the Boko Haram conflict. The United States has also been providing assistance to this effort via our representatives to the Center for Coordination and Liaison (CCL).

The Sahel countries have also developed the G5 Sahel initiative to encourage greater coordination on regional issues such as terrorism and humanitarian relief. N'Djamena hosted a summit of the G5 Sahel in November 2015 and Chad, as the current president, continues to be a key partner in the group. Additionally, given the G5's mandate to coordinate and monitor regional cooperation, it would be an appropriate African forum to assume the responsibility of counterterrorism coordination in the Sahel.

International regional coordination on humanitarian issues falls to U.N. agencies such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) and the World Food Program. For example, in response to the crisis in the Lake Chad basin, OCHA has issued appeals and provides periodic sitreps on the status of assistance programs in that subregion. The U.N. World Food Program similarly coordinates food aid to the region and has a regional emergency operation for the Lake Chad basin towards which USAID committed \$4.0 million in FY 2015 and \$5.1 million in FY 2016.

Question. What will be your role, if confirmed, in participating in interagency coordination efforts for the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership?

Answer. If confirmed, my role in participating in interagency efforts for the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) will be to advocate for an appropriate mix of 3D (diplomacy, defense, and development) resources to respond to the specific needs of Chad and to ensure that these resources are programmed to have maximum impact.

U.S. Embassy N'Djamena currently participates in the TSCTP through several offices. The Democracy and Development Office works with TSCTP on development projects. Additionally, the Regional Security Office has been extremely active in maximizing use of the TSCTP Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) Program to provide training for Chadian police and security forces and the Department of Defense's Of-

Office of Security Cooperation has provided, via the TSCTP, vehicles, as well as medical, communications and Personal Protective equipment to Chadian military forces engaged in fighting Boko Haram. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will ensure that U.S. Embassy N'Djamena continues to maximize the impact of the support provided by the TSCTP, that we encourage Chadian participation in TSCTP efforts and that we continue to maintain open and continuous dialogue on the impacts of TSCTP efforts in Chad as well as the future direction of the partnership.

RESPONSES OF MARY BETH LEONARD, NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE AFRICAN UNION, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

REPRESENTATIVE-DESIGNATE LEONARD'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CARDIN

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

Answer. I have had the privilege of addressing human rights concerns throughout my Foreign Service career, from my very first tour following the trial of a Cameroonian opposition figure. In Mali, I received the Diplomacy for Human Rights prize in 2013, awarded each year to one U.S. ambassador for notable achievement in promoting democracy and human rights. My actions there included speaking out early and forcefully for a rapid return to elected governance after the 2012 coup; forestalling potential violations by engaging leaders from groups with records of violations in previous political eras to make clear both U.S. disapproval and dispel any notion that inter-communal violence was consistent with any concept of Malian patriotism; seeking accountability for crimes and excesses by the military junta; and calling out mistreatment of journalists. For example, when Mali's elected government bravely investigated the disappearance, and presumed murder, of 21 Malian troops who were loyal to Mali's deposed president, I encouraged my team to find a mechanism to support this investigation by identifying and funding forensic expertise and exhorting the Government of Mali (GOM) to ensure the security of judicial authorities involved in the investigatory process and trial. These efforts supported Mali's newly elected government's decision to arrest and prosecute coup d'etat leader Captain Sanogo and other junta members.

A free press is another important guarantor of human rights. Once lauded by Freedom House as having the most liberal press environment on the continent, Mali suffered multiple incidents after the coup in which journalists were intimidated, beaten and detained without charge. I became the first to denounce the March 6, 2013, arrest of local editor Boukary Daou, who was tortured after his newspaper printed a letter criticizing coup leader Sanogo. Within hours of his disappearance, I spearheaded efforts to coordinate a diplomatic community effort to press the GOM to respect human rights, free speech, and freedom of the press, and called out in public events for his release. Mr. Daou credits this activism with helping secure his freedom, and linked the end of his physical mistreatment in detention to his jailors' acknowledgment of my public expressions of interest and concern.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues on the continent? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Groups that perpetrate violent extremism are among the most serious threats to human rights in Africa. In Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, deadly attacks and abductions by Boko Haram continued to terrorize thousands of civilians. Nigerian security forces' heavy-handed tactics and abuses of civilians, including extrajudicial killings, contributed to the mutation of Boko Haram into an insurgency.

Further democratic consolidation in Africa is also dependent on rights-respecting security forces that answer to civilian governments and protect, rather than target, citizens. This is, unfortunately, a persistent challenge across the continent, and one that we raise regularly with our government counterparts as part of our efforts to build strong democracies and meaningful security partnerships. In countries where security forces have questionable human rights records, citizens require access to justice, in order to hold both states and other citizens accountable for breaches of the law.

As part of our promotion of real and inclusive democracy, we remain concerned by the threats to freedom of speech and the press, as well as the right to assemble. These rights are universal, and they are written into many African constitutions. Unfortunately, not all governments regularly abide by what those constitutions say. Many of these governments seek to close space for political opposition and civil society, as well as restrict media access, well before election day. These governments often control the flow of information through state-owned media, restrict or close down access to the internet, and harass and arrest journalists. Impunity and lack of investigation by officials when journalists are killed create an environment of intimidation and fear for the media. These same governments also limit freedom of assembly and expression—they intimidate civil society activists, and arrest or “disappear” members of the opposition, often under the guise of promoting state security.

The AU explicitly allows for the right to take up member country issues relating to war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Promoting democracy and human rights are the first of four pillars of U.S. policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa. As Ambassador, I would work with the AU in order to counter violent extremism and promote inclusive democratic processes across the continent. We do this by supporting and empowering reformers and institutions of government at all levels to promote the rule of law, strengthen checks on executive power, and incorporate responsive governance practices. Accountability, access to justice, and an independent media are all necessary conditions for long term stability and development. Ensuring that elections and institutions are as inclusive as possible, including ethnic, religious, and other minorities as well as other disadvantaged groups is a key element in our strategy. We also support those leaders who abide by their constitutions to step down after their time in office, respecting term limits and allowing for the peaceful transition of power. If confirmed, I would continue to pursue these themes as they arise, encouraging the AU to build on its record of defending these important principles.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face at the African Union (AU) in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. As with all multilateral organizations, the AU can only be as strong and effective as its member states allow it to be. Individual countries' interests will not always align with the broader interests of the union as outlined in its Constitutive Act, creating potential frictions.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with human rights NGOs in the context of your responsibilities at the AU? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure any U.S. security assistance and security cooperation we may provide in support of AU institutions or efforts reinforces human rights?

Answer. Yes. These organizations and the work that they do are essential to strengthening human rights adherence and meeting U.S. objectives in Africa. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAU actively seeks their input and applies their expertise in the development of U.S. security assistance and cooperation. If confirmed, I will ensure that all U.S. bilateral assistance in support of African Union institutions is in compliance with U.S. law and encourage AU institutions to reinforce human rights and rule of law.

Question. If confirmed, will you and your embassy team actively engage with AU leadership to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted across the continent?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you engage with AU leadership on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your multilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. I am pleased that many human rights and non-governmental organizations maintain Addis Ababa—or regionally-based missions, and/or are themselves accredited as observers to the AU, helping to contribute to an environment of awareness and activism for these important issues.

Question. Despite the existence of an AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the initiative of certain leaders to address the issue domestically, corruption remains a key challenge to economic development and good governance in many places across the continent.

♦ What do you see as the most destabilizing form(s) of corruption on the continent [i.e. grand vs petty]?

Answer. At a fundamental level, all forms of corruption, including petty and grand corruption, hamper a society's ability to achieve stability and prosperity. While the impacts of grand corruption result in spectacular amounts of resources being misappropriated, petty corruption robs citizens of funds needed to feed families, pay for school and medical fees, and save for the future. To separate petty from grand corruption is to draw an artificial line between activities that have the same effects: destabilization, a lack of confidence in public leaders, ineffective institutions and robbing countries of precious resources necessary to propel themselves forward economically and protect their citizens. Our fight against corruption must be a whole-problem approach, and we need to ensure we deliver a strong message of zero tolerance to all corrupt officials regardless of station or duty.

Question. What is the AU's role in combatting corruption and how does it compare with that of the regional economic communities? What do you see as the main obstacles to the AU fulfilling this role [i.e.: lack of political will, technical capacity, few connections to civil society, some combination]?

Answer. The African Union's role in combatting corruption is in its powerful forum that draws together all African leaders in one place to talk about problems, including corruption, that face the continent as a whole. It is a place where the countries of Africa can collectively formulate and establish principles and standards by which all members can hold each other accountable.

The ability of the AU to convene all 54 members of the African continent complements the work of the regional economic communities, which also work to collectively address the effects of corruption in their specific communities. The AU provides an opportunity for the whole membership to take ideas borne out of the regionally focused economic communities and find ways to adapt policies to suit the needs of the differing members of the AU.

The AU, much like the African continent, faces a combination of challenges in combating corruption. They include a shrinking civil society space, lack of strong civil society participation, and lack of political will. Civil society does not have the ability to bring cases before the African Court in a majority of the AU member states, and in places where corruption exists, ruling parties have a vested interest to keep it that way. The African Peer Review Mechanism, a policy group for self-assessment for good governance and reinforcement of best practices, is underutilized by its members. There are also some within both the rank and file and leadership of the AU who do not want to raise the profile of the fight against corruption.

Question. If confirmed, how will you use your office to encourage tangible progress and further coordination on anti-corruption efforts?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for the implementation of the standards and principles that the AU has already set forth as a baseline for combating corruption on the African continent which are outlined in AU Convention against Corruption, and encouraging AU members who have not joined the AU Convention against Corruption to join. I will engage with the members of the AU who have a genuine interest in battling corruption and impunity to break ranks with those who are interested in maintaining the status quo, and encourage members to enforce standards.

I will also focus on discrete efforts to mainstream anti-corruption into AU Peace and Security Commission activities; especially ensuring adequate safeguards are in place to mitigate leakage in AU PKO operations.

RESPONSES OF ANNE S. CASPER, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE CASPER'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CARDIN

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

Answer. I have promoted human rights and democracy throughout my 23-year Foreign Service career. For example, as Public Affairs Counselor Bangkok (2006-2009) and in coordination with Embassy Rangoon, I led regional efforts to strengthen the Burmese people's understanding of democratic processes, counter regime cen-

sonship, and provide global attention to Burma's plight, contributing to Burma's recent democratic transition.

As Deputy Chief of Mission Kigali (2009-2012), during a period I was serving as Charge d'affaires, I led our Embassy's successful efforts to secure the timely release of an American arrested by the Rwandan government for his writings on the 1994 genocide, a case that received global attention from free speech activists.

As Consul General in Jeddah (2012-14), my commitment to strengthen non-governmental organization capacity, including groups expanding opportunities for women and young people, contributed to the development of a nascent civil society in Saudi Arabia's Western province.

If confirmed as Ambassador to Burundi, I will make human rights and democracy one of my top priorities and will ensure that our staff at Post do the same.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Burundi? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Burundi? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Since the crisis began in April 2015, over 540 people have been killed and more than 260,000 have fled to neighboring countries. Reports of human rights violations and abuses include extrajudicial and retaliatory killings, arbitrary detentions, disappearances, trafficking in persons, sexual violence against women and girls, and torture. Civil society and media representatives have fled the country due to harassment and limits on the exercise of freedoms of association and expression. I will work, if confirmed, to establish strong relationships at the highest levels of Burundi's government and with influential interlocutors on all sides of the conflict. The Embassy will continue to support human rights monitoring and documentation by the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the African Union (AU); it will also continue to monitor for hate speech and support conflict prevention and resolution activities for at-risk youth. The Embassy will also continue to promote accountability for perpetrators of unlawful violence, violations, and abuse. These activities and engagement are intended to lay the groundwork to dissuade violence and impunity and lead to a more peaceful atmosphere in which meaningful dialogue among Burundians can ensue.

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

Potential obstacles include the fact that the government has not yet fulfilled the commitments it made to the U.N. Secretary General and AU Heads of State delegation earlier this year regarding the release of detainees, the unfettered ability of media and civil society to operate, and the full deployment of AU human rights monitors and security experts.

Additionally, many interlocutors in civil society, the media, and local human rights organizations with whom an Ambassador would normally engage have fled. Finally, ongoing violence by the government and opposition groups, continuing recruitment of youth into militias, the rapid decline of Burundi's economy, and significant problems with corruption present challenges related to human rights.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Burundi? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to meeting with individuals and organizations in the United States and Burundi who can play a positive role in advancing human rights, peace and security in Burundi. Likewise, under my leadership, Embassy Bujumbura will continue to engage closely with civil society partners, the East African Community (EAC), the AU, the UN, and like-minded foreign missions in supporting these goals for the benefit of all Burundians.

Under my leadership, Embassy Bujumbura will continue its role in carefully and thoroughly vetting the limited number of Burundian military officers that the United States currently trains. This is particularly important given allegations of sexual exploitation and abuses against Burundian peacekeepers in Somalia and the Central African Republic as well as allegations that Burundi's security forces committed various human rights violations at home. Should political and security conditions permit a return to broader training, I will act in accordance with our law and policy, including the Leahy law, to ensure that future assistance does not go to security force units if we have credible information of gross violations of human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Burundi to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Burundi?

Answer. Yes. If I am confirmed, Embassy Bujumbura will continue pressing the government to respect the rights of political prisoners, as well as members of civil society, media, and peaceful opposition who may be unjustly targeted.

Question. Will you engage with Burundi on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. Promoting human and civil rights as well as good governance will continue to be at the core of Embassy Bujumbura's work. For example, the Embassy's continued institutional support for the National Independent Human Rights Commission in Burundi helps this Commission facilitate citizens' ability to file complaints about human rights violations. In addition, I will engage directly with the Burundian government on issues related to its compliance with its human rights obligations and commitments and help strengthen its democratic institutions.

Question. The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) transferred \$2.26 million to the African Union Commission just over a month ago to fund 32 AU human rights monitors deployed to Burundi since last July. What is the status of the deployment of the full complement of human rights monitors and military experts approved by the African Union? Will you have a role as Ambassador in advocating for their deployment?

Answer. The deployment of the full complement of the AU's 100 human rights observers and 100 security experts, of which 35 are currently on the ground, has been delayed. The Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the Burundian government on these observers and experts has yet to be signed and the government has declined, thus far, the entry of additional monitors into Burundi. If confirmed, I will raise this issue with the government, in close coordination with the AU.

Question. Do the monitors have full and unfettered freedom of movement throughout Burundi? What if any will be your role in helping secure agreement for such access if confirmed?

Answer. The AU observers, along with OHCHR observers, have access to some prisons and are able to conduct interviews privately with detainees, including at centers controlled by the Burundian National Intelligence Service. However, we understand that once on site, observers often confront limitations and obstacles including the sudden removal of prisoners from their cells just before the observers arrive.

If I am confirmed, our Embassy will continue to press the Burundian government for unfettered access for both of these monitoring groups so that they can fulfill their critical missions, as intended and mandated.

Question. How might your experience as a high ranking diplomat in Rwanda affect your dealings with the Nkurunziza government and regional leaders?

Answer. My previous experience in the Great Lakes region sensitized me to the importance of listening to and engaging with a broad array of stakeholders, especially when historical narratives differ. It also convinced me that East African Community member states must continue working cooperatively to advance peace, prosperity, and long-term stability in the region. If confirmed, I will bring to my engagement with Burundi's government the commitment to understand their perspective and to work constructively together to ensure that every Burundian has the opportunity for a productive and secure future. I will also work closely with my U.S. counterparts in neighboring missions to advance these goals.

Question. What funds are currently available for governing justly and democratically in Burundi? Please specify accounts and levels. If confirmed, what types of democracy and governance programs will you be recommending for Burundi given its closed political space?

Answer. There is multi-year funding for USAID programs to support democracy and governance in Burundi. Embassy Bujumbura is slated to receive \$1.25 million in Economic Support Fund (ESF) resources in FY 2016. With this funding, Embassy Bujumbura intends to continue strengthening citizens' active participation in economic, political, governing and other critical processes aimed at creating a more peaceful, democratic, and pluralistic society. The Embassy will also continue to support civil society organizations, particularly those focused on youth empowerment, in order to increase constructive community participation and build resilience to violence. FY 2016 funding will also support civil society activities to mobilize and engage youth around social cohesion and livelihood initiatives, breaking down socio-economic barriers and enhancing conflict resolution skills.

It is critical, particularly in Burundi's challenging current environment, that the United States continues to support Burundi's independent media and journalists, youth leaders from diverse backgrounds, civil society groups and human rights defenders. If confirmed, I will work to ensure continued implementation of programs that demonstrate promise, and explore additional ways to strengthen credible local actors' peacebuilding efforts.
