

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

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JANUARY 30 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
110TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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JOHN F. KERRY, Massachusetts	CHUCK HAGEL, Nebraska
RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, Wisconsin	NORM COLEMAN, Minnesota
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JIM WEBB, Virginia	DAVID VITTER, Louisiana

ANTONY J. BLINKEN, *Staff Director*

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

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
110TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

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

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BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, Maryland	JOHNNY ISAKSON, Georgia
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JIM WEBB, Virginia	JOHN BARRASSO, Wyoming*

ANTONY J. BLINKEN, *Staff Director*

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

*Note: Appointed February 12, 2008.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2008, MORNING

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

Eastham, Hon. Alan W., to be Ambassador to the Republic of
Congo
Simon, John, to be Ambassador to the African Union
Swan, James, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti
Symington, Hon. W. Stuart, to be Ambassador to Rwanda

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Russell D. Feingold presiding.

Present: Senators Feingold, Nelson, Lugar, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator FEINGOLD. The committee will come to order.

I would like to begin by thanking our four nominees for being here today, but more importantly for your many years of service and for your willingness to work in some of the most demanding positions in the United States Government and some of the more difficult postings around the world. I am confident that you agree with me that our missions across Africa are doing some of the most important diplomatic work of the 21st century.

More than any time in the past, United States policies and relationships in Africa are now in the spotlight. Next month, we will mark the 10th anniversary of the bombings of the United States embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi.

Since those tragic attacks, we have increasingly opened our eyes to the real threats that emanate from weak states and ungoverned spaces. The new United States combatant command for Africa, AFRICOM, expected to be stood up this October, is one response to that realization.

However, military tools and expertise can only contribute so much and perceptions of an overly militarized presence can generate hostile backlash. In order to fully address Africa's security challenges, we need to get at the underlying roots of instability and violent conflict. We also need to provide sustained support for conflict prevention, human rights, and economic development.

Diplomats are uniquely positioned to identify and implement strategic long-term objectives. If confirmed, you will be the eyes

and ears of our Government. We will turn to you for analysis of changing dynamics on the ground, as well as how we here in Washington can make the most effective foreign policies.

As you know, information-gathering and reporting is especially challenging in Africa. In many countries and regions across the continent, the United States does not have a long history of engagement or a whole lot of institutional knowledge. Fostering diverse contacts, not just with government officials, but also with business, religious, civil society, and other leaders is essential. We must not lose sight of the fact that today we are building the reputation and relationships that will determine our ability to help shape outcomes in Africa for decades to come. The four postings before the committee today embody those challenges.

First, if confirmed, Ambassador Stuart Symington will head to Rwanda, "the land of 1,000 hills." Rwanda is still overcoming the tragic legacy of the 1994 genocide but is making great gains in economic growth and political stability and has been a tremendous contributor to U.N. peacekeeping missions across the continent. U.S. assistance has played a significant role in this progress and increased fourfold over the last 4 years.

However, diplomatic engagement will be crucial to ensure democratic reforms before the 2010 elections and to ensure that Rwanda plays a constructive role in helping to resolve the violence in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo.

Turning then to the Republic of Congo, normal United States diplomatic activities in Brazzaville have only recently resumed after years of recurring violence and a new embassy building is set to open early next year. If confirmed, Ambassador Alan Eastham will have a unique opportunity to build a United States diplomatic presence in Congo at a time when the country's oil-based economy is growing rapidly but suffering from the challenges of resource management and economic governance.

Next, Djibouti is a country rapidly becoming a regional financial hub based around its strategic port for the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. However, Djibouti's hopeful future is somewhat limited by its rough neighborhood and hampered by recent tensions with both Ethiopia and Eritrea. If confirmed, James Swan will have to manage United States-Djiboutian relations in light of those regional challenges, as well as navigate the complexities of having the United States Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa based within that country.

Finally, if confirmed, John Simon will tackle a different kind of challenge as he engages an emerging regional institution with great ambitions but limited capacity. In its first years, the African Union has already become a significant player in continental peace and security, whether it be peacekeeping in Darfur, sanctions in Mauritania, or mediation in Kenya. The AU offers a framework for real African solutions to African problems, but its long-term capabilities will require sustained United States investment and strategic engagement.

So, again, I would like to thank you all for embracing these responsibilities, as well as to extend a warm welcome to your families and friends. I know that these people have played a critical role in

your respective journeys and will continue to support you in the challenges that lie ahead.

I would now like to invite my colleague, Senator Johnny Isakson, the ranking member of the subcommittee, to offer some opening remarks.

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

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

I am proud to welcome all four nominees, of which I have had the privilege of meeting with each of them in the days preceding this hearing. I have said many times that I think Africa is the continent of the 21st century for America, and these are tremendously important roles that each of you will play and some of you have been playing.

I want to particularly acknowledge Stuart Symington whose storied history—his family's storied history, obviously, is known to all of us. But I had the benefit of receiving his hospitality in Djibouti earlier this year, and I appreciate very much what he has done there on behalf of our country. And I know he will do wonderful things in Rwanda.

I have also had the privilege of going to Ethiopia and to our embassy in Ethiopia in Addis Ababa, and I know the tremendous potential our relationship with Ethiopia has and the help that Ethiopia has been to the United States most recently in Somalia.

I am also particularly excited about the posting at the Africa Union. Darfur is of great concern to the chairman and myself. The African Union is a fledgling organization in Africa that could be essential in putting an end to genocide and beginning to a new freedom for all people on the African continent. So your posting there, John, will be very important for the United States and for that country.

But to all of you, thank you very much for your willingness to serve and what your commitment to give the United States of America.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

I am so pleased to see Senator Lugar here, the ranking member of the committee, the former chairman of the full committee, and somebody who has been very diligent throughout his career with regard to Africa. Senator, would you like to make any remarks?

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA**

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have just come today, as we always do, to support the nominees for these important positions in Africa. I appreciate your special diligence in calling the hearings in a timely way so these embassies can be filled with talented Americans. It is a pleasure to be here this morning. I look forward to hearing the nominees.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

And now I would like to turn to two of my distinguished colleagues who are here to introduce, I believe, Ambassador Symington. First, we will go to the Senator from Missouri, Senator McCaskill.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CLAIRE McCASKILL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI**

Senator McCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This morning it is such an honor for me. It completes a circle that as a young child I never dreamt that I could complete. I remember distinctly the day the photograph arrived at my home when I was a youngster. It was a framed photograph of Senator Stuart Symington personally inscribed to my parents. It was not taken to my father's office and it was not put back in my mother's desk in the utility room. It was put in our living room with our family photos because it was a photograph that we were so proud of.

His grandson is here today, and this is, in fact, a hall of fame family in terms of public service to our country. When I realized that I am so honored to sit in the Senate seat not just of Harry Truman but of Senator Stuart Symington, that frankly is hard for me to really get my arms around that I have distinct privilege and honor. And I know how proud Senator Symington would be of his grandson.

After being raised in Missouri and graduating from Brown and getting his law degree from Columbia, he clerked for the Eastern District of Missouri, practiced corporate law across the world, returned back to St. Joseph, MO, before he became a Foreign Service officer in 1986. He has been all over the world for his country and has served in both dangerous situations and very politically difficult situations, from Mexico to Ecuador, Niger, Djibouti, and now on to Rwanda, a strategically very important country for our Nation on the important continent of Africa.

I must also acknowledge that in addition to a grandfather, he had an uncle that was very important in my life who is here this morning, Congressman Jim Symington, who served in Congress for a number of years. And I was pleased to be the campus chairman for Symington for Senate, and I was even more pleased to begin my career on the Hill as an intern in Jim Symington's office in the summer of 1974.

As I say, this is a distinct pleasure for me, and you should not by my remarks for a minute assume that mentioning his grandfather and mentioning his uncle in any way takes away from the talent, the strength, and the intellect that this man offers our country. We are lucky to be able to draw on that intellect and that strength at this important time in the continent of Africa. It is my honor to introduce him and I am even more pleased as an American at his willingness to serve.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator McCaskill. I agree with your comment. It is hard not to mention the Symington family because those of us who are old enough to remember—can you imagine a year in which four sitting United States Senators ran for President? Oh, that is right. It just happened again. [Laughter.]

But with the names—correct me if I am wrong. I believe the Senators were John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and Stuart Symington. Is that right?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Exactly.

Senator FEINGOLD. And also a guy named Adlai Stevenson. That was a heck of a primary, too.

So anyway, memory lane on that one for me.

And now we go to the Senator from Minnesota, Senator Klobuchar.

**STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA**

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I am here to honor all of the nominees and also my friend, Stuart Symington. He must be pretty special to have the two new women Senators come here and speak for him. But I am actually here—as I hear you bring up the senior Stuart Symington and Hubert Humphrey, we have now bridged the gap between Missouri and Minnesota. And I know him as a friend.

His brother, who is here today, is a very good friend of mine and married my roommate from college. I still remember being in that wedding in my lovely peach bridesmaid dress and seeing him then. And I also remember doing the toast and having Uncle Jim come up and tell me that I think you could run for office. So I appreciate the blessing of their wonderful family.

As you all know, Ambassador Symington has dedicated his career to advancing U.S. national security and diplomatic interests around the world. Since entering the U.S. diplomatic corps in 1986, he has held, as Senator McCaskill pointed out, numerous positions all across the world and, in the important position of United States Ambassador to Djibouti, has coordinated United States policies around the Horn of Africa among the world's most difficult diplomatic and security environment.

I had the pleasure of having him over for dinner with my friends. I have to tell you, Senator Lugar, I rarely cook. So he must be something special. But we had them over and it was just so heartwarming to hear his views on Africa and his views on what we can do in Rwanda. We know that Rwanda's transition from the sorrow of the past to the potential of the future will require a strong partner in the United States which still carries the burden of remorse from failing to respond 15 years ago. Ambassador Symington—what I heard that night—his vision of bringing together all parts and functions of the United States Government, the private sector, the NGO community, in a united policy to partner with the Rwandan Government is the right vision.

And I was thinking, just to end, of something. I heard Senator Durbin tell a story when he was talking about Darfur once on the Senate floor, and he talked about one of his favorite movies, Schindler's List. And he talked about at the very end when Schindler, who as you know at the beginning was a war profiteer and was making money off the war, and then came to see the victims of the war and came to help them and give them safety and hide them. At the very end, those that he had saved from the concentration camps came together and they got all the gold that they could find and made him this ring. At the end of the movie, he breaks down as they are around him, and says, if only I could do more. If only I could have done more.

Well, these people before you who are taking on such difficult assignments, especially as I think about Rwanda—I do not think they are going to be in that position to say if only I could have done more because they are doing the right thing at the right time for this country. And I am just honored to be here with my friend, Stuart Symington.

Thank you very much.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Senator Klobuchar. We understand that the Senators need to go to other locations, but they are, of course, welcome to stay if they wish.

But I think it is only fitting now we go to Mr. Symington, who will offer his testimony after he says goodbye to the Senators. Each of you please, of course, feel free to introduce any family or friends that you would like to introduce to the committee. Mr. Symington.

**STATEMENT OF HON. W. STUART SYMINGTON,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Thank you for holding this hearing, as you always have, in a way to keep our diplomatic missions staffed, for the opportunity to appear before you, the pleasure of being with you again, Senator Isakson, and the pleasure and honor of being with you, Senator Lugar.

I am deeply grateful to the President of the United States and to the Secretary for the honor of being their nominee to serve in Rwanda.

I also want to point out that one of the many things that the United States and Rwanda share is the remarkably important role of women in public life, and having just heard from two remarkable United States Senators, I cannot think of a better way to begin my engagement, not just with the men of Rwanda, but with the women too.

Before I turn to my prepared statement, I would like to mention, in addition to Uncle Jim and my brother John, the real diplomats of the family who are with me today, my wife, Susan, and my daughter, Janey, and my son, Stuart.

Senator FEINGOLD. Let us see where you are please, if you could rise. Thank you. Welcome all. We are very happy to see you here.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Thank you, Senator.

They have never been confirmed, but I want you to know they are the real ambassadors, and they have been since Stuart was 1 month old and went to our first post.

I also want to acknowledge that I am lucky enough to have with us today America's Executive Director to the World Bank, Whitney Debevoise, and his wife, Heidi, who is a friend of many years.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. And finally, thinking of interns and those people who brought us here, in this room are both members of the promotion panel of the State Department that I am working with this week and the desk officer for Rwanda and an intern who put together my book. So for them and all the other friends and family here, my thanks.

Finally, my role model in diplomacy is sitting right behind me and she has been both behind me and in front of me for my whole career, Ambassador Ruth Davis.

Senator, I want to mention also, as I think about your efforts to see that we integrate all the instruments of our Nation's strength, public and private, Chairman Ike Skelton, who could not be with us today but who challenged me a long time ago with two ideas. The first is that the strength of the United States lies in its people and their principles. And the second is that only by integrating all agencies and all services and public and private efforts can we achieve our goals in the world. I thought it was absolutely true and I will try to continue to do that, if confirmed, to be your ambassador in Rwanda.

The people of Rwanda today have a remarkable opportunity to show that it is possible for any people to forge a common future in a land consumed by the horror of genocide so few years ago. It is vital to all of us that they succeed. The Rwandans and the rest of the world must ensure that the genocide is never forgotten and that it is never repeated.

Rwandans know that the best way to honor the victims of genocide is to look forward and unite after having looked back to remember what can happen through division and hatred. Rwandans today recognize that they have a chance to make this future better. They have, over the last few years, improved security and stability, education, health care, advanced reconciliation, and made progress meting out justice to many of those involved in the genocide. They continue to face security threats, but in the midst of that, have created economic growth and worked with us to improve the investment climate. They have achieved noteworthy progress, but they still face enormous challenges.

As Rwandans look to their future, they call on all Rwandans to unite and to see themselves as one people with equal justice and opportunity under their law. That call is also their own test. Rwandans are testing themselves to counter extremists while vigorously protecting human rights, to improve governance while also improving transparency, to strengthen democratic institutions at the same time that they are trying to deliver basic services, attract investment, and promote jobs and growth. To create a shared sense of national unity and a positive climate for development, they know that they must instill widespread faith throughout every Rwandan in the fairness of their governing institutions. That means being open to dissent and permitting free access to information and to the work of a free, responsible, and independent press. Progress meeting this test is particularly important in the run-up to their September elections for the House of Delegates and to the next presidential elections.

If confirmed, I will work with all those parts of America's investment in Rwanda, especially the people out of your mission there, to help them strengthen their democratic institutions and their economy, to take care of Rwandans who need our help, and to advance transparency and respect for human rights. With continued progress, I absolutely believe that Rwanda will be a catalyst for regional peace and development and an instrument for good beyond its borders.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to ask that the remainder of my testimony be entered in the record and would welcome any questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Symington. Without objection, that will be done. Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Symington follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. W. STUART SYMINGTON,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO RWANDA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be Ambassador to Rwanda. I am deeply grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for this honor. I also want to thank you Senators for the kind introduction. One of the many things the United States and Rwanda have in common is the prominent role of women in public life. I know of no better American examples of that success.

Before I turn to my prepared statement, may I introduce the members of my family who are here with me today? First, my wife, Susan, and children, Janey and Stuart—they are the real diplomats in our family and they have served America as true ambassadors at every stage of what has truly been "our career."

May I also point out that I am pleased to be joined by my Uncle, former Congressman Jim Symington, and my brother, Doctor John Symington; I thank them as well as those friends and colleagues who have joined us here today. Finally, I'd like to thank Chairman Ike Skelton for the inspiring challenge he put to me years ago. He said that our greatest strengths as a nation were our people and our principles, and that one of our greatest challenges was to act jointly, with a common purpose, across agency and service lines, to achieve our national objectives. If confirmed, that is what I will seek to do in Rwanda.

Mr. Chairman, the people of Rwanda have a remarkable opportunity today to show that it is possible for a people to forge a common future in a land that was consumed by the horror of genocide just 14 years ago. It is vital that they succeed. The Rwandans (and the rest of the world) must ensure that the genocide is never forgotten and that it will never be repeated.

Rwandans know that the best way to honor the genocide victims is to look forward and unite, after looking back to remember the terrible cost of division and hatred. Rwandans recognize today that they must work together to realize their promising future. Over the last decade, they have improved education and health care; they have advanced reconciliation and made progress meting out justice. They have countered security threats and cared for genocide victims. They have created economic growth and improved the investment climate. They have achieved noteworthy progress, but they still face enormous challenges.

As the government and many Rwandans view their future, their call is for all Rwandans to see themselves as one people, with equal justice and opportunity under law. Their call is also a test. Rwanda faces the test of countering extremists, while vigorously protecting human rights; of improving governance and transparency; of strengthening democratic institutions, while delivering basic services; and of attracting investment, while promoting job and income growth. To create a shared sense of national identity and a positive climate for development requires instilling widespread faith in the fairness of governing institutions as well as permitting free access to information and to the work of a free, responsible, and independent press. Progress meeting this test is particularly important in the run-up to the September House of Delegates elections and to the 2011 Presidential elections.

If confirmed, I will work with all Rwandans to help them strengthen their democratic institutions and their economy in an unstable region and to advance transparency and respect for human rights.

We have a strong bilateral partnership with Rwanda, reflected in President Bush's visit there in February this year. Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed, my goal will be to advance America's interests by synchronizing the efforts of all U.S. Government agencies and personnel working in Rwanda. We will also enlist the help of the American private sector and nongovernmental groups, working with Rwandans to achieve our shared goals. We will focus on fighting disease and hunger, promoting democratic prosperity and growth, facilitating national reconciliation, and advancing regional stability and global security.

Rwanda's commitment to regional stability is reflected in its role as a member of the U.S.-led Tripartite Plus peace process. Rwanda has been a constructive partner in those efforts to develop and implement a joint approach to increasing security in the Great Lakes region. The United States will continue to play a leading role pro-

moting good relations between Rwanda and its neighbors. If confirmed, I will work in concert with my U.S. colleagues in the neighboring countries to support together ongoing efforts to bring an end to the threat of armed groups in the region and to secure the safe and voluntary return of refugees. This remains essential, if the people of the Great Lakes are to live in peace and to train their sights on generating growth instead of resolving conflict.

No country on the globe has a greater reason to stop genocide than Rwanda. It is no surprise that Rwandan troops are the backbone of the African Union and United Nations peacekeeping force in Darfur. Just last week, that Rwandan force suffered five casualties while successfully repelling a largescale attack in Darfur. Today, some 2,500 Rwandan peacekeepers are on the frontline against genocide in Darfur.

At home, Rwandans recognize that their lasting security depends on generating economic growth and creating jobs. Rising prosperity will help to underpin reconciliation and may aid efforts to ensure equal treatment under law, and political transparency. Today, Rwandans see significant economic progress. Those gains are particularly remarkable given the devastating losses from the genocide. While most Rwandans continue to live in poverty, the government has embarked on an ambitious plan to improve the standard of living through higher education and infrastructure development. If confirmed, I plan to seek ways to contribute to that effort, especially by encouraging opportunities for private sector investment and job training to prepare Rwandans for new jobs. Rwanda is opening its business environment. The Trade Investment Framework Agreement helped propel a 32 percent increase of United States-Rwanda trade in 2007, and the Bilateral Investment Treaty signed by President Bush and President Kagame in February will help attract new U.S. investment. Our extensive program to construct coffee washing stations has been a singular success, with Starbucks and other major coffee chains clamoring for Rwanda's world-class specialty coffee.

Increased prosperity will help Rwandans focus on working together to shape a better, united future, but the cleavages caused by genocide will take years to heal. Rwanda has a national policy favoring reconciliation and deemphasizing ethnic identification, but this will be the work of generations. Therefore, ongoing efforts to promote reconciliation are essential, both at the grassroots and in the capital. On the national level, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), may play a central role. The newly approved \$24.73 MCC Threshold Country Plan will fund justice sector initiatives designed to strengthen democratic governance and the capacity of civil society organizations. At the grassroots level, the Peace Corps is sure to have a very positive impact. The first volunteers are slated to arrive in Rwanda this year.

In Rwanda, investments of development resources have been shown to have great impact due to the Government of Rwanda's focused leadership. As a priority country for PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief) and PMI (President's Malaria Initiative), the United States has been in the forefront of combating HIV/AIDS and malaria pandemic in Rwanda. Through our USAID mission, we also fund programs in democracy and governance, economic growth, food security, and healthcare.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is making a difference in Rwanda and Rwanda has, and will, make a difference in the world. If confirmed, I will work to build on that success. I am convinced that Rwanda's democratic development, economic growth, and security are essential for its citizens and critical to the stability of much of Africa. I look forward to working closely with you, Mr. Chairman, and with the committee in this most important endeavor.

Thank you again Chairman Feingold, Senator Isakson, and the members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions that you might have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Mr. Eastham?

**STATEMENT OF HON. ALAN W. EASTHAM, JR., NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

Ambassador EASTHAM. Mr. Chairman, I would like to echo Stuart Symington's gratitude to you and the committee for holding this session on such a timely basis, although it did require me to come back here from my present post in Malawi on very short notice and to prepare for this in a compressed period of time. I do appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and appreciate the nomina-

tion by the President to take up my position in the Republic of Congo, or as we call it in the shorthand, Congo-Brazzaville.

This is the second time that I have appeared before the committee. I was here 3 years ago as a candidate for confirmation as Ambassador to Malawi, and I have had that position for the last 3 years.

If I may, before beginning my testimony, I would like to introduce my family members who are here. My wife, Carolyn, and my sons, Mark and Michael.

Senator FEINGOLD. Would you please rise? Thank you very much for being here. Welcome.

Ambassador EASTHAM. Carolyn and I have been together for longer than my Foreign Service career has lasted and probably for longer than she would like me to say in public session. [Laughter.]

Mark is at Elon University in North Carolina and will be in his second year this year, and Michael will be starting at James Madison University in Virginia next month. Michael also happens to be our African connection since he was born in Nairobi, Kenya during our first assignment in Africa.

If confirmed, this will be my fourth African post. I have served in Nairobi, Kinshasa, and my present post in Lilongwe.

I have had other professional responsibilities relating to Africa which I think serve as qualification. I spent a year as the U.S. Representative to the Kimberley Process talks on conflict diamonds, which gave me an introduction to resource management and the misuses to which resources can be put in extreme cases. I think that will serve me well in Congo.

I also served for 3 years as the Director of Central African Affairs in the State Department and had occasion to visit Brazzaville a couple of times during that service.

If confirmed, my top priority will be to promote and protect United States interests in the Congo. That includes U.S. citizens, U.S. interests and investments, and not least important, U.S. values. These values include promoting human rights and democracy, promoting economic good governance, and also supporting efforts by the Congolese leadership to play a positive and leading role in the resolution of conflicts in the Central African region.

On the economic front, we have to ensure that American commercial interests can operate in a free, lawful, and orderly economic and regulatory environment, which I believe involves encouraging the Congolese authorities to combat corruption, to account for revenues, to invest those revenues in human and social development, and to manage and protect the economic resources with which the Congo is blessed.

Our political goals include supporting the country's democratic institutions and encouraging their further development and promoting civil and political rights including, when necessary, talking about and intervening in particular cases relating to human rights abuses. This includes also support to civil society, as well as encouraging the Republic of Congo to protect its most vulnerable populations, including victims of child labor exploitation, child and human trafficking, and violence against women. It is important to support efforts to encourage timely, free, fair, and transparent elections for the presidency which will occur in 2009.

At the regional level, President Sassou-Nguesso was recently appointed as a co-mediator in the Chad-Sudan conflict, and he has recently been involved in the contact group process and hosted the most recent meeting in Brazzaville. We appreciate the Republic of Congo's role in the Chad-Sudan mediation and urge them to work diligently with regional partners to facilitate a resolution of that conflict.

It is important to note, as you did, Senator, in your statement at the beginning, that in both program and operational terms, the United States mission in Brazzaville is rebuilding. The embassy was closed for several years. It was followed by a difficult period when staff of the embassy were based across the river in Kinshasa and were obliged to travel across the river to do their work. There is a new building under construction which will be, I hope, occupied early next year.

In addition, the process of rebuilding the professional staff and procedures is underway. I hope to be able to continue to strengthen the U.S. diplomatic platform, if confirmed by the Senate.

At present, the major tools available to pursue United States interests in the Congo are diplomacy and close engagement with the people and the government. There are also public diplomacy initiatives that we can take that further our goals and strengthen mutual understanding between our two countries. It is my intention, if confirmed, to examine our programs currently active in Congo and I will definitely be recommending changes and proposing some new initiatives to support our objectives. In particular, I hope to be able to attract additional resources and attention, both public and private, clearly linked to United States policy objectives and to positive actions by the Government of the Republic of Congo to add to our tool kit in Brazzaville.

I appreciate very much, Mr. Chairman, the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy, of course, to respond to any questions that you might wish to pose. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Eastham follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ALAN W. EASTHAM,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a privilege and a distinct honor to appear before you for a second time as the President's nominee to serve the United States in Africa. The first time, over 3 years ago, was as Ambassador to Malawi, a post I will be relinquishing next month. At present, I am seeking confirmation as United States Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo (ROC).

If I may, I would like to introduce my wife, Carolyn, who has been at my side for 34 years. She has also served our country in seven of the eight foreign posts to which I have been assigned. She is looking forward to seeing the Congo River for the first time, as no family members were allowed to live in Kinshasa during the 2 years I served there. I have to say that she works as hard as I do to support United States activities in Malawi, and she will do the same in Brazzaville, if I am confirmed by the Senate. Let me also introduce my sons—Mark, who attends Elon University in North Carolina, and Michael, who will begin his studies at James Madison University next month. They have grown up in the Foreign Service and I expect that there is a good chance you will see them serving the United States abroad in some capacity in the coming years.

If confirmed, Brazzaville will be my fourth Africa post overseas. I have served in Nairobi, Kinshasa, and Lilongwe. I have visited 20 African countries in an official capacity, and I have had other professional responsibilities relating to Africa, including a year as the U.S. representative to the Kimberley Process talks on conflict diamonds and 3 years as Director of Central African Affairs in the State Department.

As Director, I had responsibility for the Republic of Congo. I have visited the country several times, both before and after the destructive civil war.

United States policy in the Republic of the Congo centers on promoting human rights, democracy, and good governance in the country. We also support efforts by the Congolese leadership to play a positive and leading role in the resolution of regional conflicts.

If confirmed, I will fully exercise my mandate to promote and protect U.S. interests in that country, including U.S. investments, U.S. citizens, and U.S. values.

Economic governance is a strong priority for the United States. We must ensure that American commercial interests can operate in a free, lawful, orderly, and transparent economic and regulatory environment. This involves encouraging the authorities to combat corruption, invest oil revenues in human and social development, and manage the country's precious environmental resources.

Our political goals include supporting the country's democratic institutions, and promoting civil and political rights. This includes support to civil society as an effective mechanism of checks and balances to promote government accountability and transparency as well as encouraging the ROC to protect its most vulnerable populations, including victims of child labor, child trafficking, and violence against women. It is also important to note that Congo will be holding presidential elections in 2009. It is important to support efforts to make those free, fair, and transparent.

There is also important work to be done to further the implementation of the 2005 Peace Agreement between the government and the last remaining rebel group, in order to create a positive atmosphere for free and fair presidential elections in 2009.

Following the Republic of Congo's tenure as President of the African Union and nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council in 2006, the ROC has enhanced its role in regional and multilateral issues. President Sassou-Nguesso was recently appointed as a mediator in the Chad-Sudan conflict, and has been actively involved in the contact group process, and hosted a meeting in Brazzaville. We appreciate the ROC's role, and urge them to work with regional partners to facilitate a resolution of the conflict.

The ROC is increasingly becoming a partner in the area of security cooperation. Last October, the Government of Congo hosted a United States Navy ship visit. We continue to support capacity building efforts to enhance the country's maritime security awareness. Our training of the Congolese military will also support the country's efforts to contribute to future central African peacekeeping efforts and promote awareness for human rights in the country's armed forces.

It is important to note that in both program and operational contexts the United States mission in Brazzaville is in a rebuilding phase. The embassy was closed for several years, followed by several difficult years of coverage by personnel under severe security strictures and based across the river in Kinshasa. The embassy building was destroyed during the civil war, and a new building under construction is expected to be ready for occupancy early next year. This building is necessary to support our efforts in the ROC and will provide a strong visible indication of our commitment to strong relations with the country. The process of rebuilding professional staff and procedures is well under way. I hope to be able to continue to strengthen the U.S. diplomatic platform if I am confirmed by the Senate.

If confirmed, I would support these policy efforts through diplomacy and close engagement with the government. I would also support public diplomacy initiatives that further our goals and strengthen the mutual understanding between our two countries. I also intend to examine our programs currently active in Congo, and recommend changes and propose new initiatives to support our objectives. In particular, I hope to be able to attract additional resources, clearly linked to United States policy objectives and to positive actions by the Government of the Republic of Congo, to add to our toolkit in Brazzaville.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to respond to any questions you might choose to ask, and I look forward, if confirmed, to serving the United States in Brazzaville.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Mr. Eastham.
Mr. Swan.

**STATEMENT OF JAMES CHRISTOPHER SWAN, NOMINEE TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI**

Mr. SWAN. Mr. Chairman Feingold, Ranking Member Isakson, Senator Lugar, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee for chief of mission at Djibouti. I have a very brief oral

statement and would ask that my written testimony be included in the record, if possible.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Mr. SWAN. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer.

First, Mr. Chairman, if I may acknowledge several family members and colleagues who are here today. My wife, Daphne Michelle Titus, please stand up. Daphne is also a Foreign Service officer with extensive experience in Africa. I would also like to mention our children, Mitchell and Garner, who are not able to be here today but who are here with us in spirit, and also to note the presence of our goddaughter, Kiama Alexis, who is visiting from Los Angeles.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome.

Mr. SWAN. Let me please also recognize several Africa Bureau colleagues, including of course, chief of staff, Ruth Davis, who has already been mentioned; desk officer Sarah Skerubsky. And let me also say that I am honored to appear today with other friends and colleagues working on African issues.

Mr. Chairman, during more than 20 years at the State Department, I have devoted my career to the challenges of developing countries in transition, especially in Africa. Since 1992, my overseas assignments have been all in Africa, including work in Cameroon, Somalia, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the last two posts as deputy chief of mission. I currently serve as Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs with broad policy and program responsibility for Central and East Africa, including Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy Djibouti's dedicated team of Foreign Service, Civil Service, military staff assigned to the embassy, and Foreign Service national employees in advancing the interests of the United States. In Djibouti, these interests are primarily in the areas of peace and security, good governance, and economic development.

First, with respect to peace and security, Djibouti has long been a pocket of stability in a turbulent region and is an important partner in the fight against terrorism. As has been mentioned, Djibouti hosts the only United States military base in sub-Saharan Africa, Camp Lemonier, headquarters for the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, with some 2,200 personnel. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to build our close relationship with the Government of Djibouti on regional peace and security issues.

And in view of the importance of CJTF-HOA, let me also state that I am committed to close coordination and cooperation between embassy personnel and CJTF-HOA and to ensuring that all CJTF-HOA programming in Djibouti fits within overarching United States Government priorities for the country.

With regard to democracy and governance, Mr. Chairman, Djibouti is a nascent democracy, independent only since 1977. We have been encouraged by the results achieved by U.S. engagement on human rights issues, for example, progress on trafficking in persons, and we will continue to seek to enlarge space for private

media and civil society groups that at times have faced constraints. If confirmed, I will work with our Djiboutian partners to support and deepen their democracy governance reforms.

On the economic front, Mr. Chairman, Djibouti is seeking to become a center for regional and international trade, financial services as well. Nonetheless, the country remains very poor, ranked 149 out of 177 countries, according to the UNDP Human Development Index. The United States, consequently, has a small but active aid mission in Djibouti focused on health and education and on responding to urgent humanitarian requirements. If confirmed, I will continue to make support for economic development in Djibouti a priority.

Finally, but most importantly, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the safety and well-being of Americans living in or visiting Djibouti. With only a few hundred private American citizens in the country, I would expect, if confirmed, to remain in frequent contact with them, most importantly on consular and security issues, but also to benefit from the wisdom of longtime residents, aid workers, and others with expertise on developments in Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the honor to appear before you today. Of course, we welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Swan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES SWAN,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

Chairman Feingold, Ranking Member Isakson, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee for chief of mission Djibouti. Thank you for convening this hearing so quickly during a very busy season of Senate business and campaign preparations. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position, and particularly for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer in this appointment.

First, Mr. Chairman, let me mention several family members and colleagues who are here today. My wife, Daphne Michelle Titus, is here, and I would also like to mention our children, Garner and Mitchell, who are not present in this room, but are with us in spirit. Daphne is also a Foreign Service officer with extensive experience in Africa. We have been full partners not just in the home, but also as we've worked in embassies abroad and in public service here in Washington. Let me also add that I am honored to appear before you on this panel with my two friends and colleagues, Ambassadors Eastham and Symington.

Mr. Chairman, during more than 20 years at the State Department, I have devoted my career to the challenges of developing countries in transition, many involving unsettled security environments and complex political reforms. My overseas assignments have included service as political officer in Cameroon during its first multiparty Presidential elections, as "Somalia Watcher" in Nairobi during the final pull-out of U.N. forces in the mid 1990s, and as deputy chief of mission in both the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo during efforts to bring an end to conflicts and humanitarian crises in those countries and to promote democratic reforms. In Washington I have served as Director for African Analysis in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and most recently as Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs with broad policy and program responsibility for Central and East Africa, including the Horn of Africa and Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy Djibouti's dedicated team in advancing the interests of the United States. This team of over 200 consists of Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel, military staff assigned to the embassy, and of course our invaluable Foreign Service national employees. Our interests in Djibouti are primarily in the areas of peace and security, good governance, and economic development.

PEACE AND SECURITY

Djibouti is a small but important country on the Horn of Africa. It occupies a strategic position at the Bab el Mandab Strait, which joins the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. These waters are used by some 40 percent of the world's commercial ships. Djibouti hosts the only United States military base in sub-Saharan Africa, Camp Lemonier, headquarters for the Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) and its approximately 2,200 personnel. Djibouti has long been a pocket of stability in a turbulent region, and is an important partner in the fight against terrorism. It borders Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia/Somaliland, and faces Yemen less than 18 miles across the strait to the east. Djibouti has often used its close relations with all of its neighbors to promote peace and understanding in the region. It is the regional headquarters for the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. In June, Djibouti hosted an important meeting between Somalia's Transitional Federal Government and the opposition Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, which led to an agreement that both sides have now initialed. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to build our close relationship with the Government of Djibouti on regional peace and security issues.

In view of the large and important CJTF-HOA presence, let me underscore my commitment, if confirmed, to continue close coordination and cooperation between embassy personnel and the CJTF-HOA contingent. If confirmed, I will also ensure that all CJTF-HOA programming in Djibouti fits within overarching United States Government priorities to advance our key interests in the country.

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

Djibouti is a nascent democracy. It has been independent only since 1977 and faced a limited but persistent internal rebel movement in the early 1990s. With the negotiated conclusion of the rebellion, a "grand coalition" was formed that effectively rules the country. Presidential elections in 2005 were determined by international observers to be free and fair. Recent parliamentary elections in February returned all of the seats to members of the ruling coalition. At the regional level, however, other political groups obtained greater representation. We have been encouraged by the results achieved by active U.S. engagement on governance and human rights issues—for example on trafficking in persons. Djibouti's rapid passage of a new antitrafficking law and followup implementation were reflected in an improvement in Djibouti's trafficking in persons ranking from Tier II Watch List to Tier II. If confirmed, I will work with our Djiboutian partners to continue their democracy/governance reforms—including to enlarge space for private media and civil society groups that at times have faced constraints.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

On the economic front, Mr. Chairman, Djibouti's leadership is seeking to embrace the opportunities of globalization. Capitalizing on its location and excellent deep-water port, Djibouti has privatized its port and airport and has embarked on construction of a new port facility that will dramatically increase capacity. This privatization has reduced corruption and increased revenues flowing to the government. Djibouti is also emerging as a regional banking center, albeit on a modest scale. Making Djibouti an attractive place for investment and a center for regional and international trade will be critical to its economic development. Djibouti remains very poor, ranked 149 out of 177 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index. Nearly 90 percent of Djiboutian land is desert. The United States has a small but active AID mission in Djibouti, focused on health and education, particularly to combat low life-expectancy, maternal and under-5 child mortality, and transmission of infectious diseases. The United States also responds to the current worldwide problem of food insecurity through support for the Famine Early Warning Network office in Djibouti, as well as Food for Peace and Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance programs. If confirmed, I will continue to make support for economic development in Djibouti a priority.

ERITREA/DJIBOUTI BORDER

Mr. Chairman, as you can see, we have important interests in Djibouti. Djibouti's role in regional peace and security, its democratic and governance reforms, and its economic prospects merit support and encouragement from friends of Djibouti. Yet, one of its neighbors—Eritrea—has instead sought to foment instability, creating a potential new border conflict where before none existed. The establishment of Eritrean military positions just over the Ras Doumeira ridge on the Djiboutian side of the border represents a worrying threat to Djibouti. The Eritrean Government has

rebuffed efforts by the African Union, League of Arab States, and bilateral partners of the two countries to negotiate resolution. Now the United Nations Secretariat, at the behest of the Security Council, is sending a team to gather further details of the border standoff and report back to the council. In view of Eritrea's destabilizing role elsewhere in the region, this move against Djibouti can only be seen as yet another deliberate threat by this dangerous spoiler on the Horn. If confirmed, I will give my full support to international efforts to resolve this incipient conflict peacefully and restore the border to the status quo ante.

AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my first, most immediate priority will be the safety and well-being of Americans living in or visiting Djibouti. With only a few hundred private Americans in-country, I would expect, if confirmed, to remain in frequent contact with them, most importantly on consular and security issues, but also to benefit from the wisdom of long-time residents, aid workers, and others with expertise on developments in Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the honor to appear before the Committee today. I would be happy to take any questions you may have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Mr. Swan.
Mr. Simon.

STATEMENT OF JOHN A. SIMON, NOMINEE TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE AFRICAN UNION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. SIMON. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I would like to echo the thanks of my colleagues for the opportunity to testify before you here today. And in particular, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and your staff for allowing me the opportunity to join my colleagues.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you in consideration of my nomination to serve as the United States Ambassador to the African Union. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have shown in nominating me for this position.

I have submitted written comments for the record, and with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will summarize them here.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Mr. SIMON. Mr. Chairman, first I would like to acknowledge my wife, Laura, who is here with me today.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome.

Mr. SIMON. Without her love and sacrifice and that of my children, Will, Leo, Maya, and Jayne, my career in public service would not have been possible.

I would also like to thank the African Union desk in the State Department and the many offices and bureaus that worked overtime to prepare me for this hearing today.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have spent the past 6 years working on global development issues. The primary focus of this work has been in Africa. Over that time, I have had the extraordinary honor and privilege to serve our country as an official of the U.S. Agency for International Development, as Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization, and Development on the staff of the National Security Council, and most recently, as executive vice president for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. In these capacities, I have helped to support the President's international development agenda at a time of dynamic economic and political change around the world.

Nowhere has this change been more profound than in Africa. The United States has been an active partner in helping Africans along this journey, with far-reaching initiatives on the continent, including the Millennium Challenge Account, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the African Education Initiative, the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the African Mortgage Market Initiative, and the African Financial Sector Initiative. I have been honored to have played a role in every one of these efforts.

The African Union is the most prominent manifestation of the new era on the continent. Founded in July 2002, the African Union heralded a change from its predecessor's focus on noninterference to one, in the words of its first chairman, Alpha Oumar Konare, of nonindifference.

Over the last 18 months, the breadth of the AU political initiatives has dramatically expanded. It has registered some significant successes, including stabilizing Comoros and Burundi, establishing the Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit, and adopting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance.

Although making significant progress, the African Union still faces considerable challenges. Capacity gaps, understaffing, and regional conflict, such as in Zimbabwe, Somalia, and Sudan, all threaten the nascent strides the African Union has made. These challenges on the one hand and the increasing vitality of the AU on the other provide the United States with a unique opportunity to engage the AU, which is looking to the United States for support.

For instance, given the recent elections in Zimbabwe and others that have suffered from serious irregularities, it is imperative that the United States and other donors assist the African Union to develop institutions that ensure the standards enshrined in the AU charter function to guarantee free and fair elections that are respected throughout the continent.

Building upon our historic ties, shared culture, and deep appreciation of the African continent's strategic significance, the United States in August 2006 became the first country to establish a separate diplomatic mission accredited to the AU. USAU was established with the intention to forge a strategic partnership between the United States and the African Union by building upon the AU's capacity to strengthen democratic institutions, promote peace and security, improve the lives and health of all Africans, and support sustainable economic development through increased trade and investment. If confirmed, I will strive to forward this agenda. I will also use every opportunity to press AU to live up to its own standards of nonindifference, especially in promoting human rights and democracy.

I would look forward, if confirmed, as the U.S. Representative to the AU, to working closely with you, Mr. Chairman, your staff, and other Members of the Congress to ensure that United States interests, policies, and assistance to the African Union achieves maximum impact.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this hearing. I would be pleased to answer any questions you and the members of the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Simon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN SIMON,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE AFRICAN UNION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today in consideration of my nomination to serve as the United States Ambassador to the African Union. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have shown in nominating me for this position.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge the members of my family who are here with me today. First, my wife, Laura, and my daughter, Maya. My two sons, Will and Leo, and my other daughter, Jayne, could not be here today. I would also like to thank my parents, Barry and Hinda Simon, for their generous and unfailing love and support. Without my family's love and sacrifice, my career in public service would not have been possible.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have spent the past 6 years working on global development issues. The primary focus of this work has been in Africa. Over that time, I have had the extraordinary honor and privilege to serve our country as an official at the U.S. Agency for International Development; as Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization, and Development on the staff of the National Security Council; and, most recently, as executive vice president of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. In these capacities, I have helped to support the President's international development agenda at a time of dynamic economic and political change around the globe.

Nowhere has this change been more profound than in Africa. Thanks to improved governance, balanced fiscal and monetary policies, and investments in health and education, Africa as a whole is experiencing its most significant economic expansion since independence, with 10 years of uninterrupted growth, the last 5 at rates in excess of 5 percent. Africans have also experienced a growth in freedom and democracy, with more countries classified as free by the nongovernmental organization Freedom House than at any time in the continent's history.

The United States has been an active partner in helping Africans along this journey. Through the groundbreaking Millennium Challenge Account, with firm bipartisan backing from Congress we have supported the rule of law, sound economic policies, and investments in people. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative, Americans have helped Africans make unprecedented strides against two of the most deadly diseases on Earth. Through the Africa Education Initiative and the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, the United States has worked to educate and empower Africans from all strata of society. And through the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the African Mortgage Market Initiative, and the African Financial Sector Initiative, we have helped to lift the staggering burden of debt and develop the institutions of a modern economy. I have been honored to have played a role in every one of these efforts. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will work with the African Union (AU) to highlight these initiatives as important developmental issues for the AU to pursue.

The African Union is the most prominent manifestation of the new era on the continent. Founded in July 2002, the African Union heralded a change from its predecessor's focus on "noninterference" to one, in the words of its first Chairman, Alpha Oumar Konare, of "nonindifference." This was a highly significant change and a recognition that Africa not only can, but must take charge of its own destiny if it is to compete and prosper in the 21st century. The creation and success of the African Union is not only critical to the continent, but to the international community and to the interests of the United States.

The African Union is an active, multilateral organization orchestrating complementary agendas for change and development. The permanent representatives of its 53 member states are setting political directions in areas as disparate as election monitoring and climate change. The African Union Commission, effectively the AU's Executive Secretariat, is implementing the policies endorsed by the AU's Assembly of Heads of State. Over the last 18 months, the breadth of AU political initiatives has dramatically expanded, and it has registered some significant successes, including stabilizing Comoros and Burundi, establishing the Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit, and adopting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance.

Although making significant progress, the African Union still faces considerable challenges. Capacity gaps, understaffing, and regional conflict, such as in Zimbabwe, Somalia, and Sudan, all threaten the nascent strides the African Union has made. These challenges on the one hand, and the increasing vitality of the AU on the other, provide the United States with a unique opportunity to engage the AU, which is looking to the United States for support.

For instance, given the recent elections in Zimbabwe, and others that have suffered from serious irregularities, it is imperative that the United States and other donor partners assist the African Union to develop institutions to ensure that the standards enshrined in the AU charter function to guarantee free and fair elections are respected throughout the continent. Despite its shortcomings, the AU sent an observer mission to the June 27 Zimbabwean runoff, and that mission concluded that the election had fallen short of AU standards. The June 30-July 2 AU summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt issued a statement stating that they were deeply concerned with the prevailing situation in Zimbabwe and called for negotiations between parties and recognition that some form of transitional government would be necessary.

Building upon our historic ties, shared culture, and deep appreciation of the African continent's strategic significance, the United States, in August 2006, became the first observer country to establish a separate diplomatic mission accredited to the AU. USAU was established in 2006 with the intention to forge a strategic partnership between the United States and the African Union by building the AU's capacity to strengthen democratic institutions, promote peace and stability, improve the lives and health of all Africans, and support sustainable economic development through increased trade and investment. If confirmed, I will strive to forward this agenda. I will also use every opportunity to press the AU to live up to its own standard of "nonindifference," especially in promoting human rights and democracy.

I would look forward, if confirmed as the United States Representative to the AU, to working closely with you and other Members of Congress to ensure that U.S. interests, policies, and assistance to the African Union achieves maximum impact.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this hearing. I would be pleased to answer any questions you and the members of the committee may have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Simon. Thank you all.

We will begin our first round of questions. I will begin it. We will do 7-minute rounds.

Ambassador Symington, you spent the last 3 years as United States Ambassador to Djibouti. What lessons do you hope to bring with you from your experience in Djibouti?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Mr. Chairman, thank you for asking me the question that I focused on every day as I prepared for this hearing.

I think that there are three important lessons. The first is the one that I mentioned inspired both by Chairman Skelton and by you of working together jointly. I think that it is synchronizing not just what government does but what government does to enable the private sector to do more. So to continue to focus on what every agency of our Government does and then to push forward on the economic development side by creating conditions that can help the people of Rwanda not only find peace but a path to prosperity strikes me as the very first and most important.

The second thing is that I am keenly aware, in an insecure part of the Horn, how important security is, and so I will, with the help not only of the rest of the United States Government, but with the continued help and support of you and the Senate and the House funding our efforts, to not only have boots on the ground, but also to have seats at the table with that kind of support in development, with that kind of resource required to not just talk about security, but to be in a position as we have been in Rwanda, training folks to then deploy in Darfur, do something about it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Now, similar to Djibouti, Rwanda faces a major violent conflict in a neighboring country. In fact, the extreme violence that has plagued the Kivu Region of Eastern Congo can be, of course, directly traced to the legacy of the 1994 genocide and the continuing Hutu-Tutsi tensions. In response to the presence of the FDLR and former members of the Interahamwe in Eastern Congo, the Rwanda Government funded Tutsi insurgents until at least 2003.

Now, do you see, sir, a potential to resolve this crisis, and how do you intend to work with President Kagame and others in the region to do so?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There is clearly a potential to resolve it. The magnitude of the problem, while still considerable, has diminished, thanks to the efforts not only of other American ambassadors in Rwanda, but also the considered efforts of the Tripartite Plus process and the conversations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda and other leaders at very many levels pushed forward by a meeting last year that the Secretary of State chaired in Addis to bring the Tripartite Plus together in which the Minister of the Interior of the Democratic Republic of Congo and President Kagame got together and talked about the way forward.

There is a tremendous opportunity to address this problem by focusing, I think, on three things.

The first is getting together to talk about the common interests in a lasting peace. And they are doing that more regularly.

The second is to focus explicitly on the security concerns, and all the parties share a desire to make sure that there are not groups operating in the area that threaten the stability of law.

But the third element is to turn this part of Africa from a place of troubles to a place of promise, and that means going beyond the focus on security to focus on the sort of opportunities for economic integration represented by Rwanda's recent joining of the East African community and its membership in COMESA. We need to take some of that growth that I saw in Djibouti that is coming across the Indian Ocean and reach into the heart of Africa so that they can cooperate together.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Ambassador.

According to the State Department's country reports on human rights practices for 2007, extrajudicial killings by security forces increased, as well as restrictions on freedom of speech, association, and press.

How would you assess the challenges of building democracy in Rwanda and the current state of democracy there?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. As we were discussing earlier, one great test for their commitment to multiparty democracy will be the multiparty elections that are about to take place in September. And so this is a perfect time to see whether or not Rwanda continues to make progress towards that goal.

In the course of the last year, I was pleased to see progress in a couple of those areas, particularly in that relating to extrajudicial killings. Another very significant issue that has plagued them in the past has been both the crowdings and the conditions of their prisons, and they continue to make progress there.

But there are genuine human rights concerns in Rwanda today, and as I see our efforts, I am reminded of a very simple truth that I learned which is that when I swear an oath to serve as your ambassador in Djibouti, I swear that oath to preserve and to protect the Constitution, a body of ideas. What we have at the core of our being is those principles, and it is what holds us together and gives us our strength in the world.

If Rwanda is to realize its promise of a single united Rwanda playing a positive role in Africa, it must show the same adherence to principles that we do and not because we tell them to, but because those principles are their principles and they work for them. And that test is one they must pass every day, but it will be a great challenge to work with them as they try to make progress in that area.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Symington.

Mr. Eastham, since ending its civil war, oil production in the Republic of Congo has increased significantly and it continues to do so.

What United States companies, petroleum companies, are active in the country, and do you expect that Congolese oil exports to the United States will increase in the coming years?

Ambassador EASTHAM. On the second question, Senator, I do not—I think the market will determine whether imports to the United States will increase. I would anticipate that they will simply because there will be more Congolese oil available. There is an expectation that when a new field comes on line next year, that there will be an additional 90,000 barrels a day of production, bringing Congo up from its present level of approximately 240,000 barrels a day, up to around 330,000 in the coming year. At present, Congo is the fifth largest producer in Africa. I do not think that that will change the ranking for the additional capacity to come on line.

Operating in the Republic of Congo at the moment, there are several United States oil exploration and production companies, as well as a number of other companies that support them. I believe that the exploration companies are Chevron, Congo SA, the Murphy West Africa Limited, and Neighbors Offshore. Supporting services companies include Halliburton, Baker Oil Tools, Schlumberger, and Trac d'Afrique. There are a couple of other American companies also engaged in Congo, one in bauxite and another in milling of flour for consumption in the Congo.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Eastham. When I have my second round, I will return to this subject, but I will just simply comment in all this debate about energy and oil, there is insufficient attention to the role of African oil supplies, both the positive aspects and the challenges. I know that the ranking member has talked about it, but this is something the American people have, I think, a limited awareness of. And I am hoping that through our work together we can let people know that there are not simply Middle Eastern sources of oil.

Senator ISAKSON.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On that subject, I want to acknowledge that Ambassadors Symington, Eastham, and Swan all made reference in their state-

ments to the important role of supporting the private sector in each of those countries. And with the chairman mentioning oil and the resources of Africa, I think it is important to note, Mr. Eastham, that not far from your positing is Equatorial Guinea where the United States left some years ago and did not have an embassy, but has come back and brought Ambassador Johnson. U.S. companies, Marathon in particular, but also Hess, formed a joint venture with that government, discovered a huge reserve of natural gas in the Gulf of Guinea and Marathon invested \$1.5 billion in a liquefaction facility which is now operating.

And as a result of that, two things happened. One, the economy of Equatorial Guinea and the money it is raising, is being invested in hospitals and schools, and is helping the populace, but also as recently as last month, President Obiang released 37 political prisoners we have been trying to encourage him to release for a number of years. I think that shows that if we can help empower the private sector to participate in joint ventures on the continent of Africa, particularly in energy, but in other areas as well, the result is not only wealth for the people of Africa, but also a more democratic government emerges from that prosperity.

I am making a speech, not asking a question, but I thought it was important to note that all three of you voluntarily noted that point.

Mr. Eastham, in your printed testimony and verbal testimony, you talked about American interests being able to operate in free, lawful, orderly, and transparent economic and regulatory environments, in particular, you mentioned the problem of corruption and making sure that we do everything to have honorable dealings.

What is in the Congo as far as corruption? How is it? Is it a major problem? Is it improving?

Ambassador EASTHAM. Thank you for the question because that is one of the most important things that I believe I will be addressing, if I am confirmed and go to this post.

My impression from my preparations here is that I would rather call it lack of accountability is getting in the way of a lot of things that Congo would like to do. For example, they have gone off track with the International Monetary Fund after a promising start about 2 years ago because of a problem of overexpenditure that caused them to miss their targets to continue on their poverty relief and growth facility program.

Similarly, their progress toward debt relief under the HIPC program has gone off track, largely as a result of being off track with the IMF because, again, of a lack of accountability.

There are nongovernmental organizations that are extremely credible on this subject, such as Global Witness, that have noted in public the problems of accountability with regard to the revenues from petroleum that is exported from the Republic of Congo.

Now, I am not the ambassador yet. You will determine that, but I think that at this stage in my preparation for this post, I would prefer to look at it as a glass a quarter full rather than characterizing it as corruption. So let me just assure you that I think that that is an issue that cuts across through the Congo and Congo's governance. The question of how they account for the money and how they spend it in terms of—well, I will go back to your example

of Equatorial Guinea—spending on hospitals and infrastructure projects that benefit the population of the country, I have a feeling that is going to be a core aspect of my mission there, if I am confirmed.

Senator ISAKSON. I really appreciate not only the answer, but the way in which you answered it because “corruption” is a word that gets thrown around a lot. I think the reference to transparency and accountability is the key because with a transparent and accountable economic and regulatory system in a country, the United States can compete most favorably, but when it lacks that it benefits other countries who might want to come benefit from the resources in the country but not necessarily do it in a transparent or accountable way. And I think you are right on target. I will not mention who I am talking about on that, but I think it benefits the United States for that to exist.

Mr. Swan, I had the privilege of visiting Ambassador Symington in Djibouti earlier this year, and I appreciate in your remarks that you addressed Camp Lemonier and what the United States is doing in concert with other countries at that tremendous military facility, but acknowledge that it is—and you correct me if I am wrong, Mr. Symington, but when I was there, I was not only astounded, but I was pleased to see the tremendous role of helping people in Africa. Those personnel there are drilling wells and building bridges. They are ambassadors of the United States. Camp Lemonier is of tremendous value, I think, to our country and to the Horn of Africa as well, so I commend you on your mentioning of that and I hope you will be very committed, as Ambassador Symington has been, to coordinate and cooperate with the personnel there.

Ambassador SWAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Yes, indeed, sir. As I mentioned in my remarks, I think this is going to be a key priority to ensure that we have a very close relationship with the leadership and, indeed, the other personnel of CJTF-HOA. I think there has been an excellent base already established—a base of collaboration, I should clarify I suppose—already established in terms of our relationship not only with the leadership, but in terms of our embassy personnel working directly with a number of CJTF-HOA officials as well to coordinate activities.

I think it is important to remember, Senator, that although based in Djibouti, CJTF-HOA has an area of responsibility that currently extends to some 13 countries, including Yemen. So it is a matter of coordinating our activities with CJTF-HOA not only as it relates to Djibouti, but more broadly in terms of its activities elsewhere on the Horn of Africa and extending into Yemen. With the transition to AFRICOM on October 1, we expect CJTF-HOA’s assets will, in fact, be available for programming even outside its existing area of responsibility.

There is no doubt that its civil affairs activities have been very important in terms of helping people who desperately need help in the Horn of Africa and have also been very helpful in terms of putting a more positive light on the role of the United States military and what kinds of contributions it can make in contributing to improvements in those societies. I think we do see, however, that what CJTF-HOA has as a critical asset is its ability to engage on

security cooperation issues, as well as traditional military-to-military activities. So we see CJTF-HOA as a critical component, one of an array of instruments of U.S. security influence, including diplomatic elements, informational elements, economic elements, development elements, and also this military component. So coordination will be key.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, my time is up, but I do remember when I went to Camp Lemonier and walked in to meet with—was it Admiral Hart? Is that correct? Who was commanding officer, and he introduced me to the British general and the French general that were there with him, and I realized there is a very diplomatic role in that camp with other countries in Europe and around the world. You have a very important posting, and that is a very important facility for the people of the United States, as well as the people of Africa.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Senator LUGAR.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In 2006, our committee commissioned a report which was entitled Embassies as Command Posts in the Anti-Terror Campaign. But specifically a lot of the emphasis came to special challenges for our embassies in Africa. So I am going to ask you, Ambassador Swan, and you, Ambassador Symington in order, first of all, to describe from your experiences in that report what we have learned about coordination in our embassies of all the various facets of the United States Government—civilian, military, somewhere in between—in very challenging circumstances where special responsibilities come to the ambassador. And likewise, to what extent have we utilized the lessons learned, providing information for future ambassadors or, for that matter, to young Foreign Service officers who are coming into service posts in the way that you have over the last two decades in both of your careers? Can you, Ambassador Eastham, give us some outlook from the position you have had back in the State Department on this? And then I will ask Ambassador Symington for his views out in the field.

Ambassador SWAN. Certainly, Senator, there is no doubt that having a coordinated U.S. Government policy that includes, as I mentioned, all the instruments of power and all of the interagency elements is critical to achieving our objectives. In most posts, as you may know, Senator, we have what is effectively a country team, led by the ambassador and the deputy chief of mission, which brings together all of the agencies at post to ensure that there is a common message to ensure that there is a collective and collaborative and coherent effort aimed at achieving the objectives that are established, both through the interagency process in Washington and by the chief of mission on the ground. And that certainly, if confirmed, would be the approach that I would intend to take in Djibouti.

I think in Djibouti, there is, of course, also this special issue of the relationship with CJTF-HOA. This is also the case for other missions on the Horn of Africa in which CJTF-HOA has relations. But there is, in fact, quite an established framework already to ensure good coordination.

For example, within the country team at the embassy, there is a coordination element, a representative of CJTF-HOA who participates in those discussions to ensure that there is good coordination. There is also at CJTF-HOA a senior State Department political advisor, a POLAD, to ensure that messages are well transmitted. And recently there has been the addition of a development advisor from USAID to CJTF-HOA. So I think there is a serious effort to ensure close collaboration and coordination.

With respect to lessons learned on coordination, I think more and more we are seeing an emphasis on training at the State Department at all levels of leadership and management. Much of this is, in fact, due to Ambassador Davis' initiatives when she was the Director General of the Foreign Service. But we see in each of those elements an emphasis on the need for coordination in terms of maximizing the impact on the ground.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Symington.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Senator Lugar, thank you for that question.

I learned three lessons. The first is that you need to coordinate at the level of the sergeants and at the level of the admirals and at the level of Washington. The second is that you need to do that every day, and the third is that you need to do that in every country.

If you do those three things so that you are constantly syncing up your goals and your assets and working together, and if you do that in a spirit that ultimately says this is not about what the United States is doing alone, but what we can do with the partner nations and the people there, then you have a chance to succeed. If you drop any part of that, if you think it is about us and not about them, if you think it is about me and not about you, then it does not work.

But I would also add one other thing that you and the chairman have been working for for much of your public life, for which I am extraordinarily grateful. We cannot have effective interagency cooperation around the world if the civilian agencies are not funded sufficiently well to do their part of the job. And I know that in the current budget, with the prospects looking ahead, this is very difficult. But I applaud your efforts and those of your colleagues to bring us those resources. And I just hope that we will continue to do it.

One area, for example, is some of these young diplomats who are now, frankly, much better trained in working in sync with the military than I am—I got 90 days once working in an intensive operation with them, and I have worked with military personnel throughout my career on civil affairs work. Many of my young colleagues, whose files we are reading today to decide on promotions, have served one and two and sometimes three tours in places like Afghanistan and in Iraq and out in a PRT. They know more about it than I know. And I am looking forward to learning from them as they come back.

But in every case, it helps to have, for example, discretionary funding. That is as much true for your ambassadors as it is for your generals and admirals. And those commander's funds that

they have are wonderful, fast dispensing, get a target of opportunity chances to do some good.

So those are my lessons and those are a little of my thanks to you for your leadership over the years in getting us the resources.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I appreciate your comments, and in a diplomatic way, you have raised an important issue for this committee and for the Congress. We have had a lot of testimony about the disproportionate funds available to the military as opposed to our civilian or diplomatic components. And Secretary Gates, our Secretary of Defense, has recognized this publicly and indicated that we are going to have to have some leveling up. Or if we have urgent military needs, we will need to rebuild the funds that are available for American diplomacy if this type of coordination that we have been talking about is to be more satisfying.

But finally, I appreciate likewise your recognition that sometimes, in the course of fighting the war on terror, we have had military expeditions or even intelligence expeditions that were not altogether known by our ambassador or at least the briefings were incomplete.

Now, one of the reasons for this coordination in effect is to make certain we are all on the same page. Each of you as professionals recognize the importance of that. Likewise, as ambassadors, just the essential aspect of knowing what is going on in the country for which you have responsibility.

I think we are making headway, but I wanted to raise this question at this hearing just to have testimony from two veterans of the trail. And I appreciate that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Nelson.

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

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to come by since these professionals are going to a very important part of the world with regard to our relations and since our relations are really on the up-tick with each of these posts that you are going to, indeed, over most of Africa.

Mr. Chairman, for example, the Ambassador in Tanzania told me a couple of weeks ago that he thinks our favorable toward the United States is now at about 60. In Kenya, I was having dinner with a group of Kenyans, both in the government and in the business sector, and they said that the good will toward America was upwards about 85 percent. And of course, we were laughing, depending on the turnout in the election, that it might go to 99.9 percent.

But all over Africa, you give credit where credit is due to the President with his PEPFAR program, the fact that we have now tripled it in the Senate, for not only that, but malaria and AIDS. The fact that in Zanzibar this coming year they expect malaria to be zero. These are some incredible things, and since the United States is, in fact, initiating a lot of this, that good will is being extended there.

Of course, the very emotional experience that we have seen how President Kagame in Rwanda over the course of 14 years—14 years ago, April 6, 1994—when as general of the rebel army that he enters the capital city and sees the city strewn with corpses, with dogs eating their flesh, and how he held that army together with discipline so that they would not all go out, as some of them individually did, taking retribution into their own hands, but that he could work with reconciliation after that slaughter of a million within a 100-day period of the Tutsis. That right there is just a wonderful story of reconciliation and healing that the whole world would do well to understand.

So, Ambassador Symington, you, along with the others, are all professionals, career service. You go to a very important part of the world for them and for us.

Now, it is going to be interesting to see, as we take the first little, timid steps into this Africa Command, how that works, but it has a great deal of promise. We are already seeing it happening in South America in Southern Command because the commander, Admiral Stavridis, is not only a warrior, he is a diplomat. So too as we set up in Africa, the military can do a lot of things that other agencies cannot, but the military has got to be in the proper place reaching out with coequals, with State, with USAID, with Agriculture, with Health, and on down the line. And that is going to be a very important part.

I will just conclude by saying that I am seeing in just a few minutes General Zinni. He was the commanding general of Central Command some 10–12 years ago, but he was very visionary because he said in third world countries, the United States military has got to take exactly this kind of approach if we are going to be successful.

So you all are on the front lines. Thank you for your public service, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Nelson. I can confirm, having served on this subcommittee for 16 years, this is the highest level overall of senatorial interest in Africa that I have witnessed. The subcommittee is used to being a little lonelier. And it is a very good sign, and it is bipartisan. So this is a good sign. I appreciate Senator Nelson's very strong interest in Africa and his demonstrated willingness to make the trips there and make the contacts. It is very helpful.

Let me return to Mr. Eastham on the oil issue. Earlier this year, the Republic of Congo was accepted as a candidate country for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. What does EITI implementation consist of, and how can the United States best contribute to that process?

Ambassador EASTHAM. It is important to note, Senator, that EITI is a voluntary scheme of transparency and accountability. The Republic of Congo has just begun its implementation of the scheme. They have set up the committee that is going to implement the requirements for joining. They are at present a candidate country for EITI.

I do not think that very much progress has been made in actually producing the documentation and the procedures that will have to be followed.

I think that, in the first instance, their voluntary submission to the process, which has been going on for a couple of years now, is an important indication of their willingness to be more transparent in the publication of the actual revenue side.

It is also important to note that it does not address the budget side. What happens to those revenues, once they come into the government treasury or the government coffers, is not addressed by EITI.

I have met with the folks in the State Department who are charged with monitoring EITI, and they have noted to me that as a candidate country, Congo has nearly 2 years to complete the process. So there is a deadline out in early 2010 by which this must be completed or they will no longer be a candidate.

I am hopeful that when I get there, if confirmed, that I will be able to push this along. I noted earlier that I think that this issue of accountability is going to cut across everything I do in Congo, accountability on the oil revenue side in the first place, but also accountability on the expenditure side, as well.

I would note that at my present post, the Malawians were fortunate enough to be able to qualify for Millennium Challenge threshold funding, and one of my major jobs in Malawi has been overseeing a program that did a great deal to improve their ability to monitor their revenues and expenditures within the government side in the interest of transparency and in the interest of accountability on the government side. We do not have that kind of resources available for Congo, but I hope to use our diplomatic tools to be able to push that forward.

It seems to me that accountability is an issue that gets in the way of just about everything that you want to do that is right in Congo and the EITI is one part of the piece.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Eastham.

Mr. Swan, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, Djibouti is a small country in a rough neighborhood. If confirmed, how do you envision your role in the wider region? How do you intend to coordinate with other ambassadors and actors in the region to work toward peace and stability?

Mr. SWAN. Thank you, Senator.

Yes, indeed, Djibouti's role historically on the Horn of Africa has been as this small place of stability in what you aptly term a rough neighborhood, to the north, Eritrea; to the west, Ethiopia; to the south, Somalia and Somaliland. And just 18 miles across the Gulf of Aden is Yemen. So it has in many ways defined its national mission as being that pocket of stability in the turbulent neighborhood.

And Djibouti has played a helpful role in terms of seeking to promote stability in the region in the past. It is the headquarters of the international organization for drought and development in the Horn of Africa. It is a member country of the League of Arab States. It recently played host to an important piece, negotiation, between the transitional federal government in Somalia and the opposition alliance for the reliberation of Somalia, and while not directly involved in the talks, which were led by the U.N., the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, nonetheless, Djibouti played an important role as a neutral venue for these discussions to take place.

In terms of coordination with other missions in the region, if confirmed, Senator, I would obviously maintain regular contact, frequent contact with the other chiefs of mission on the Horn of Africa and in Yemen through sort of day-to-day e-mails, telephone calls, and other efforts to stay in constant contact.

Second, there are some institutional means already in place in terms of ensuring regular contact. Under the rubric of our counterterrorism efforts, there are twice yearly meetings of the East Africa Regional Security Initiative, with a particular focus on counterterrorism. At the annual chiefs of mission conference, there is typically a session devoted explicitly to Horn of Africa issues as a means of institutionalizing this coordination. And then clearly, sir, I would, of course, have to take reference regularly from the State Department in Washington and the interagency here in Washington in terms of the overall direction of our policy with respect to the Horn of Africa.

Senator FEINGOLD. As you mentioned in your testimony, Djibouti and Eritrea have been engaged in border skirmishes over recent months at the mouth of the Red Sea. What progress has been made to mitigate these tensions, and what role could the United States play in resolving this kind of border dispute?

Mr. SWAN. Certainly, sir. The dispute really arose as a consequence of an Eritrean incursion across the border into Djibouti. It is a remote area in the north of Djibouti, the south of Eritrea with no physical demarcation of the boundary, but with an agreement that the ridge line between the two countries constituted the border. And Eritrean forces moved across that ridge line in April and took up positions. There was, indeed, exchange of fire between the two sides, most recently in June, but there has not been further exchange of fire between the two sides since June.

In response to this situation, the United States played really a leading role in terms of bringing this matter to the attention of the U.N. Security Council, which issued a very strong presidential statement, and then followed up with a determination to send an official of the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping—I am sorry—of Political Affairs to meet with the two sides and seek a way forward in terms of resolving this peacefully.

I think the challenge, sir, is going to be, once again, obtaining Eritrean support for a solution. The Eritreans rejected earlier initiatives by the League of Arab States, by the African Union, and by some bilateral partners to try to achieve a negotiated settlement. I think, unfortunately, this is an example once again of Eritrea playing an unhelpful role as a spoiler in the region. If confirmed, however, I would obviously continue to support international efforts to resolve this peacefully and return to the status quo ante on the border.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Swan.

Senator ISAKSON.

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

One, as a hometown boy, I have to say this to all of you. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta, GA and they have a significant number of people on the ground in Africa and have had, even before PEPFAR, working on the African AIDS problem. I know you will be in Addis Ababa, Mr. Simon. They have a significant group there,

as well as probably in each of the other countries, or near them. So any support you can give Dr. Gerberding and always look out for the CDC people, I would appreciate.

My one question remaining. It really is for Mr. Simon. I appreciated the fact that you remarked on the progress of the African Union, but also the significant challenges, particularly Zimbabwe, Somalia, and the Sudan.

And in particular, I have grave concerns over the Darfur issue. I know the African Union is managing or has been selected to be the group to try and go in there and end the killing, but I also know there has been a short supply of things like helicopters and other equipment that are absolutely necessary. I know some of our other world powers are not as interested in Darfur becoming a safe, civilized place again, but I am and I think every Member of this United States Senate is.

As the representative to the African Union, it would seem to me that Darfur would have to be mission one or certainly on the priority list, so I would appreciate your discussing what you know about the situation as far as the African Union and Darfur and what progress they are making, and also if you will be a source for us to know what we need to do as a country to help facilitate that becoming a reality rather than just a hope.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Senator.

Darfur is clearly going to be a priority not only of this mission, the United States mission to the African Union, but is a priority obviously of Congress and of the President.

The African Union has had troops on the ground in Darfur since 2004. They went in early. They are the core of the 11,000 U.N. personnel there under UNAMID, and 10,000 of those personnel come from the African Union. And they are in harm's way and recently they have been taking casualties. So the African Union has played a very important and very constructive role in Darfur in terms of trying to create an environment for peace and security.

The African Union has said—and we believe as well—that there needs to be a strong U.N. presence to supplement what they are doing, and that is why we argued strongly for a dual-hatting of the mission in Darfur with U.N. support, as well as AU support.

Also, the size of the force needs to be more than the 11,000 that exist today, as high as 26,000. And critical to getting the forces up to that level is both increasing the number of troop-contributing countries and the Government in Khartoum allowing countries that are non-Africans to provide troops to the forces that exist there on the ground. There has been some progress on that latter point recently. Khartoum has allowed Nepalese and Thai troops to join the UNAMID forces in Darfur.

And then the other major challenge that the African Union faces is having its troops, as you mentioned, Senator, brought up to the standards of the U.N. and of the U.N. peacekeeping mission. In that regard, the United States has spent \$450 million, increasing the capacity and the equipment of the African Union forces in Darfur that are part of UNAMID.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will continue to work to ensure that the African Union forces get the resources they need to meet the standards of the United Nations and of UNAMID and work to

increase pressure within the African Union for the Government in Khartoum to allow more troop-contributing countries that are non-African to add the necessary forces to reach the 26,000 number that was approved by the United Nations.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I think that is important. I cannot remember his name. I think it was the White House liaison to Darfur. He testified before our Foreign Relations Committee and talked about—Williamson, yes—they still have problems with security for the convoys of humanitarian aid going into Darfur. If they cannot even protect those convoys going in, then it seems to me that any hope of that bringing us some resolution is unlikely. Anything we can do to help be a constructive player in supporting getting to the 26,000 and encouraging anybody in the U.N. that is maybe reluctant to do so, I would appreciate your information on what we can do as the United States Senate to raise the visibility of that issue here.

Mr. SIMON. As you asked, Senator, if confirmed, I will be conveying information to you on where the challenges stand in reaching that 26,000 number.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Simon, in addition to Darfur, you mentioned in your testimony, or we did, problems with Zimbabwe and President Mugabe. Now, at least the press accounts following the African Union meeting were that President Mugabe got a free ride out of the situation. In other words, he defied the other people sitting around the table of the African Union on the basis perhaps that some of you gentlemen got to where you are likewise through either strengthened methods that were not necessarily democratic and who are you to be criticizing me on that basis—and sort of stood them down.

Not only that, but there are inferences in the press that the United Nations, in terms of its activity, was somewhat stymied by the fact that some leaders in Russia and China also were reticent to get involved in discussions of democracy and the purity of the election methods in Zimbabwe and did not necessarily give a free pass, providing some criticism perhaps, but nothing stronger than that.

I raise that because that was then. This is now. On the front pages of national papers today, you see four people seated, including the two major candidates for the presidency, and apparently they are visiting about life and the times and the future.

Can you give us some idea of what progress the African Union may have brought about in this, or is this entirely an internal negotiation within Zimbabwe without reference to the neighbors?

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Senator.

The situation in Zimbabwe, obviously, is very dynamic and changing very quickly.

Where we stand today is there has been an MOU signed between the ZANU-PF and the Movement for Democratic Change, the opposition, although by rights perhaps it should not be the opposition. That MOU is basically a process for starting negotiations. It is

really not much more than that. It does include an expanded role for the African Union as part of an expanded mediation group, and from our perspective, that is a positive development. However, there are a lot of open questions about how this MOU and this process will go forward.

From our perspective, our focus is on the outcome, and the outcome must be a Zimbabwe Government that is representative of the will of the people of Zimbabwe that will stop the intimidation and the killing and the long suffering of the people of Zimbabwe and lay the foundation for the prosperity that that country so rich in human and natural resources should be able to enjoy. That is the outcome that we as a government are focused on. And if confirmed as an ambassador, that is the outcome that I will try and focus the African Union on.

The African Union has within its charter embedded the principles of democratic governance and, like I said, the principle of nonindifference, and it is by stressing those principles that we need to focus the African Union on achieving an outcome that truly represents the will of the Zimbabwean people.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I appreciate that last comment that there is some progress—the African Union is there and there is this pledge to work toward democratic solutions—to recognize that is important. I suppose some could say in the past, prior to the African Union's intervention in all these affairs, that this was the way the world works. The Zimbabwe election and various others might have gone without further ado.

But the promise of the African Union is I think what you have stated. There is at least a principle there that hopefully nations are struggling to fulfill, and our role in that and your role as ambassador from the United States can be a very important one in trying to refine this, give support to it. So we wish you well on that mission because your work is cut out for you there.

Mr. SIMON. Senator, I would note that there are many voices within the African Union that have been very public about their condemnation of the current situation in Zimbabwe, including the Pan-African Parliament, which is an organ of the African Union, including the observer mission that the African Union went to observe the runoff which commented that the standards of the runoff did not meet the standards of the African Union, and including, of course, several African leaders who have been very vocal about their concern about the situation in Zimbabwe. I think, if confirmed as ambassador, my role will be to try and encourage those voices to be the voices that are heard and to ultimately be the voices upon which action is taken.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you for recognizing those voices, and really credit should be paid to those persons who were with the observers and others who assisted them. Thank you.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

We will begin a third round.

This is for Mr. Swan again. According to the State Department's country reports on human rights practices for 2007, women in Djibouti face specific challenges, including domestic violence, prostitution, and female genital mutilation. What measures, if any, have been taken by the Djiboutian Government to combat these

problems and protect women's rights? If you are confirmed, how will you draw attention and U.S. resources to this area?

Mr. SWAN. Senator, for a variety of cultural and historical reasons, the status of women has been low in Djibouti, historically. I think we have seen some movement on this front in recent years, however, including in terms of their political participation. There are seven women in the 65-seat parliament, for example. There are two women in the cabinet. The President of the Supreme Court is a woman. So I think we are beginning to see more positive movement at this point in terms of the role of women.

You drew attention to a very important continued challenge, Senator, and that is female genital mutilation, which regrettably is practiced on an estimated 98 percent of the female population, including frequently some of the most severe forms, the so-called infibulation.

The Djiboutian Government has adopted legislation that, indeed, outlaws that practice. That legislation is on the books, although my understanding is that, as yet, there have not been any convictions in regard to that. But I think it is testimony to the increased awareness on the part of Djiboutian authorities of these challenges and of the need to respond.

If confirmed, Senator, this would certainly be an important priority as well for me and for the team at the embassy in terms of continuing efforts to raise awareness of these issues and to seek change and government follow-up in terms of taking action.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you for that answer, Mr. Swan.

Mr. Simon, if you are confirmed, this would be your first diplomatic post in Africa as well as at a multilateral institution. What do you think qualifies you for this posting, and how will you apply your previous experiences to the challenges of the African Union?

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Senator.

It is a question that I have asked myself many times when the suggestion first arose that I be nominated to this position.

For the last 6 years, I have worked on development and international issues and have worked in multilateral fora, whether that is involvement in the G-8 conferences, the G-8 summits, both Gleneagles and the Sea Island Summit that we had here in the great State of Georgia, whether it was working with the U.N. finance for development process, or whether it has been working with the international financial institutions here in Washington.

As part of those efforts, I have been heavily focused on development in Africa. That was the focus of our work in Scotland for the Gleneagles Summit. That has been the focus of much of the President's development agenda over the past 6 years. And as part of that work, I have worked closely, whether it was at the United States Agency for International Development, whether it was at the National Security Council, or whether it was in my current position at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation with the other agencies involved in development in the United States Government.

Almost all of the initiatives that I referenced in my testimony are multiagency initiatives that involved several different parts of the U.S. Government working together to accomplish a positive result. And I think the result that we have achieved on the African con-

continent, through things like the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief or the President's Malaria Initiative or the Millennium Challenge Account, really indicates how that type of work can credit both the United States and the Americans who are helping to fund it and help the Africans themselves and help the Africans realize the opportunity that the current era presents for them.

If confirmed at the African Union, I would see a major focus of my efforts being to marshal all of the resources that the United States Government has and has committed to the continent together to help build the capacity of the African Union and help it truly achieve its goals which are very closely aligned to our goals for the continent of Africa.

Senator FEINGOLD. I am pleased to hear about the range of Africa issues you have worked on over the last 6 years, but I do have to note a lack of specific peacekeeping or security-related experience, both of which are a priority for the African Union right now. Please describe the tools and the expertise you would bring to the table when you are working on these kinds of issues.

Mr. SIMON. As Senior Director for Relief Stabilization and Development, the Director for Stabilization reported to me. So the Director for Stabilization on the National Security Council was the official of the National Security Council in charge of peacekeeping issues and basically everything that he did was something that I was apprised of and kept in the loop.

Now, I happen to have an excellent Director for Stabilization, Clint Williamson, who is now the U.S. Ambassador for War Crimes. And so I can honestly say that my involvement in that was less than maybe some of these other issues because he was so good. But I was involved in all of the initiatives in that area that we engaged in, including the Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative, including the SCRS, the conflict and reconstruction coordinator's position that was created at the State Department, and including the creation of a civilian reserve.

Part of what we recognized in putting the Director for Stabilization or part of what Steve Hadley, the National Security Adviser, recognized in putting the Director for Stabilization in the Relief Stabilization and Development Directorate instead of in the Defense Directorate was that ultimately stabilization is not purely a military matter. Ultimately it is a matter that must involve the military working together with the civilian agencies to create an environment for economic growth and prosperity to basically win the confidence of the people that putting down their weapons and picking up their plowshares and picking up their computers and picking up the other elements of economic growth can ultimately lead to a better result for them and their families than continued conflict and continued trying to play the zero sum game of getting more of what other people have.

So like I say, peacekeeping was always something that was part of what I did at the National Security Council even though my personal focus was largely on many of the economic issues.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

And finally, Mr. Simon, in the realm of counterterrorism, what are the African Union's chief concerns, and to what extent do the United States and the AU engage in counterterrorism cooperation?

Mr. SIMON. The AU has a small counterterrorism cell in Algiers and it is only now being built up. The capacity there clearly could be enhanced, and if confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to the African Union, that is certainly an issue that I would take on.

However, the United States itself has several counterterrorism initiatives throughout the continent, including the counterterrorism program, including the East African security program that Mr. Swan mentioned. And part of the role that the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union should play, and if confirmed, part of the role that I would play, would be to connect the AU to these other initiatives so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. And that would be a major role that I would look to play, and frankly, I would hope that the AU itself would look to find ways that it could increase its capacity by working with the other initiatives that exist on the continent.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, sir.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman, I do not have any more questions. I just want to end by thanking the families of these four gentlemen for all the support they give to them to allow them to do a very important job for a great country. Thank you for what you do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join my colleague, Senator Isakson, in thanking not only the nominees for your service but the families, and their presence today is very meaningful I think to all of us. But I appreciate your responses and we look forward to supporting each one of you.

Senator FEINGOLD. I thank my colleagues especially, but I thank all the nominees for your patience. It was a longer hearing, but I think it is a good sign. It is a sign of great interest in these matters and great hope that, should you be confirmed, things go well for you and for our country as you represent us. Thank you very much. And we will do what we can, as we are doing today, to try to expedite these nominations.

That concludes the hearing.

[Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF JOHN SIMON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What, in your view, are the most pressing human rights issues in facing the African Union (AU)? What are the steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy among members of the AU and within the body as an institution? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The African Union faces a wide array of human rights challenges, including advancing peace and security and protecting basic human rights in Darfur, Somalia, Eastern Congo, and other parts of Africa where there is insecurity and instability. The AU also faces the daunting challenge of fighting poverty and disease while creating economic opportunities, which will help Africa's poorest develop the educated and middle class constituencies that are the strongest local advocates of human rights.

These challenges require institution and capacity building at the AU and education and support for dialog between government and opposition as well as greater participation by civil society groups.

If confirmed, I will devote my energy and focus to work with the commissioners of the African Union and the member states to better understand their needs and how the United States, in partnership with international institutions and other interested parties, can mobilize the resources and expertise necessary to help the AU take a leadership role on the continent in addressing these issues.

In this context, it is clear that as a strong partner of the African Union, we can and must work together to promote peace and security, a fundamental priority if we are to advance human rights and democracy on the continent. The AU and the United States stand together in support of the AMISOM troops in Somalia and the need for a greater international response to stabilize the conflict there and advance reconciliation. We are in strong partnership in support of forces in Darfur. Further, we are working together to promote political reconciliation and respect for human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe. If confirmed, I will work to maintain and strengthen cooperation with the AU in these critical areas.

To further promote human rights and democracy within the AU, the USAU must also expand its engagement with the Commission for Political Affairs, the Commission for Social Affairs, and the Division for Women and Gender, among others. If confirmed, I will work through the AU permanent representatives to express the United States interest in the signature and ratification of the Charter on Democracy, Governance, and Elections and support United States Government efforts to request observer status to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). As an observer, the United States will be able to both highlight issues of concern with and express support for the ACHPR in the African Union's plenary sessions.

Through a very coordinated and cooperative relationship with the AU, member states, and donors, I believe we can accomplish greater dialog among diverse groups, between government and opposition, civil society and bureaucrats, and transparency, which will allow all people to be a part of process that creates more open, free, and democratic states. We must work with the AU to ensure the continent's people have the opportunities for democracy and human rights promised in the AU charter. If confirmed, I will work to see that opportunities are created, but more importantly, support the ability of African States to advance human rights and democracy.

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

Answer. The obstacles include the persistence of conflicts that plague parts of Africa from Somalia to Sudan to Cote d'Ivoire, the resistance of a minority of leaders in Africa, like Mugabe in Zimbabwe and Bashir in Sudan, and inaction of the international community to some of the pressing stabilization needs on the continent. Some leaders have argued, as President Isaias in Eritrea, that you cannot have democracy without economic advancement. I submit that we can have both and must do both. Democracy feeds the soul while economic advancement meets the needs of the people. The success of Liberia, Burundi, and other countries underscore that we can resolve conflict in the current environment in Africa. Mauritius' political maturity underscores that people can have a voice in the affairs of their government.

Our challenge is to build on these successes. This requires building political will within the AU for just and sustainable settlements of current conflicts, capacity within the AU to implement such settlements, and international support to provide the necessary assistance to the AU. It will not be easy, but if confirmed, I will work with our partners in Africa, and those interested in Africa, to forge the commitment required to make a difference.

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

Answer. As an official at the United States Agency for International Development and the National Security Council, I helped design the selection criteria for the Millennium Challenge Account, which emphasized the importance of democracy and political and human rights in its "ruling justly" category. These criteria have proven a powerful incentive for democracy and good governance in Africa, as documented in academic statistical studies and by particular cases. For instance, in 2006, the prospect of an MCC Compact helped ensure free and fair election in the Republic of Benin.

As Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization, and Development at the National Security Council in 2005, I helped secure funding and support for the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, a Presidential initiative launched prior to the G-8 Summit at Gleneagles that works with African partners to strengthen the capacity of local justice systems to protect women from sexual violence and abuse and punish perpetrators, as well as provide victims access to shelter, counseling, and healthcare. The initiative is now active in four countries—Benin, Kenya, South Africa, and Zambia.

More generally, over the past 6 years, I have been integral to a series of development initiatives, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the African Financial Sector Initiative, and post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia. By increasing the health and welfare of Africa's people and the opportunities for employment and economic growth, these efforts reinforce the positive trends occurring on the continent in the realm of democracy and human rights.

If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize democracy and human rights as a fundamental pillar of United States engagement with African Governments, leaders, and people. I will also encourage investment to create economic opportunity to provide jobs that are sustainable and enable people to invest in their own futures. Addressing economic development is a critical component in promoting human rights and democracy.

Question. Peacekeeping is one of the foremost functions of the AU at this time. What are the key limiting factors on the effectiveness of AU peacekeeping operations? What are the strengths of previous or ongoing operations? If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to enhance these capabilities?

Answer. The African Union has taken the lead role in several critical peacekeeping missions across the continent despite suffering from a number of deficiencies in this area. The United States, through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, has helped equip and train AU peacekeeping troops with great effectiveness in places like Burundi and Congo.

Yet challenges remain on sustainability, including paying and supporting troops in the field, mission planning and financial management, and attracting additional troop contributing countries to the current AU missions on the continent. More importantly, the AU needs to secure international financial and political support for the missions it currently has in the field, including the AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the AU contribution to the UN-AU mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

The AU has proven that, with sufficient donor assistance, it can respond to conflicts on the continent when the U.N. is either unwilling or unable to act. In several instances, including Burundi, Comoros, Darfur, and Somalia, the AU has led the way when the U.N. was unable to react to a crisis, whether because of its own deliberative process or because of restrictions levied by host governments. Yet the AU cannot and should not bear the full burden of long-term, complex missions on its own.

As ambassador, I will, if confirmed, build on our engagement with the AU through ACOTA to encourage the AU to work with the United States, U.N. and other key donors to enhance its capacities at the headquarters level, particularly in the areas of financial management, human resources and mission planning. I will also seek to ensure that our ongoing capacity-building efforts continue, and that we pursue new opportunities for collaboration with the AU. In particular, I will, if confirmed, work with the U.S. mission at the U.N. and U.S. ambassadors to our allies to get the AMISOM and UNAMID the international assistance they need.

Currently, the United States is supporting the Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMU) of the AU by providing funding for equipment and a logistics advisor through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). The United States is also providing peacekeeping equipment, training, and logistics support to the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The United States is supporting long term efforts to build the capacity of the African Standby Force (ASF) through the bilateral and multilateral peacekeeping training activities of ACOTA program, as well as support for subregional components of the ASF like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Standby Force (ESF).

RESPONSES OF W. STUART SYMINGTON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. While making admirable advances over the last decade in economic development and making significant progress in the adjudication of an enormous backlog of genocide cases, Rwanda continues to face challenges regarding reconciliation, human rights, and democratization as it continues its efforts to rebuild a society torn asunder by ethnic hatred, war, and genocide. The 2007 Human Rights Report cites the Government of Rwanda's demonstrable efforts to address human rights, however significant human rights abuses occurred. Principal human rights problems include restrictions on citizens' right to change their government peacefully and freely; the security forces' use of extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary arrest and detention; lack of judicial independence; harsh prison and detention center conditions; prolonged pretrial detention; limits on freedom of expression and association; limits on freedom of press; and limits on civil society.

If confirmed, I will engage at every level in Rwanda to help them strengthen democratic institutions and to advance transparency and respect for human rights. Leading up to the September Parliamentary elections and 2011 Presidential elections, I will support efforts by Rwandans to improve platform development and increase the channels of communication open to all parties. Our key goals are to work together to open political space, increase civil liberties, and to strengthen the judiciary. The newly approved \$24.73 MCC Threshold Country Plan will also be a key area for engagement. It will supplement other United States Government programs to address problems in the justice sector by seeking to strengthen democratic governance, build the capacity of civil society organizations, and advancing press freedom.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues that you have identified as most pressing?

Answer. Improving respect for human rights in Rwanda is an essential part of reconciliation and a key element needed for Rwandans to succeed in efforts to unite as a people and make progress for the future. Passions generated by the decades of misrule by previous governments have not disappeared; overcoming this difficult legacy of mistrust and violence is the work of generations. Rwanda's main obstacle in this period of reconciliation is to address the issues of governance and ensure that justice is not perceived as one-sided. Dealing with the sheer magnitude of the issues the country faces causes people to look at human rights through the prism of recent and awful ethnic division. It is essential in the pursuit of human rights in Rwanda, and in its pursuit for unity and prosperity, that the country be seen by its own people to provide equal justice under law applicable to all.

Question. In response to a question before your confirmation as Ambassador to Djibouti, you described how you have worked to advance human rights in the Sahel and Latin America. How has your experience as chief of mission further shaped your perspective on this issue? Specifically, how were you able to elevate the importance of human rights issues in the United States relationship with the Djiboutian Government and to engage with civil society and other groups to promote increased respect for human rights?

Answer. While I was Ambassador to Djibouti, embassy staff and I regularly engaged the Government of Djibouti, NGOs, and the private sector on human rights issues—through both public and private efforts. The embassy organized and hosted events to improve women's participation in and understanding of the political process. We brought members of the opposition party together with members of the ruling coalition party to address improvements in the electoral process. We engaged with police prosecutors and others on trafficking in persons, supporting Djibouti's successful efforts to draft and enact new antitrafficking laws.

As chief of mission in Djibouti, I have seen that significant and lasting improvement in human rights is tied to working in partnership at all levels with host government officials, private sector leaders, and civil society. This is needed to ensure that all progress in the promotion of human rights is effective and sustainable.

Question. Rwanda held its first local elections in over 30 years in March 2001 and Presidential and Parliamentary elections in 2003. What is your assessment of the state of democracy in Rwanda? Do you consider Rwanda to be tolerant of dissent

and democratic? Please describe the state of freedom of the press in Rwanda. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you see your role to help foster such freedoms?

Answer. The people and the Government of Rwanda have made democratic advances since the 1994 genocide, though Rwanda has much work to do before it can achieve democracy. Over the last decade, they have made notable progress, including a constitution which prohibits discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or creed; laws in place which prohibit torture; a decrease in the prison population; and the application of criminal penalties for corruption. Rwanda has advanced reconciliation and made progress meting out justice. While it has accomplished much, it continues to face enormous challenges. It continues to encounter obstacles in finding the right balance between the need to maintain internal stability and the requirement to instill fundamental democratic values including respect for a free and independent press. While the constitution provides for freedom of the press, press freedom in Rwanda remains limited, due in part to the active role of domestic media organs in the genocide and the resulting mistrust of the media by the government.

If confirmed, I hope to help the Rwandan's achieve progress toward a democratic system that they see as representative of and responsive to the wishes and hopes of all Rwandans. I think that continued progress toward this goal is both right and essential to underpin progress on the economic front. It will permit Rwandans to unite to achieve a shared vision for a more stable and prosperous future.

Question. The United States has played an important role in helping to create the possibility of greater peace and stability in the region through the Tripartite Plus process. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to build on this progress?

Answer. Significant progress has been made since the Tripartite Plus' inception. To highlight the priority for peace in the Great Lakes, Secretary Rice chaired the Tripartite Plus Heads of State meeting in Addis in 2007. Inside of this mechanism, member countries agreed to continue military and political pressure on the FDLR, the former Rwandan genocidaire rebel group now based in DRC, and to ensure that the FDLR fulfills its commitment to disarm and repatriate to Rwanda. Tripartite members also agreed to advance diplomatic relations and establish mechanisms for safe and voluntary refugee return. In concert with the international community and UNHCR, these initiatives are taking shape.

If confirmed as ambassador to Rwanda, I will encourage and facilitate Rwanda's full participation in the Tripartite. This facilitation will include diplomacy in Kigali with European Union, United Kingdom, French, Belgian, and MONUC representatives for implementation of international sanctions imposed on the FDLR and participation in the Joint Monitoring Group, established as the monitoring mechanism for the Nairobi Communique between the Government of Rwanda and the Government of the DRC. Such tangible acts and confidence-building mechanisms will keep Tripartite members, especially Rwanda, engaged in building peace through their own initiatives with the support of the international community.

RESPONSES OF JOHN SIMON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. What is your assessment of the performance of African Union peace-keeping missions including in Sudan and Somalia? What are the principal challenges the African Union faces in this regard?

Answer. African Union troops are performing with commitment to duty and dedicated service, particularly in Sudan and Somalia. There, troops are facing extraordinary challenges. In Somalia, over 2,500 troops from Uganda and Burundi serve under harsh conditions. Troop levels remain far below what is necessary to maintain peace in this volatile region. Financing, logistical support for supplies and equipment, and force protection issues pose the greatest challenges to AMISOM's objectives. The lack of troops, armored vehicles, and air assets makes it impossible for the AMISOM force to patrol and secure Mogadishu as well as monitor and secure areas outside Mogadishu, particularly in the highly dangerous lower Juba region where extremists, such as al-Shabaab operate. A political solution is key to enhancing stability. The recent Djibouti peace accord offers renewed hope for a framework to promote peace. The negative influence of Eritrea as well as threat from extremism from outside Somalia complicate the challenges facing the African Union in stabilizing Somalia.

In Sudan, the killing of seven UNAMID peacekeepers, including five from Rwanda, underscores the deadly situation the troops operate under. Challenges include the need for a political solution to resolve the instability, including the Sudanese Government engagement of the south in implementing the Comprehensive Peace

Agreement. The slow rate of deployment of additional forces and the lack of air and heavy transport assets makes it difficult to monitor the region and support UNAMID operations.

Question. What steps should the United States take to help the African Union build its capacity and resource base to carry out PKO missions?

Answer. The United States, as an observer mission, can play a crucial role mediating and facilitating coordination and cooperation among the donor community in providing resources to help the African Union build capacity and secure resources for its operations. The United States provides limited funding to the African Union, but this can be targeted at critical gaps and supplemented through the help of other donors for projects and programs of importance to the African Union. This includes enhancing its capacities at the headquarters level, particularly in the areas of financial management, human resources, and mission planning.

Currently, the United States is supporting the Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMIU) of the African Union with funding for equipment and an "in-kind" logistics advisor through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). The United States also is providing peacekeeping equipment, training, and logistics support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In addition, we are helping long-term efforts to build the capacity of the African Standby Force (ASF) through the bilateral and multilateral peacekeeping training activities of ACOTA program. We also support subregional components of the ASF like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Standby Force (ESF).

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that our ongoing capacity-building efforts continue, and that we pursue new opportunities for collaboration with the African Union. In particular, I will, if confirmed, work with the United States mission at the U.N. and United States ambassadors to our allies to get the AMISOM and UNAMID missions the international assistance they need.

Question. What role should other donors play to help the African Union build its capacity and resources base to carry out PKO missions?

Answer. The needs of the African Union in the peacekeeping arena cannot be met by one donor alone. The international community must work together to increase the planning, logistics, financial management, and training capabilities of the African Union. In addition, the African Union peacekeeping troops in the field need equipment, supplies, financial support for troop payments, and additional forces. In the case of the two African Union missions currently in the field, AMISOM and UNAMID, a more robust international response is necessary to reach the troop levels and capability required to stabilize those conflicts and promote reconciliation.

If confirmed, I will endeavor to create closer coordination among the donor community and work with the African Union to focus limited funding on key issues that will help advance cooperation as well as streamline operations.

Question. What is your assessment of the African Union's capacity to use effectively and account for donor funds provided to assist it in building its capacity and resource base to carry out PKO missions?

Answer. The African Union has limited financial management capacity, in general, and this applies to its peacekeeping operations as well. In addition, the African Union is still developing capabilities to coordinate among member states on equipment, resources, and information. It requires further expertise to establish competent fusion cells and centers to handle peacekeeping missions. These shortcomings explain deficiencies in recruiting, training, equipping, paying, and dispatching troops.

The new African Union chairman, Jean Ping, was elected on a platform of management reform and is working to strengthen these systems. If confirmed, I will work with the chairman and commission to assist them in making as much progress in the area of financial management and accountability as possible.

Question. What is the cost of moving the nominee to Djibouti? Will he be accompanied or unaccompanied?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be residing and working in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the seat of the African Union and the United States mission to the African Union. To date, no decision has been made as to whether my family will accompany me, if confirmed. If I travel to Addis alone, the Department estimates the total cost will be approximately \$241,000. If I am accompanied by my wife and four children, the Department estimates the total cost will be approximately \$321,000. These cost estimates include round-trip airfare costs, round-trip transportation costs for household effects, unaccompanied air freight, a personally-owned vehicle, and operating expenses in Addis.

Question. Please describe the circumstances of the outgoing Ambassador Cindy Courville's departure from the post?

Answer. It is my understanding that Ms. Courville resigned her appointment as the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union.

Question. Why was our ambassador to Ethiopia not selected to maintain U.S. representation at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa for the short term instead of selecting a new ambassador for the vacant post?

Answer. The establishment of the United States mission to the African Union was an important step in furthering our engagement in Africa. Its opening was received warmly across the continent and the European Union has followed our example and established a mission to the African Union. Reverting to covering the post part-time during this period of significant activity at the African Union on a number of fronts—peacekeeping in Sudan and Somalia, political crisis in Zimbabwe, greater vitality in health and development issues, initiation of management reforms—would undermine our success and decrease our opportunity to influence and assist the African Union just when it is looking to the United States for leadership and support.

Moreover, while Ambassador Yamamoto is currently maintaining diplomatic relations with the African Union, the significant workload of handling United States affairs with Ethiopia, including a large assistance program and meeting the difficult drought problems plaguing Ethiopia, limit the time he can spend on African Union issues. Therefore, the administration believes selecting a full-time ambassador to the African Union is necessary to reinforce our commitment to support the African Union and the region as a whole.

RESPONSES OF JAMES SWAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. As we have catalogued in our annual Human Rights Report, despite recent improvements, Djibouti's human rights record remains poor. Problems include arbitrary arrest and detention, harsh prison conditions, executive branch influence on the judiciary, corruption, interference with privacy rights, and restrictions on freedom of the press, assembly, and association. Accordingly, human rights are part of our regular diplomatic dialog with the Djiboutian Government, including the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labor, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Embassy staff also meets regularly with individuals and groups affected by these problems, as well as minority political parties to gain a better understanding of obstacles they are facing as the decentralization process moves forward.

If confirmed, I will ensure that human rights and democracy remain a fundamental focus of all embassy activities. I will work closely with the Government of Djibouti at every level to ensure that government officials understand the importance of the promotion of human rights and democratization, and that they remain committed to improving the country's human rights record. I will encourage an acceleration of progress on these issues, and in addition to working with government officials, will make engagement with civil society, media, and other advocacy groups a priority.

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

Answer. The challenges and obstacles in advancing human rights and democracy in Djibouti are significant. Djibouti faces high unemployment, has a high degree of illiteracy, and is located in an unstable region. Opposition parties are still in the development stages, and still trying to find their voice in Djibouti. They face financial and organizational obstacles, and often get caught up in internal disputes. Few nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are present in Djibouti working on democratization and human rights issues.

Although President Guelleh ran unopposed amid an opposition boycott in Presidential elections in April 2005, international observers considered the election generally free and fair. In March 2006, Djibouti held its first-ever municipal elections, in which several new independent opposition parties successfully participated. Although the President's party won an overwhelming majority of seats, these opposi-

tion parties won several seats, including 12 in the capital. Legislative elections in February 2008 returned the ruling coalition, Union for a Presidential Majority (UMP), to all 65 seats in Djibouti's unicameral legislature. However, despite a boycott call from a rival coalition, voter turnout was over 72 percent, and international election observers did not report any irregularities. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Djiboutian Government to encourage an independent judiciary, the expansion of the political space, and respect for human rights.

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

Answer. Human rights issues touch on every element of an embassy's work, and as such, if confirmed, I will ensure that the promotion of human rights is an integral component of each officer's portfolio. I will stress to all embassy employees that the promotion of human rights values should not only be a part of their formal work with the embassy, but also a part of their daily lives as they interact with Djiboutians at all levels. If confirmed, I will ensure that our human rights goals are formally recognized within the embassy, and that those members of the embassy team who best work to further these objectives are also formally recognized—both with award nominations and in their annual evaluations.

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

Answer. In my Foreign Service career, all of my assignments have been to countries where human rights issues were at the top of the agenda. I have personally drafted eight Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, and took pains to ensure that these reports were as thorough and accurate as possible. I believe that the promotion of human rights and democracy is integral to all U.S. policy objectives, and if confirmed, I will continue to prioritize effective promotion of our human rights and democracy goals.

In my current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, I have ensured that human rights concerns are high on our agenda in some of the most challenging political and security environments on the continent, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other Great Lakes states, and Somalia and other countries in the Horn of Africa. I have personally pressed host-country officials throughout central Africa and the Horn to address human rights problems.

While serving as deputy chief of mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, I ensured that human rights issues received high-level attention and coverage, including by increasing reporting from the rebel-held areas of eastern Congo. I focused attention on the grave challenges of sexual and gender-based violence, an area in which the embassy and USAID conducted a number of programs both to heighten awareness and to respond to the needs of victims. I also pressed to ensure inclusion of civil society and human rights groups as part of the Inter-Congolese Dialog that led to the transition government after the rebellion ended in 2003. As a sign of the high value I placed on human rights, I nominated our principal human rights reporting officer for the Department of State's worldwide human rights award, which she won in 2003.

While deputy chief of mission in the Republic of Congo, I drew human rights abuses to the attention of the Congolese Government during the 1998–1999 civil war and oversaw grants to NGOs focused on promotion of human rights. These included programs to address the needs of the marginalized pygmy population.

As chief of the political section in our embassy in Cameroon in 1992–1994, I organized election observers for the first ever multiparty, Presidential elections, oversaw grant programs to support human rights organizations, helped to train several human rights groups on international standards and investigative methods, and conducted extensive public outreach on governance and human rights. In Nicaragua, as the embassy labor and human rights officer, I worked with USAID and mission implementing partners to support independent trade unions and human rights groups in the aftermath of the National Opposition Union victory over the Sandinistas in 1990.

Question. Djibouti reportedly has one of the most serious corruption problems in the region. What is your assessment of the causes of corruption in Djibouti? What additional measures, in your view, might be needed to deal with corruption?

Answer. Djiboutian law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and the Government of Djibouti has increased its efforts to implement such laws and combat

corruption. However, the government has not yet been able to implement these laws effectively, and corruption remains a serious problem.

Djibouti's extreme poverty and popular frustration over unemployment, inadequate public services, and obstacles to political participation all contribute to corruption. However, Djibouti has recognized the opportunities provided by globalization, and in seeking to capitalize on its location and deep-water port, the government has privatized the port and facilitated significant private and international investment. This privatization has helped to reduce corruption. As investment grows and Djibouti's port capacity and need for commercial efficiency increase, the government incentive for reducing corruption will also increase. Additionally, USAID assistance programs in Djibouti for improving governance seek to promote a more transparent and efficient government at the national, regional, and local levels; advance Djibouti's decentralization; promote government accountability; and strengthen civil society. The fiscal year 2009 budget request includes \$500,000 for democracy and governance programs, including an anticorruption component.

Question. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to balance the growing U.S. military presence and security interests in the country with other U.S. priorities?

Answer. Camp Lemonnier, our base in Djibouti and the only United States military base in sub-Saharan Africa, allows the United States Government to focus our efforts to deny safe haven, external support, and material assistance for terrorist activities in the Horn of Africa. The base is home to the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), which is present in the region to counter the reemergence of transnational terrorism by providing security assistance in support of civil-military operations (CMO) to enhance long-term stability in the region.

Djibouti is a relatively stable country in a volatile region, and it provides a solid foundation from which to address several primary policy aims in Africa, including food security, regional stability and economic development. The Port of Djibouti is the primary conduit for United States food aid to Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Djibouti is a country with a 96 percent Sunni Muslim population that is pro-western and pro-American. As a moderate Muslim state and a member of the Arab League, Djibouti is a valuable international partner. Djibouti has the potential to play an important role in the economic and political revitalization of its neighbors, and it has played a significant role in the regional peace processes in Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Somalia.

If confirmed, I will ensure that Djibouti continues to function not only as a base for CJTF-HOA and our peace and security interests, but also as a base from which to promote democratization, human rights, economic development, and effective humanitarian response. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the partnership between CJTF-HOA and USAID; to ensure appropriate levels of United States assistance in support of democracy and governance, and health and education; and to ensure that all CJTF-HOA programming in Djibouti continues to fit within overarching United States Government priorities.

RESPONSES OF ALAN W. EASTHAM, JR. TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues are the need for a credible electoral process and the prevalence of corruption. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that two goals are achieved: (1) That the country carries out free and fair presidential elections in 2009; and (2) the government makes progress in combating corruption.

Democracy in the Republic of Congo faces an important test in the presidential elections that are slated for 2009. President Sassou-Nguesso has announced his decision to delay the elections for 6 months. Having recently signed a peace agreement in 2005 with the last remaining rebel group in the country, the Congolese Government can demonstrate the progress it has made with respect to reform of the country's democratic institutions by holding free and fair elections. A failure to do so will exacerbate social and political tensions in the country, and harm our interests. If I am confirmed as ambassador, I will encourage Congolese authorities to work with the donor community to lay the groundwork for transparent elections. I will also recommend how the embassy and the State Department can best assist the Congo-

lese in these efforts, including opportunities to incorporate IFES other United States-based NGO groups in our initiatives.

The State Department Human Rights Report notes that government corruption is an infringement on human rights, recognizing that corruption deprives ordinary people of access to essential social services. Corruption also discourages foreign investment and hinders economic growth. American foreign investment can benefit from an environment that is free of the burden of government corruption. The embassy has done a great deal to highlight the concerns of corruption with its interlocutors. If confirmed, I will continue our dialog and advise Congo to implement the reforms necessary to address donor concerns about its commitment to transparency. The Republic of Congo must continue to make progress on fulfilling the validation process under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and must take steps to cooperate with the IMF and World Bank to implement substantial economic reforms and programs to encourage poverty alleviation.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues that you have identified as most pressing?

Answer. Still emerging from a post-conflict status, the Republic of Congo currently lacks the capacity to overcome its many human rights challenges. Congo must marshal its limited resources and overcome bureaucratic lethargy to train government personnel, improve government infrastructure, professionalize its security forces, and increase enforcement capacity. A professional bureaucracy and skilled security forces are necessary preconditions for maintaining internal stability and moving forward on long overdue legislative elections in the troubled southeastern Pool region.

The Congolese Government sometimes has difficulty taking the specific steps needed to fully implement planned reforms. One example of this is the government and U.N.-supported disarmament and demobilization program. The goals of the program are lofty, but the government must implement further reforms to strengthen the program's effectiveness. Similarly, while the Congolese have made some improvements on revenue transparency, additional actions, such as continuing to hire external auditors to review government records and independently assess Congo's progress, are necessary to make significant progress.

Question. In response to a question before your confirmation as Ambassador to Malawi, you described how you have worked to advance human rights in Central Africa and elsewhere. How has your experience as chief of mission further shaped your perspective on this issue?

Answer. As chief of mission in Malawi since 2005, I have been fortunate to work with a government whose intentions on human rights are generally good. On occasion, however, lack of resources has led to some cases of abuse, particularly with respect to the underpaid and poorly trained police. I attempted to bring the problem to the attention of the authorities, and, along with other like-minded colleagues, direct resources to improve the professionalism of the police. In addition, as the next election draws near, there is a tendency on the part of the Malawi Government to use government instruments and power in support of the incumbent president's reelection. I have attempted, through quiet conversations with both opposition and government, to defuse disputes and bridge differences, particularly in support of a recent mediation effort led by an ecumenical group of Malawi clergy. I have also sought out civil society and nongovernmental organizations to understand and attempt to put into action their suggestions for reducing the political temperature and therefore the possibility of politically-motivated human rights violations. My experience at chief of mission highlighted the important role a U.S. Ambassador can play in helping to transcend differences among political parties and incorporate civil society in the political process.

Question. The past several elections held in Congo were considered to be highly disorganized by opposition members and outside observers. What specific measures has the government taken to improve the electoral process? Do you view the democratic process as improving?

Answer. While the government has taken steps to consult with the opposition on the electoral process (including members of the opposition in the presidential cabinet), and while they have committed to supporting the country's electoral commission, they haven't done so. The government has the financial resources to develop a climate for free and fair elections in 2009 but has not shown the will to do so. I will be able to better characterize the status of the democratic process in the Congo when I go there, if I am confirmed.

If confirmed, I will encourage the Congolese Government to support the country's democratic institutions to ensure that the electoral process is free and fair. I will

also continue the embassy work in supporting initiatives to better inform members of the Congolese civil society on their role and responsibility in the electoral process.

Question. Congo is endowed with natural resources, including abundant rain forests, large deposits of oil, natural gas, magnesium, diamonds, and gold. To what extent are natural resources being responsibly and transparently managed? If confirmed, what role would you envision playing in helping to promote transparent, responsible, and sustainable resource management?

Answer. One of the chief concerns of the U.S. Embassy is conservation of the natural resources. I understand that the Congolese Government has expressed its commitment to transparently and responsibly manage natural resources. They are cooperating with initiatives by the Wildlife Conservation Society, Jane Goodall Institute, and Central African Regional Project on Environment (CARPE) representatives to promote sustainable resource management. In 2007, the Republic of Congo was permitted to reenter the Kimberly Process certification scheme after a 3-year suspension, which resulted from the government's inability to reconcile discrepancies between rough diamond exports and known production capacity. They have also expressed an interest in working with the embassy to prepare a comprehensive report on the life span of the Congo's resources. The report will focus on timber, iron ore, and bauxite.

If confirmed, I will continue to consider environmental resource management as a significant priority for the United States in the Republic of Congo. I will continue to encourage the Congolese Government to cooperate with NGO groups to ensure that the country's resources are managed properly. I will also encourage the Congo's compliance with all aspects of the Kimberly Process. Finally, I will work with United States and foreign companies involved in the extraction of natural resources to ensure that they consider resource management as a top priority. This will include working with our Chinese counterparts operating in the region.

