

RESPONDING TO DROUGHT AND FAMINE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

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RESPONDING TO DROUGHT AND FAMINE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2011

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher A. Coons (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Coons and Isakson.

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

Senator COONS. I would like to call to order today's hearing focusing on one of the most critical issues in the world today, responding to the drought and famine in the Horn of Africa.

As always, I'm privileged to serve with my friend, Senator Isakson, and want to thank him for staying with me here in Washington after the Senate has adjourned in order to help convene and preside over today's hearing.

This is a children's crisis. There are hundreds of thousands of children on the verge of death suffering from severe malnutrition in the Horn of Africa. And Senator Isakson and I agreed that this hearing could not wait. So, even while many of our colleagues have understandably returned to their home States and districts, we both believed it was crucial that we go ahead with this hearing today and not let another month go by.

Senator Isakson has been a true and good partner in highlighting a range of compelling issues and shared concerns in Africa, and I greatly appreciate his leadership on this subcommittee.

As everyone is well aware, the U.S. Congress has been almost entirely focused on the deficit and debt crisis in recent weeks, and while that issue was rightfully at the top of the agenda of the United States, we must also consider global issues of greater humanitarian concern, especially when millions of lives are at risk and tens of thousands have already died.

Today we have displayed in the front of the hearing room images of the crisis in the Horn of Africa in order to demonstrate the rising human toll of the drought and famine, including on children who are facing unspeakable deprivation and hardship. In today's hearing, we will list numbers that quantify the impact of the drought, but it is these images that help convey powerfully the true impact on human lives.

I want to thank at the outset UNICEF for its vital work on behalf of children worldwide and providing the photographs we've displayed at today's hearing. UNICEF has also submitted a statement detailing its efforts in the Horn of Africa that I will submit for the record.

The crisis in the Horn of Africa has been caused by the worst drought in the region in more than 60 years, resulting in severe malnutrition, acute hunger, rising levels of starvation, and famine in Somalia. It is the most severe humanitarian crisis in a generation, affecting food security for more than 12 million people across Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti, and surrounding areas.

According to UNICEF, an estimated 2.3 million children in the region are acutely malnourished, half a million of whom are at risk of imminent death. Unfortunately, this crisis is expected to worsen in the coming months, eclipsing the famine in Ethiopia in the mid-1980s that elicited first global public outcry and then a great response, as demonstrated by memorable events, such as Live Aid. The broad public awareness of that crisis in the 1980s appears to be absent today, despite a worsening humanitarian situation and increasing need for aid.

The situation is the most severe in Somalia where rising food prices and failures of governance and regional security have exacerbated an already dire situation, given the ongoing conflict, poor governance, and obstructed humanitarian access by the group al-Shabaab.

Aid organizations and U.S. Government officials estimate more than 1,500 refugees every day are leaving Somalia for Kenya, flooding the world's largest refugee camp in Dadaab, which is well over capacity, nearing half a million refugees, or a population comparable to Tucson, AZ. Hundreds of Somalis are also fleeing every day for the Dolo Ado camp and other camps in Ethiopia, also well over its capacity with more than 100,000 refugees.

The international community and the United States are working closely with the Governments of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti to address this massive transnational influx of refugees, and I praise their efforts to accommodate these displaced populations while their own people and their own countries also face severe challenges from the drought.

The countries impacted by this drought and famine are among the world's poorest, suffering from high rates of poverty and unemployment. And while the failure of two consecutive rainy seasons contributed to the scale of this disaster, the humanitarian crisis and famine that has resulted highlights broader capacity, governance, infrastructure, and security problems and needs in the region.

This drought was not a surprise. USAID, through its famine early warning system, or FEWS NET, predicted an impending crisis last year and worked closely with the Kenyan and Ethiopian Governments as well as our own to enhance their ability to respond and preposition emergency relief supplies.

As the United States joins with its partners in the international community to provide emergency assistance, we must also consider the lessons learned in order to avert the next famine, to improve

food security globally, to build sustainable capacity, and mitigate the impact of this crisis on future generations.

In response to the drought, the United States has been the largest international donor, providing more than \$450 million in food aid, critically needed treatment for malnourished children, health care, and other assistance. But the responsibility cannot rest on our shoulders alone. Especially in difficult budgetary times, the humanitarian response to this crisis must be a shared transnational obligation.

According to the United Nations, more than \$2 billion will be needed to provide emergency assistance, and only a billion has so far been committed. The international community must join the United States and many others in providing this critical aid in the near term in order to save lives, especially those of malnourished children and others in desperate need.

As we consider the international response to this crisis, we must also examine restrictions on access given the volatile security environment in Somalia where the United Nations recently declared a famine in southern areas controlled by al-Shabaab. Just yesterday the U.S. Government announced an easing of restrictions on humanitarian organizations operating in Somalia in order to facilitate the delivery of aid. I look forward to hearing from today's witnesses about this new policy, which aims to provide additional guidance and assurances to U.S. partner organizations' operation in southern Somalia.

To hear more about the scope, impact, and response to the crisis, we are privileged to be joined by two distinguished panels. First, we will hear from Nancy Lindborg, Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance for USAID, and former president of Mercy Corps. Ms. Lindborg will also be joined on this panel by Ambassador Donald Yamamoto, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and former Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti. We will finally hear from Dr. Reuben Brigety, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration, and a former fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, who has just returned from a visit to the region.

On the second panel, we will hear from Mr. Jeremy Konyndyk, director of policy and advocacy for Mercy Corps, who has led humanitarian and post-conflict recovery operations throughout the region. Next will be Dr. Peter Pham, director of the Michael Ansari Africa Center of the Atlantic Council, and a former professor of justice studies, political science, and Africana studies at James Madison University. Finally, we will hear from Mr. Wouter Schaap, the assistant country director for CARE International Somalia, who is based in Nairobi and recently returned from a visit to drought-affected areas of Somalia.

I am privileged to chair this hearing and highlight the growing urgency of this grave humanitarian crisis. Americans have demonstrated great leadership, helping those in need both domestically and abroad. And I am confident we can continue to partner with the international community to save lives and protect future generations in the Horn of Africa.

I appreciate each of our witnesses being here today and look forward to your testimony.
 Senator Isakson.

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

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Chairman Coons, and I want to welcome all those who will testify today. I want to particularly thank Wouter Schaap from CARE USA, headquartered in my hometown of Atlanta, GA, for being here, as well as so many of the other CARE people that are here.

I have had the privilege of being on site with CARE in Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and in Darfur in the Sudan, and seen first-hand what our NGOs do to deliver humanitarian aid, as well as in the case of CARE, life-sustaining techniques that people can learn to be self-sustaining amongst themselves, which is so critical in areas of bad poverty and poor education. So, I appreciate CARE being here and testifying today. I am always proud to have my home team here talking about the good things that they do.

And for Dr. Peter Pham, who is also on the second panel, I am particularly delighted that he is here because he can provide insights as an informed observer of the regional anarchical, political, and security dynamic without the constraints an NGO must maintain in describing the situation, given the exposure of the staff. He will be able to examine the persistent extremist vein that runs through Somalia, and the perverse impact it has on the region and international donors.

The severity of this crisis and the complexity of the geopolitical situation in the region, coupled with the U.N. and the United States own challenging history dealing with hunger and conflict in Somalia make this a particularly challenging humanitarian response. It is in such places that the principles of our policies are tested, both our humanitarian impulse as well as our hard-nosed realism regarding the purveyors of violence who impose illegitimate and moral control over the people and the region.

I am delighted that the chairman called this hearing today. This is one of the main humanitarian crises before the world today, and we need to work together to see to it that we bring humanitarian relief to a people struggling in a terrible part of the world.

So, Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this hearing today, and I look forward to hearing the testimony of all our witnesses.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

We will begin with the opening statement of Ambassador Yamamoto, and then Ms. Nancy Lindborg, and then Dr. Brigety, in that order, and then we will proceed to questions, if we might.

Ambassador.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD YAMAMOTO, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Thank you very much. I have a longer version for submission for the record, so I will read a short version, sir.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I would encourage 5-minute statements, if that is possible. And without objection, we will submit your full statements for the record. Thank you.

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Chairman Coons, and Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the committee, the worst humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa in 60 years has its roots in the brutal force of al-Shabaab, which has until now prevented humanitarian assistance from reaching those most in need, persistent instability in Somalia and changing regional climate pattern that impact vulnerable pastoral populations.

We are working hard with our international and regional partners to deliver quickly the life-saving, short-term relief critical to those suffering the effects of this crisis. U.S. Government and U.S.-funded assistance has prevented the loss of millions of lives. At the same time, we cannot rely on emergency assistance alone to resolve the underlying long-term problems in the region. Therefore, we are working with those governments in the region to support long-term political and food security in the region.

Let me be clear. The response to the drought has been complicated by the continuing instability in Somalia, especially due to the actions al-Shabaab. Those most seriously affected by the current famine are the more than the 2 million Somalis trapped in al-Shabaab-controlled areas in South Central Somalia.

Since January 2010, al-Shabaab has largely prohibited international humanitarian workers and organizations from operating in the areas it controls. Al-Shabaab continues to refuse to grant humanitarian access, and has prevented the international community from responding quickly inside Somalia.

As we seek to take advantage of any current openings to expand aid distribution, we are also working with our partners in the international community to counter al-Shabaab's ability to threaten our interests or continue to hold the Somalia people hostage. At the same time, we are taking the necessary steps to support the flow of urgently needed humanitarian aid to those who need it in South Central Somalia, while working to minimize any risk of diversion to al-Shabaab.

We have worked closely with the Department of Treasury to ensure that aid workers, who are partnering with the U.S. Government to help save lives under difficult and dangerous conditions, are not in conflict with U.S. laws and regulations. However, the United States sanctions against al-Shabaab do not and never have prohibited the delivery of assistance to Somalia, including to those areas under the de facto control of Shabaab.

In the long term, regional security in the Horn of Africa requires political stability in Somalia. The United States already has placed a long-term process to stabilize Somalia. Last year, we announced our dual track approach to broaden our efforts by taking into account the complex nature of Somali society and politics, as well as to be more flexible and adaptable to our engagement.

On track one, we continue to support the Djibouti peace process, the TFG, the transitional government, Amazon, as the first line of efforts to stabilize Somalia and expel Shabaab from Mogadishu.

Since 2007, the United States has supported stabilization efforts by obligating \$258 million to support Amazon training, logistical

needs, and approximately \$85 million to support and build capacity to the TFG forces.

On track two, we are deepening our engagement with the regional government and administrations throughout the Central and South Somali area, and those who are close to Shabaab, but who are not affiliated with the TFG. In fiscal year 2011, the United States plans to provide approximately \$21 million to support development efforts in our dual track policy.

We have further information as we go on to the Q&As, and I want to leave room for my colleagues to speak. So, thank you very much, Senator.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Yamamoto follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DON YAMAMOTO

Good morning, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the committee. Thank you for holding this hearing on the drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. We share your grave concern about the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. The eastern Horn of Africa is currently experiencing one of the worst droughts since the 1950s. More than 12 million people—mainly in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia—are severely affected and in need of humanitarian assistance. In Somalia, drought conditions have exacerbated a complex emergency that has continued since 1991. The information coming out of the Horn of Africa, especially the dire situation of refugees from Somalia, is devastating. In cooperation with our international and regional partners, we will continue to work to address this humanitarian crisis while continuing to support long-term political and food security in the region.

Somalia is at the center of the crisis, but the crisis is affecting the entire Horn of Africa. Ethiopia has issued an appeal indicating 4.5 million Ethiopians need food assistance. In Kenya, the government and a consortium of NGOs have placed 10 districts in the north and east under alert for increased food insecurity and malnutrition. The crisis has hit hardest in Somalia, where failed or poor rains combined with conflict have left 3.7 million people in need of immediate, lifesaving assistance. Two areas of southern Somalia, the Lower Shabelle Region and areas of the Bakool region, are currently facing famine conditions, and the remaining regions of southern Somalia are projected to meet the threshold for famine unless humanitarian assistance is significantly increased.

The number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) across the region has increased the challenges of drought response. There are approximately 620,000 Somali refugees in the eastern Horn region, according to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with 200,000 of these fleeing in the past year alone. Reports from inside Somalia indicate the combined arrival rate of 2,000 new refugees per day in Ethiopia and Kenya could rise dramatically as the situation in Somalia grows increasingly desperate. The current flows threaten to overwhelm the existing refugee assistance structure in Kenya and Ethiopia. Moreover, there are reports of over 400,000 IDPs in Mogadishu alone.

A large-scale multidonor intervention—my colleagues will go into greater depth on this—is underway to prevent the further decline of an already dire situation, but there will be no quick fix. The United States is one of the largest donors of emergency assistance to the region, helping more than 4.5 million of those in need in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, and Djibouti and providing nearly \$459 million in humanitarian assistance to date. Our assistance includes food, treatment for severely malnourished people, health care, clean water, proper sanitation, and hygiene education and supplies. Our assistance also includes \$69 million for refugee assistance in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. The U.S. Government has previously supported the expansion of the Dadaab camps, and we understand that the Government of Kenya has agreed to allow new refugees to begin occupying the new areas. Our Embassy in Nairobi is actively engaged with the Kenyans to ensure the best possible emergency response. I know my colleagues Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Reuben Brigety and Assistant Administrator Nancy Lindborg will go into greater detail about these conditions in their testimony. I would like to turn now to the political complications of the drought in Somalia.

The response to the drought has been complicated by the continuing instability in Somalia—especially due to the actions of al-Shabaab. Those most seriously affected by the current drought are the more than 2 million Somalis trapped in

al-Shabaab-controlled areas in south central Somalia. Since January 2010, al-Shabaab has largely prohibited international humanitarian workers and organizations from operating in the areas it controls. Al-Shabaab's continued refusal to grant humanitarian access has prevented the international community from responding to the drought in south central Somalia, which precipitated the famine we are seeing now. The United States is pressing all parties to immediately restore unimpeded humanitarian access to all parts of Somalia.

During the last week of July, major fighting began again in Mogadishu between the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces against al-Shabaab and its affiliates. With more than 400,000 IDPs now residing in and around Mogadishu, this renewed fighting is an area of concern. We are confident that AMISOM and the TFG understand the threat this fighting places on the civilian population and call on all parties to do everything in their power to protect civilians, particularly those displaced due to recent famine and drought conditions. We continue to support AMISOM and the TFG in their efforts to bring stability to Mogadishu in the face of continuing threats from al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab is a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and has also been sanctioned by the United Nations for its role in threatening the peace, security, and stability of Somalia including disrupting the Djibouti Peace Process; and for obstructing humanitarian assistance into Somalia. As we seek to take advantage of any current openings to expand aid distribution, we are also working with our partners in the international community to counter al-Shabaab's ability to threaten our interests or continue to hold the Somali people hostage. At the same time, we are taking the necessary steps to support the flow of urgently needed humanitarian aid to those who need it in south central Somalia while working to minimize any risk of diversion to al-Shabaab. We have worked closely with the Department of Treasury to ensure that aid workers who are partnering with the U.S. Government to help save lives under difficult and dangerous conditions are not in conflict with U.S. laws and regulations. To be clear, however, the U.S. sanctions against al-Shabaab do not and never have prohibited the delivery of assistance to Somalia, including to those areas under the de facto control of al-Shabaab. The presence of al-Shabaab means that U.S. persons must adhere to U.S. legal requirements in the course of providing assistance in Somalia.

In the long term, regional security in the Horn of Africa requires political stability in Somalia. The United States already has in place a long-term process to stabilize Somalia. Last year we announced the Dual Track approach to broaden our efforts by taking into account the complex nature of Somali society and politics, as well as to be more flexible and adaptable in our engagement. On Track One, we continue support for the Djibouti Peace Process, the TFG, and AMISOM as a first line of effort to stabilize Somalia and expel al-Shabaab from Mogadishu. Since 2007, the United States has supported stabilization efforts by obligating approximately \$258 million to support AMISOM's training and logistical needs, as well as approximately \$85 million to support and build the capacity of TFG forces. Recent security advances by AMISOM and the TFG in Mogadishu have taken back significant portions of the city from al-Shabaab control.

On Track Two, we are deepening our engagement with the regional governments of Somaliland and Puntland, as well as with local and regional administrations throughout south central Somalia who are opposed to al-Shabaab, but who are not affiliated with the TFG. In FY11, the United States plans to provide approximately \$21 million to support development efforts in support of the Dual Track policy. We are reviewing how best to adapt our travel policy for Somalia to execute our Dual Track approach most effectively without compromising on our obligation to protect the security of U.S. personnel when they travel inside Somalia. Our long-term efforts will continue to focus on security, governance, and humanitarian and development assistance.

In addition to working toward political stability in Somalia, the U.S. Government is also focusing its efforts to help provide long-term food security in the eastern Horn of Africa region. We recognize that emergency assistance alone cannot solve the underlying long-term problems in the region. That is why President Obama's innovative and forward-looking Feed the Future initiative is so critical. Feed the Future is already at work in the region with local, regional, and multilateral partners improving agricultural production, improving markets, building infrastructure, bringing innovation, and addressing the entire value chain from seed to market.

As I noted when I began, we are extremely concerned about the drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. We are working hard with our interagency and international partners to deliver quickly the life-saving short-term relief critical to those suffering its effects. U.S. Government and U.S.-funded assistance has prevented the

loss of millions of lives. We recognize that both the food security problem in the region and the political instability problem in Somalia are linked, and that both demand long-term solutions. Our Dual Track approach to Somalia provides an effective mechanism for us to grapple with the challenges of political stability in Somalia. Our Feed the Future initiative will help create food security in the eastern Horn of Africa region. The United States will continue to monitor and respond to the humanitarian crisis and work with host governments on long-term solutions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome your questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Ms. Lindborg.

STATEMENT OF HON. NANCY LINDBORG, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID), WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. LINDBORG. Thank you, Chairman Coons and Ranking Member Isakson. I really appreciate your taking this time to hold the hearing and raise the level of attention. Even as we meet today, the situation is deteriorating, and I think we all share significant concern.

As you noted, the Horn of Africa has long been plagued by cyclical drought, and what we are seeing now is the worst in 60 years. What used to be 10-year drought cycles are now happening literally every other year, and the current drought is now affecting 12.4 million people in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti.

The crisis is both a humanitarian and a security one. The famine, as you noted, has been declared in only the most difficult to access areas of Somalia. We will hear more from Dr. Brigety about the refugees who are pouring across the border into the already drought-stressed areas of Kenya and Ethiopia.

Internally, more than 1½ million displaced Somalis are crowding into the northern cities of Somalia that are ill equipped to handle this increase in population.

The July 20 U.N. Declaration of Famine in the two regions of Somalia was not made lightly, and truly reflects the dire conditions of the people in Somalia. It is based on nutrition and mortality surveys, data that has been verified by the CDC. And on the basis of that, we estimate that in the last 90 days, 29,000 Somali children have died. This is nearly 4 percent of the children in southern Somalia.

Our fear and the fear of the international community and the governments in the Horn of Africa is that the famine conditions in those two regions of Somalia will spread to encompass the entire eight regions of southern Somalia. The next rains are September/October, and even if they're good, we could bear witness to another wave of mortality in the south due to water borne diseases.

In Ethiopia and in Kenya, the situation is grave, but we do not expect it to deteriorate into famine or result in the level of needs as severe as we are witnessing in the south.

Ethiopia and Kenya have large areas of arid lands, populated primarily by pastoralists. In partnership with local governments and international donors, USAID has worked extensively in both countries to increase the resilience and the food security of these communities in drought affected areas. We have strengthened early warning systems. We have supported an ongoing safety net and

community protection programs, and have increased productivity in arid lands.

And just in—for example, in partnership with the Ethiopian Government, with the World Bank and other donors, the United States Government has supported the Ethiopia Productive Safety Net Program. As a result, 7.6 million people have been removed from the emergency case load.

In the drought of 2002–03, the Government of Ethiopia stated that 13.2 million people in Ethiopia were drought affected. By contrast, today only 4.8 million are stated to be in need.

The needs in Ethiopia and Kenya are serious. They will require sustained focus and attention. But the results of our preparedness and development programs are paying off. We are seeing results.

As you noted, Senator Coons, the FEWS NET famine early warning system alerted us in August that a drought was on the horizon. At that time, we began prepositioning food stocks, food aid, stockpiling food in Djibouti, Kenya, and South Africa. We have since, just for this fiscal year, provided \$459 million of aid in the Horn. This includes food assistance, treatment for malnourished children, water sanitation, hygiene education, and assistance in the refugee camps.

We are now focused aggressively on working to abate the potential for mass starvation in southern Somalia. We learned in the drought of 1992 in Somalia that the leading cause of death for children under 5 was disease. We are focusing on three key areas therefore—first, the availability of food, including those therapeutic foods so essential for children under 5, access to food, and integrated health programs.

In terms of key challenges, we identify three. First, time; it is not on our side. We have a small window to reach those in need or risk the additional deaths of several hundred thousand. We are looking at about a 6-to-8-week window.

Access. Access in the worst affected areas of south Somalia remain the primary obstacle to relief efforts. As you noted, the World Food Programme and most international organizations suspended operations in early 2010. And since 2008, WFP has lost 14 staff members. Until now, al-Shabaab has restricted access, and they have given mixed signals on whether it will lift its ban.

We, along with the international community, are working to explore all avenues to safely provide assistance where there is access. In the face of these extreme needs, we have issued new guidance on the provision of assistance to allow more flexibility to a wider range of aid to those areas in need. And we have clarified that aid workers who are partnering with the U.S. Government to help save lives are not in conflict.

The third challenge is scale. The emergency will outstrip the resources currently available in the international community, in the traditional donor community. So, we are working aggressively to encourage all donors, all nations, to step forward with assistance.

I will conclude by saying we cannot stop drought from happening, specifically in this region, but what we can do is strengthen communities and their ability to withstand these natural calamities.

President Obama's Feed the Future initiative is focused precisely on addressing these root causes of hunger and undernutrition and working to strengthen the resilience of communities. It shores up the ability of these populations to withstand drought through commercial availability, access of staple foods, reducing the trade and transport barriers that impede the movement and sale of livestock, and harnessing science and technology.

We are seeing right now how these investments in the future can make a critical difference.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Isakson. And I would like this testimony to signal to the people of the Horn, as well as the Somali-Americans I recently met in Minnesota and Ohio, that the American people are very much with them in this time of need. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lindborg follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NANCY E. LINDBORG

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today on the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. Your attention and concern is critical, as the situation continues to deteriorate daily, with millions of individuals affected.

In scale and severity, the current drought in the Horn of Africa is the worst in 60 years and, according to the U.N. Office of the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs, it is now affecting an estimated 12.4 million people in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. It is both a humanitarian and a security crisis, as famine has been declared in the difficult to access areas of Somalia and refugees are pouring across the borders into already drought-stressed areas of Kenya and Ethiopia.

I will discuss today the current situation, our immediate response, the challenges we face, and our long-term plans to address the chronic food insecurity in the Horn of Africa.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Horn of Africa is experiencing the lowest rains in 60 years, in a region long plagued by cyclical drought. However, what used to be a 10-year drought cycle is now occurring every other year and is combined with rising food prices and a 20-year conflict in Somalia.

Twenty five years ago, USAID invested in the Famine Early Warning System, or FEWSNET, precisely because of the recurring droughts in the region. FEWSNET, along with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), maintains a strong presence in the Horn and enables the humanitarian community to identify conditions based on an extensive analysis of historical and current rainfall, cropping patterns, livestock health, market prices and malnutrition rates. USAID is the largest supporter of these vital early warning systems, and the entire international humanitarian and donor community relies on their information to provide appropriate assistance to those who need it most and to target assistance that might be needed in the future.

In Ethiopia and Kenya, the situation is grave but we do not expect it to deteriorate into famine. Both countries have large areas of arid lands populated primarily by pastoralists. Ethiopia has declared 4.8 million in need of urgent assistance, and in Kenya, 3.7 million are at risk. USAID has worked extensively in both countries, in partnership with international donors and local governments; to increase the resilience and food security of communities in these drought-affected areas. We have focused better on early warning systems, ongoing safety-net and community protection programs, and increased productivity in arid lands and pastoralist livelihoods.

For example, in partnership with the Ethiopian Government, the World Bank and other donors, the United States supported the Ethiopian Productive Safety Net program, which has effectively removed approximately 7.6 million people from the emergency caseload. In the drought of 2002-3, the Government of Ethiopia stated that 13.2 million people in Ethiopia were drought-affected and in need of emergency assistance. By contrast, that number to date is 4.8 million. The needs in these countries are still serious and require sustained focus and attention, but the results of preparedness and development investments are having a positive impact.

In Somalia, however, the situation is stark. Consecutive seasons of failed or poor rainfall, coupled with two decades of conflict and lack of governance, have resulted in rising food prices, livestock mortality, crop failure, denial of reliable humanitarian access by al-Shabaab, and consequent severe malnutrition and massive population displacement. The U.N. estimates that a total of 3.2 million people in Somalia now require immediate, life-saving humanitarian assistance. Of those in urgent need, 2.8 million people reside in southern Somalia. On July 20, the U.N. declared a famine in two regions of Somalia: Lower Shabelle Region and areas of Bakool Region in southern Somalia. A famine determination is never made lightly and reflects the truly dire circumstances facing the people of southern Somalia. Based on nutrition and mortality surveys verified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we estimate that more than 29,000 children under 5—nearly 4 percent of children—have died in the last 90 days in southern Somalia.

Somalis are leaving the south in great numbers, either for the more stable areas in the north or into neighboring countries—in all cases adding great strain to already drought-stressed environments. More specifically, 1.5 million internally displaced Somalis are concentrated in Mogadishu and the regions of Lower Shabelle and Galgaduud, with increasing numbers in Puntland and Somaliland. In May, I traveled to Hargeysa, in the semiautonomous region of Somaliland, where I met with President Sulanyo, as well as U.N. and local and international nongovernmental organizations. They noted rising concerns about the numbers of internally displaced persons who are now arriving in their cities, ill-equipped to meet the needs of a rising population. Farmers and pastoralists, with no remaining assets, are swelling the outskirts of cities throughout northern Somalia, including many youth with no evident future.

The refugees who cross into Ethiopia and Kenya describe a grueling trip, often on foot for 3 to 4 or more weeks. My colleague, Deputy Assistant Secretary Reuben Brigety, will describe in more detail the deeply distressing stories of families arriving in refugee camps in near-death shape. Tragically, we also know that in these crisis situations, those who leave are the ones with the strength and resources to do so. The weakest and most vulnerable are often left behind.

CURRENT U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO THE HORN DROUGHT AND FAMINE

FEWSNET warned us of the increased probabilities of drought in August 2010. Because of these early warnings, USAID began prepositioning additional emergency relief supplies and food aid in the region last fall, stockpiling food aid supplies in Djibouti, South Africa, and Kenya. As a result, the U.S. Government was able to help jump-start relief efforts and is now reaching more than 4.6 million in need throughout the Horn and providing approximately \$459 million in humanitarian assistance to date (in FY 2011). U.S. assistance provides critically needed food aid, treatment for severely malnourished children, health care, clean water, proper sanitation, and hygiene education and supplies. The United States is providing approximately \$217 million in Ethiopia, \$156 million in Kenya, \$80 million in Somalia, and \$6 million in Djibouti. Since the drought began, for example, USAID assisted the Government of Ethiopia to vaccinate nearly 300,000 livestock, critical for the survival of 25,000 households.

Our strategy is focused on providing emergency assistance for those most at-risk, while also continuing to build greater food security and resilience in the drought-affected communities of Kenya, Ethiopia, and northern parts of Somalia so they can better withstand future droughts and shocks.

We have been responding since last fall with prepositioning of supplies and increasing programs. Last spring, we created a Horn of Africa Drought Task Force in Nairobi, and on July 6, USAID activated a regional Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in Nairobi, Kenya, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to monitor regional drought conditions, identify anticipated response needs, and coordinate response activities with other donors. USAID also stood up a Response Management Team in Washington, DC, to support the DART and coordinate U.S. Government humanitarian efforts. The DART continues to conduct assessments in the field to evaluate ongoing humanitarian needs and coordinates daily with other major donors to ensure a multilateral response.

In FY 2011 to date, USAID has provided more than 360,200 metric tons (MT) of Title II food relief and emergency food assistance through the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) and nongovernmental organizations for drought- and conflict-affected populations in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia—supporting approximately 10.7 million people.

Given the urgency of reaching the people in southern Somalia, we have a special focus on aggressively working to abate the potential for mass starvation. We have

learned from the Somalia drought of 1992 that disease was a leading cause of death for children under 5, so we are stressing a multisector response with a focus on three key areas: availability of food, access to food, and integrated public health interventions—including therapeutic feeding focused on the children under 5, vaccinations, and access to clean water and sanitation.

Based on FEWSNET data, we do not expect a significant harvest in the south for another 6 months. The next potential rains are in September or October in the south, and even if there are good rains, we could experience another wave of mortality due to water-borne disease and livestock death.

We are working closely with other donors and U.N. and NGO partners to mount an effective response to save lives. We have three key challenges: time, access, and scale. As noted earlier, time is not on our side. Unfortunately, the situation is going to worsen before it gets better. However, we know we have a small window over the next 6 weeks in which to provide life-saving assistance to prevent additional and potential significant deaths from occurring. The fear is that without immediate and significant assistance, famine conditions will spread from the two regions in southern Somalia to encompass the entire eight regions of the south with several hundred thousand additional deaths.

Access remains difficult in the worst affected areas of southern Somalia. The World Food Programme and most international NGOs had suspended operations in the south due to deteriorating security and bans imposed by al-Shabaab. Since 2008, WFP has lost 14 staff members in attacks. However, we are in lockstep with other donors and the humanitarian community in our determination to test aggressively all options for delivering assistance in previously inaccessible areas to the people in southern Somalia.

Finally, the scale of this emergency outstrips the resources currently offered by the international community to meet the needs. We are working to encourage the broader international community to step forward with additional assistance as we seek to address this sobering challenge.

LOOKING AHEAD: FEED THE FUTURE

We can't stop drought from happening, but we can strengthen communities and their ability to prepare for and withstand these kinds of natural calamities. President Obama's Feed the Future initiative (FTF) is focused precisely on addressing these root causes of hunger and under nutrition. It seeks to increase longer term resilience among vulnerable populations by increasing the commercial availability and accessibility of staple foods, reducing trade and transport barriers that impede the movement and sale of livestock and staple foods, harnessing science and technology to assist populations in increasing crop yields, and supporting national and regional efforts to reduce years of marginalization of certain populations. USAID is focusing its investments, both geographically and programmatically, to have the greatest sustainable impacts on reducing hunger and poverty. By linking vulnerable populations to market opportunities in more productive areas, our efforts are helping increase labor opportunities and strengthen value chains.

In the Somali, Oromiya and Afar National regional States of Ethiopia for example, FTF investments are helping vulnerable pastoralists and ex-pastoralists and Afar to improve their incomes and increase their ability to survive climate and economic shocks. USAID is helping these pastoralists to improve the health of their animals through strengthening community veterinary services and accessing affordable vaccinations and other medicine. In addition, we are working to help pastoralists earn more money from their animals by linking them to markets where they can sell their animals for a significant profit. We help producers organize into marketing cooperatives and access much-needed credit, improve their business skills and provide them access to market information. Stronger linkages between traders, feed lot operator, processors and exporters also help to expand livestock trade and provide better access to lucrative markets in the region.

We are seeing with this drought the critical and positive impact of investing in the future. When countries have the governance structures, the policies and productive capacity to withstand drought and when communities have the resilience to withstand the inevitable shocks of droughts and crisis, the need for large-scale international emergency assistance is diminished. Even as we focus on the heart-breaking tragedy of Somalia, we are also committed to helping to build sustainable futures where communities feed themselves.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Lindborg.
Dr. Brigety.

STATEMENT OF DR. REUBEN BRIGETY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. BRIGETY. Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, good morning, and thank you very much for this opportunity to testify before you today on the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa.

Let me also say that we appreciate the support and attention that Congress has given to this crisis in the midst of so many other issues that you have been grappling with this summer.

I will discuss today the current situation facing refugees, our immediate response, the challenges we face in meeting their needs as more famine survivors reach the borders of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, and our plans to work with the world community to meet those challenges and save as many lives as we possibly can in the coming months ahead.

I traveled to Ethiopia in Kenya in July to evaluate the emerging refugee crisis in the region where hundreds of thousands of Somalis have fled drought and famine in Somalia. During my trip, I visited refugee camps in each country, along with representatives from donor countries. I met with senior government officials, I talked with officials from U.N. agencies and nongovernmental organizations, and I also spoke obviously with many refugees.

It was clear that this situation is developing into the worst humanitarian emergency the region has seen in a generation, at least since the great famine of 1991 and 1992.

We now must confront a refugee emergency within a protracted refugee situation. Years of hard work by the host governments and their international partners to address just the basic needs within established camps quickly are being overshadowed by the need to add new border-crossing facilities, new camps, and additional emergency services.

Both Ethiopia and Kenya are receiving record inflows of refugees from Somalia, and in both countries, refugees are arriving in appalling physical health. Every refugee family with whom I spoke in both Ethiopia and Kenya said that they had walked for days from Somalia with virtually no food and no water. Brief visits to the health clinics in the refugee camps revealed dozens of malnourished children, so emaciated and so weak that, to the untrained eye, they appeared close to death.

Among new arrivals in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, we are seeing up to 50 percent global acute malnutrition, reflecting the even more grim state of affairs for children inside Somalia. Camps in Ethiopia and Kenya are strained far beyond their capacity in every way with regard to space, staff, food, and essential services, as they try to cope with the record influx of refugees which continues unabated.

Somalis represent the largest refugee population in all of Africa. According to UNHCR, Somalis neighbors in the eastern Horn of Africa now host more than 620,000 Somalia refugees. Some 159,000 Somalis have sought refuge in Ethiopia, with over 75,000 arriving just since January of this year. Kenya hosts more than 448,000 Somali refugees, with nearly 100,000 arriving since the beginning of this year. Even Djibouti has seen an almost 20-per-

cent increase in the number of refugees since the beginning of 2011.

We commend the Governments of Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia for their generous support for refugee populations in the region, even as they themselves are currently struggling with the drought that, as you say, may be the worst in some 60 years.

While the current crisis is taxing an already stressed system, I am confident that the Governments of Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and their international partners, to include the United States, have the ability to confront this crisis head on, and will be able to find new solutions to address the needs, not only within the camps, but also for those within Somalia.

Let me give you just two examples of what I saw during my trip and how we are responding to those in need.

First, the United States and our regional and international partners have helped ramp up emergency assistance. I traveled to the refugee camp complex in Dolo Ado on the Ethiopian/Somali border, accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Donald Booth, USAID Deputy Administrator Don Steinberg, Ethiopian Government officials, UNHCR's Ethiopia country representatives, and senior representatives from several donor embassies.

As we wandered through the refugee camp talking with people who had been there for several days or who had only just arrived hours earlier, we heard versions of the same story over and over again.

One man I met had come all the way from Mogadishu, traveling 9 days with his wife and six children with very little to eat along the way. I talked with him as he sat on the hospital cot with his youngest child, a 3-year-old girl whom I shall call Aisha. As we spoke, Aisha never stopped moaning. She could not get comfortable amidst the heat and the flies as her tiny bones threatened to pierce her paper-thin skin.

We saw many families in the same desperate situation during a separate visit to Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. In Dadaab, I spoke to one mother who had carried her polio stricken 7-year-old daughter on her back for 9 days with little food and water as her other six children trailed behind.

It was clear that a number of recent interventions, such as the provision of hot meals at the transit center, are vital steps needed beyond just basic camp services to assist those making this heart-breaking journey. I commend Antonio Guterres, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, for finding ways to add these additional programs around Dolo Ado after he visited the area just a few days before I had.

Still, we know that more must be done.

The second example is how the United States has increased overall refugee assistance throughout the region. The United States has long been a partner to governments and people in the Horn of Africa as they host hundreds of thousands of Somalia refugees, providing approximately \$459 million in humanitarian assistance just this fiscal year to those in need. This funding supports refugees, internally displaced persons, and other drought-affected populations.

Out of this overall funding, the United States is providing approximately \$69 million specifically to refugees through the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Maintaining access to first asylum for Somalis in neighboring countries is critical to saving lives. The United States has previously supported the expansion of the Dadaab camps, and UNHCR is now moving refugees into the new space following the Government of Kenya's agreement to allow the opening of a new site. We are also urging Kenya to open quickly more reception center capacities so that incoming refugees can be properly screened and registered.

We will continue to support the Horn countries' efforts to provide asylum to vulnerable Somalis, including through our support to the office UNHCR, the World Food Programme, and other international organizations and NGOs in the region.

Representatives from other donor countries who accompanied me were also moved by the gravity of the situation, and they said that they would work with their own governments to support the efforts of aid groups. Rigorous and sustained diplomacy will be required, both in the region and with other donor capitals to ensure that the international community and host countries take necessary measures to save lives in the coming months.

We are also committed to addressing the humanitarian needs inside Somalia as my colleagues, Ms. Lindborg, spoke. There is an immediate need to reach vulnerable populations inside Somalia so that they don't have to travel long distances to save lives.

Let me also say that unless we find ways to provide assistance to people inside Somalia, we will continue to see refugees arrive in appalling states of health in Kenya and Ethiopia, and we will continue to see mortality rates in the refugee camps rise unabated.

And this brings us to the security situation. Al-Shabaab activities have clearly made the current situation worse, as Ambassador Yamamoto noted. We expect the situation in Somalia to continue to decline, especially in southern Somalia, where the U.N. has declared famine in two regions to date and where conditions continue to worsen.

There is not a single solution to this regional crisis. We are working to tackle it through a variety of means and mechanisms, including addressing underlying causes as addressed by my colleague, Assistant Administrator Lindborg.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, thank you very much for your time and attention. I look forward to any questions you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Brigety follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY REUBEN E. BRIGETY II

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today on the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. We appreciate the support and attention Congress has given to this crisis in the midst of so many other issues you have been grappling with this summer.

I will discuss today the current situation facing refugees, our immediate response, the challenges we face in meeting their needs as more famine survivors reach the borders of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, and our plans to work with the world community to meet those challenges and save as many lives as we possibly can in the coming months ahead.

REFUGEE OVERVIEW

I traveled to Ethiopia and Kenya in July to evaluate the emerging refugee crisis in the region where hundreds of thousands of Somalis have fled drought and famine in Somalia. During my trip, I visited refugee camps in each country along with representatives from donor countries, met with senior government officials, talked with officials from U.N. agencies and nongovernmental organizations, and spoke with refugees. It was clear that this is developing into the worst humanitarian emergency that the region has seen in a generation, at least since the great famine of 1991–1992. We now must confront a refugee emergency within a protracted refugee situation. Years of hard work by the host governments and their international partners to address just the basic needs within established camps quickly are being overshadowed by the need to add new border-crossing facilities, new camps, and emergency services.

Both Ethiopia and Kenya are receiving record inflows of refugees from Somalia, and in both countries refugees are arriving in appalling physical health. Every refugee family with whom I spoke in both Ethiopia and Kenya said that they had walked for days from Somalia with virtually no food and water. Brief visits to the health clinics in the refugee camps revealed dozens of malnourished children, so emaciated and weak that they appeared to the untrained eye to be close to death. Among new arrivals in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, we are seeing up to 50 percent global acute malnutrition—reflecting the even more grim state of affairs for children inside Somalia. Camps in Ethiopia and Kenya are strained far beyond capacity in every way—with regard to space, staff, food, and essential services—trying to cope with the record influx of refugees, which continues unabated.

Somalis represent the largest refugee population in Africa. According to UNHCR, Somalia's neighbors in the eastern Horn of Africa now host more than 620,000 Somali refugees. Some 159,000 Somalis have sought refuge in Ethiopia; over 75,000 have arrived just since January 2011. Kenya hosts more than 448,000 Somali refugees with nearly 100,000 since the beginning of the year. Even Djibouti has seen an almost 20 percent increase in the number of refugees since the beginning of the year. We commend the Governments of Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia for their generous support for refugee populations in the region, even as they themselves are currently struggling with a drought that may be the worst in 60 years.

While the current crisis is taxing an already stressed system, I am confident Governments of Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and their international partners, including the United States, have the ability to confront this crisis head on and will be able to find new solutions to address the needs not only within the camps but also for those within Somalia. Let me give you just two examples of what I saw during my trip and how we are responding to those in need.

THE LONG JOURNEY OF THE SURVIVORS

First, the United States and our regional and international partners have helped ramp up emergency assistance. I traveled to the refugee camp complex at Dolo Ado on the Ethiopian-Somali border accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Donald Booth, USAID Deputy Administrator Don Steinberg, Ethiopian Government officials, UNHCR's Ethiopia Country Representative, and senior representatives from several embassies, including Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, Sweden, and the European Union. As we wandered through the refugee camp, talking with people who had been there for several days or who had just crossed the border a few hours earlier, we heard versions of the same story over and over again.

One man I met had come all the way from Mogadishu, traveling for 9 days with his wife and six children with very little to eat along the way. I talked with him as he sat on the hospital cot of his youngest child—a three-year-old girl I'll call Aisha. As we spoke, Aisha never stopped moaning. She could not get comfortable amidst the heat and flies as her tiny bones threatened to pierce her paper-thin skin. We saw many families in the same desperate situation during a separate visit to Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. In Dadaab, I spoke to one mother who had carried her polio-stricken 7-year-old daughter on her back for 9 days with little food and water as her other six children trailed behind.

It was clear that a number of recent interventions—such as the provision of hot meals at the transit center or the establishment of blanket feeding programs—are vital steps needed beyond just basic camp services to assist those making this heart-breaking journey. I commend Antonio Guterres, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, for finding ways to add these additional programs around Dolo Ado after he himself visited the area and found ways to move resources and personnel into place more quickly. Still more is needed and we in the international community cannot slacken our efforts.

CURRENT U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES

Second, the United States has increased overall refugee assistance throughout the region. The United States has long been a partner to the governments and people of the Horn of Africa as they host hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees, providing approximately \$459 million in humanitarian assistance this fiscal year to help those in need. This funding supports refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other drought-affected populations, and helps build resiliency and food security beyond the immediate crisis. Out of this overall funding, the United States is providing approximately \$69 million, specifically for refugee assistance in the region through the Department of State's Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau.

Maintaining access to safe asylum for Somalis in neighboring countries is critical to saving lives. The United States has previously supported the expansion of the Dadaab camps and UNHCR is now moving refugees into the new space following the Government of Kenya's agreement to allow the opening of the new site. We are also urging Kenya to quickly open more reception center capacity so that incoming refugees can be properly screened and registered. We will continue to support the Horn countries' efforts to provide asylum to vulnerable Somalis, including through our support for the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, and other international organizations and NGOs working in the region.

Representatives from other donor countries who accompanied me were moved by the gravity of the situation and said they would work with their governments to support the efforts of aid groups. Rigorous and sustained diplomacy will be required both in the region and with other donor capitals to ensure that the international community and host countries take necessary measures to save lives in the coming months. We need to ensure that insecurity from Somalia does not spill over into the neighboring countries.

We are also committed to addressing the humanitarian needs inside Somalia so that lives are saved and fewer people need to flee to the neighboring countries. There is an immediate need to reach vulnerable populations inside Somalia who may be unable to travel long distances to seek life-saving assistance. Ideally drought victims would not have to leave their homes in order to receive life-saving assistance, but in conflicted Somalia, that is not currently possible in all instances.

That brings us to the security situation. Al-Shabaab's activities have clearly made the current situation much worse. We expect the situation in Somalia to continue to decline, especially in southern Somalia where the U.N. has declared famine in two regions to date and where conditions continue to worsen. The international community is calling on al-Shabaab to allow unimpeded assistance in these areas of Somalia, including allowing aid groups access to the direst areas to directly assist those in greatest need.

There is not a single solution—to this regional crisis. We are working to tackle it through a variety of mechanisms and responses, including addressing the underlying causes, as noted by my colleague, Assistant Administrator Lindborg.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Dr. Brigety.

Ambassador Yamamoto, if I might pick up where Dr. Brigety's testimony left off, clearly being able to deliver humanitarian assistance within Somalia, particularly southern Somalia, is vital to preventing refugees from having to make day-long or week-long treks across the desert that are so difficult and so stressful on them and their children.

My understanding is in the past day the administration has eased restrictions on humanitarian groups providing assistance in southern Somalia. Could you just explain in a little more detail the modified policy, the extent to which it will increase the flow of aid? And do you have confidence that there is enough time left for humanitarian assistance to be provided in southern Somalia, given the famine?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. That's really a kind of multifaceted answer, and I will also refer to Dr. Lindborg for a comprehensive answer.

But, you know, 60 percent of those in need are in Shabaab-held territory. And the question comes in is whether or not this U.S. policy or not has prevented, and the answer is, no, it has not. The issue is that it has been extremely difficult—impossible—to deliver food into these Shabaab-held territories.

What the United States has taken has been to ease the OFAC licenses on NGO groups. They are required—a heightened due diligence procedures to avoid the diversion. But essentially it is to allow NGO groups and deliverers to enter al-Shabaab-held areas if they can, even if it means paying—what was it—fees or convoy fees or what have you, as long as they have done the due diligence, if there is no other alternative.

But the bottom line is, even with these measures and the easing of the licensings and procedures, is really, is Shabaab going to allow the deliveries? Right now, as an example, if you see the internally displaced people right now, you are having about 100,000 or so south of Mogadishu. You are having, at a rate of 1,000 a day going into those areas. You have Shabaab troops and shooters going into the areas and targeting refugees and making it more difficult. Amazon has done a preemptive measure to try to keep the quarters of feeding open to these IDPs.

So, the question comes in, is how are we going to stabilize the area? How are we going to allow free flow of food into these areas? And I guess I would refer to Dr. Lindborg for more information.

Senator COONS. Please, if you would like to expand, Ms. Lindborg.

Ms. LINDBORG. Yes, thanks. You know, I think time and access are the two critical challenges that we face. And we are working closely with the international community to explore a number of options that test the possibility of having greater access.

There are air lifts bringing food into Mogadishu. We are hopeful that there will be an opportunity to move more vigorously into areas where there is a willingness by al-Shabaab and others to let assistance in.

I think that the new guidance that was issued just over the last few days creates greater assurance and greater flexibility, but fundamentally this is a tough area to operate. It is probably one of the toughest operating environments globally right now. And it will take very seasoned humanitarian workers to be able to navigate through that environment.

Senator COONS. Ambassador, how would you assess the international community's response to this crisis compared to the United States? And what are we doing, and how successful are we being to encourage engagement by the African Union, the EU, the GCC, the Arab League, and other multilateral entities and groups that might be engaged?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Let me answer in two ways. First is that the response by the United States has always been there. It is not something that we have suddenly responded because of the effects of the famine.

As you know, for the last several years, the United States is the primary food supplier to the region. In fact, the Horn of Africa is probably our No. 1 region for food recipients around the world, and Ethiopia is our No. 1 country for the last several years.

The issue comes in is—another example, too, is—just to kind of give you the breadth or the depth of the problems, you know, on a good in Ethiopia you have something like 300 kids under the age of 5 dying each and every day from preventable diseases. And under this situation, the rates are much higher.

And so, the response has been how to get, A, the more food into the pipeline, ensure deliveries. More important is working with Ethiopia and Kenya to, A, get better access, expand refugee camps. And then number three is to work with the Amazon forces up in Mogadishu to ensure that there's more feeding capability to those IDPs, and also easing up procedures to make it easier for NGO groups to operate. And finally is really to confront the Shabaab and how they can, you know, either we can contain them or open up more corridors for feeding.

Senator COONS. I would be interested—and, Ms. Lindborg, you mentioned in your testimony the important role of harnessing science and technology, the role that Feed the Future has played. I, in doing the background reading on this, was struck at the effectiveness of ready to use therapeutic foods, like plumpy nut and others, that are being deployed and have revolutionized our ability to revive children who have come to the very edge of starvation, and also the investments USAID has made on water drilling in Ethiopia and how it has allowed pastoralists to sustain their lifestyle, but still provided them with more reliable water supplies.

Any brief comments you would like to add about how our strategic investments in advance of this particular crisis have changed the ground and made this different than previous drought cycles?

Ms. LINDBORG. Yes, thank you. You know, I think the most striking is what I cited in my testimony in that because of our work with the World Bank and other donors and the Ethiopian Government on the community safety net, we have enabled 7.5 million Ethiopians to not go into a state of urgent need. And in addition, there has been significant work on increasing the ability of pastoralists to weather these kinds of serious droughts through improving the health of their livestock, improving their ability to trade.

As we look ahead to the Feed the Future initiative, that is really I think at the heart of President Obama's vision for how to truly enable us to not have to mobilize large emergency responses every time there is a drought. We want to couple that with the kind of trade reforms and policies that can enable vulnerable populations to have greater protection, for there to be greater productive capacity, and to use science and technology on issues like drought resistant seeds, or better productive techniques or livestock approaches.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to all of you for testifying.

Ambassador Yamamoto, you said, and I think I got this right, that sanctions do not inhibit delivery of humanitarian aid. And I think you were referring to Somalia and al-Shabaab. What do our sanctions say regarding humanitarian aid?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. You mean that this is the OFAC licensing?

Senator ISAKSON. Yes.

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. When we debated the issue on deliveries into Shabaab-held territories, the debate was centered on the payment of convey fees to the Shabaabs in order to allow feeding into those areas.

The second thing is, when was the Shabaab using those money and funding for? And so, that became a major concern is, is through this effort of feeding are we also contributing to greater instability? And so, that became a great debate.

The problems comes in right now is that with the famine or the severe, acute malnutrition, is how do you liberalize and open up the capabilities of NGOs and explore opportunities to allow them procedurally to get into those areas faster, quicker and food deliveries?

But the problem remains is that, even with all the procedural openness, is that will the Shabaabs allow them to enter? Now, as you know, Ethiopia and Kenya have tried to open corridors for feeding, or they pushed into Somalia. But even those are not sufficient enough given that those are still remain insecure areas and dangerous. And so, it becomes a big problem of how do you engage or how do you open corridors? How do you begin to feed in those areas where really 60 percent of those in need are in Shabaab-held territories? That becomes a real problem.

Senator ISAKSON. So, the problem is the corruption at the checkpoints that the al-Shabaab would issue. They have payoff fees for safe passage, and they use those to help finance their organization. Is that what you are referring to?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Yes, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. And so, the question is, is it—are we telling them—are we telling NGOs that are willing to travel and deliver humanitarian aid that it is OK to pay those fees?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. No. We are requiring through procedures that they do the due diligence to find any way possible to be able to feed and provide food to needed areas without paying those fees. But if it becomes necessary, obviously.

Senator ISAKSON. Is there any security for NGOs provided either U.N.-wise or by the African Union in terms of getting the material into Somalia?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Well, actually I will refer to you.

Senator ISAKSON. Ms. Lindborg.

Ms. LINDBORG. Well, I know you have an NGO panel following us, so I would—I know they will have much to say on this. But, you know, I think most groups operating have a very principled approach to not paying taxes or tolls. And many are able to accomplish this.

The easing of the legal restrictions simply removes any concern that an accidental or incidental payment will not jeopardize them with any legal action. And so, it is creating a greater sense of comfort with the partners that that is not a barrier to effective assistance delivery.

Senator ISAKSON. In Somalia, after that issue, it is still a pretty dangerous place, and al-Shabaab has used violence and intimidation to carry out its intent. Do these NGOs have any degree of protection other than their own provided protection?

Ms. LINDBORG. I believe most of them choose not to have any other protection other than the protection of the communities welcoming them in and hosting them in the provision of assistance.

Ultimately, we all need the kind of access that comes from the communities wanting and understanding the importance of the international effort to help them at this critical hour.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I wanted to make a point. Chairman Coons and I have traveled to Africa together and seen the scourge that corruption causes throughout the continent. And this is not related to this issue, but the work that the United States is doing to get democratic institutions to tackle corruption in return for MCC compacts and other things of that nature, is changing Africa. This region struggles, and not necessarily only because of al-Shabaab and some of the other organizations that are there, but that is the single biggest inhibitor I see to U.S. investment in businesses, as well as U.S. foreign aid going there through NGOs.

Dr. Brigety, let me ask you about the Dadaab for a second. I was in Kenya 2 years ago, and at that time the Kenyans were expressing their frustration with the pressure being applied to them in Dadaab with the number of refugees they had then. Your flyer says they're getting 1,295 new ones a day, and they have expanded that camp, and the camp has almost a half a million people in it now. Is that correct? Other than providing the additional land for the expansion, what pressure is being put on the Kenyans by this number of people to provide help, at what cost, and how is that cost being borne?

Dr. BRIGETY. Thank you very much, Senator. You are correct that the Dadaab refugee camp is the largest in the world. It has been there since 1991.

The issue of refugees inside Kenya frankly is a very sensitive one politically for them. They have been very patient in dealing with this refugee crisis for two decades now.

Just to give you sort of a sense of an order of magnitude, earlier this year in January, Dadaab was getting about 1,200 new arrivals a week. It is now about 1,200, 1,300 a day. The international community has long asked them to open an additional camp. The three major camps there are Ifo, Hagadera, and Dagahaley. There was an expansion to Ifo called Ifo Two, which we have long asked them to expand.

When I was in Dadaab 3 weeks ago, I was there on the ground with Prime Minister Odinga, who had a public press conference with the international media. And at that press conference he gave his word that the Government of Kenya would allow the Ifo expansion to be opened. And UNHCR has begun to move refugees there, and we look forward to the continued commitment of the Government of Kenya to support that.

The cost for the camp is largely borne by the international community. The U.N. high commissioner for refugees is responsible for camp management and the World Food Programme, which is supported by USAID. It is responsible for feeding those refugees.

The Government of Kenya obviously provides some financial support for the guard through the provision of security forces around the borders, but the United States has long been the leader in

terms of supporting UNHCR. We work with our other international partners to do so.

Senator ISAKSON. The reason I brought it up, is I think it is—when we talk about tragedies like what is going on with the famine on the Horn, we also ought to give kudos to those countries who are trying to help. And the Kenyan Government and the Kenyan people have been supportive, as you said, for two decades and are bearing a tremendous amount of the burden now. And the cost of that security alone around Dadaab is a significant contribution by Kenya. So, we need to acknowledge and appreciate what they have done in that case.

Dr. BRIGETY. Yes, sir. You are correct. And we do regularly.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

If I could just follow up, the other largest refugee camp that is receiving Somalis is Dolo Ado in Ethiopia. My understanding was there were nearly 2,000 Somali refugees arriving a day up until a few weeks ago, but that has recently dropped significantly. Do you have a sense of the cause of that, and how do you assess the Ethiopian Government's increased willingness or capacity to provide support, and what the ongoing issues are at that camp?

Dr. BRIGETY. Thank you for the question, Senator. You are correct. When I was in Dolo about 3 weeks ago, the arrival rate was about 2,000 a day; it has now dropped to about 250 a day. We frankly do not have a good answer for why that number has decreased by an order of magnitude, but we are continuing to work with our partners to try to understand what the nature of that dynamic is.

When I was first in Dolo in February this year, the two major camps there had about—Bocamaya and Mokadida had about 50,000 refugees combined. That number has now doubled, as you say, to about 100,000.

At the rates that we were seeing in mid-July, it is conceivable that rate could double again by the end of the year. The Government of Ethiopia frankly has been a very, very good partner in terms of supporting this refugee population, particularly since the odds out of the current drought crisis earlier this summer. They have responded with alacrity in terms of providing additional staff from their refugee agency to deploy there to Dolo Ado. They have allowed NGOs to operate at the transit center near there. We engage regularly and repeatedly with the Government of Ethiopia both in their Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also their refugee agency to ensure they know we are effective partners with them, and we are very pleased with the extent to which they have extended their hospitality to these people in need.

Senator COONS. What is the medical situation in these two camps? It is hard for a Senator from a State the size of Delaware to grasp a camp of half a million people. That is the size of Kansas City. That would be five times larger than the largest city in my State. How are they managing the health pressures, the health concerns, and ensuring that we do not have, as Ms. Lindborg mentioned, with the onset of September rains, a follow-on humanitarian crisis from a rapid spread of disease?

Dr. BRIGETY. Well, Senator, that is a very good question. To be frank, in Dadaab, which is not yet at 500,000, but certainly could be by the end of the year at current rates, the health pressures are enormous. Dadaab refugee camp complex, just the camp, is now the fourth-largest population center in Kenya beyond Mombassa, beyond Nairobi and others.

Now having said that, there are a number of partners which help provide health services inside the camps. Doctors Without Borders is one of the more important. But frankly, with the new refugees that are arriving, there are about 44,000 refugees that are simply on the outskirts of Ifo Two because they were not allowed to settle in the Ifo camp expansion, and the other three camps were full.

So, those that are settling on the outskirts where there were no services to speak of, there were no significant health services or others, were clearly suffering additional rates of all sorts of basic preventable diseases, to include, frankly, respiratory diseases, because these are very hot, dusty conditions. You are out without shelter, and it is very easy to develop those sort of problems.

So, we are hoping that the addition of the opening of this Ifo camp expansion will give people shelter, will give them access to establish health clinics and other facilities, which, frankly, are already built, but simply have needed the permission of the Government of Ethiopia to support. And we will continue to support both UNHCR and these NGOs to providing these essential medical services, especially to treat these horrible rates of malnutrition amongst children under 5 years old that we are seeing.

Senator COONS. A question for Ms. Lindborg, if I might. We were talking about science and technology earlier. These two nations, Ethiopia and Kenya, are bearing an enormous burden in terms of the refugee demand. Much of Kenya's power is delivered by hydroelectric power, which, due to the record drought, has dropped by more than half.

What is USAID doing to help deploy alternative power, whether solar or geothermal or other sources of power, that might help provide electricity, either in Ethiopia or Kenya, to these camps, or that might help reduce the strain on the rest of these host nations in terms of their electricity grid? And is there anything we are doing to sort of streamline or expedite the process of deploying alternative sources of power that are not so reliant on water?

Ms. LINDBORG. Senator, I would like to get back to you with the specifics on that answer. I know that there are a number of conversations with both Kenya and Ethiopia about ways in which we can work closely with them to mitigate the impact of future drought. And so, there are conversations underway, and we would be delighted to get back to you with details.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Let me ask just a final question, any member of the panel wants to speak to. What are we doing to avoid the significant security challenges facing Somalia spilling over into Kenya and Ethiopia? Both of these nations have supported and sustained very large refugee populations from Somalia for a long time, and would have understandable concerns about the possibility of it destabilizing either of their nations.

And then, last, is the investment that is being made sufficient from the United States, from the international community? And what additional resources might be needed, and how might we be more effective in engaging the NGO community and the international community on top of the commitments already made by the United States?

Ambassador.

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Answer quickly. You know, the Somalia and that whole region is just so complex. I mean, for example, if you think about it, one out of every six Somali is an Ethiopian living in the Ogaden area. And then the refugee flows, and, of course, the IDPs within Somalia.

The issue comes in is on security and stability. For Ethiopia and Kenya, Somalia is a strategic interest because of security concerns. During the time when I was there, for instance, in 1 year's time we had 12 terrorist bombings in 1 year, and from groups emanating out of Somalia into Ethiopia. So, if it is a concern for the Ethiopians, just as it is a concern for Kenya, then it is a concern for us in the regional states.

And so, how do you ease security concerns? And I think the dual track approach is one approach that we have worked not just with the regional states, but also with the transitional government, to stabilize that region. And that really is one area that to look at the security by the Somalis themselves addressing the Somali problems. And then, the Amazon troops from Uganda and Burundi have done a great job in taking back a lot of parts of Mogadishu.

But, again, the bottom-line problem is that security is going to be a long-term problem. Do we have enough finances? No. But it is an issue that is going to be in partnership with the regional states and also the Somalis themselves.

Dr. BRIGETY. Senator, if I may add one concrete example on the security aspect. One of the principal crossing points from Somalia into Kenya is a place called Lavoie, where the United States has long encouraged the Government of Kenya to open a screening center.

As you know, the Government of Kenya has officially closed their border from Kenya and Ethiopia—Kenya to Somalia has for some years. We have encouraged the Government of Kenya to reopen the screening center at Lavoie, and we have committed some funds—some considerable funds to help them pay for that opening. And that will be a means for them to help them know who is actually coming into their country.

In addition, it would be a means to actually providing assistance to refugees at the first point of crossing before they have to make the additional 80 kilometer trek to Dadaab. So, we hope the Government of Kenya will continue to consider this favorably and will open the screening center in short order.

Ms. LINDBORG. Well, I will just wrap that up by saying, we are very focused on ensuring that the host communities around the vicinities of the camps also receive assistance. There are large drought affected areas, as we have discussed, in both Ethiopia and Kenya, and it is important that we work to meet those very grave needs as well.

On the awareness issue, it is critically important, I think, that we mobilize the resources of very generous private citizens as well as donors, including nontraditional donors. And there is a significant effort underway to do exactly that.

Senator COONS. Great. Thank you very much.

Senator.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one question, and I guess, Ambassador, this might be directed to you, but, Ms. Lindborg, you might have something on it too.

In our briefing memo from the committee, there is a reference to ethnic Somalis living in Ethiopia, and access given to NGOs to be able to provide with them food and humanitarian assistance, the inference being it was somewhat restricted. What is the case with ethnic Somalis in Ethiopia, and is there a restriction in getting food and aid to those Somalis?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. I think during the time that I was the Ambassador there, I spent most of my time traveling into the Ogaden/Somalia area to ensure that the U.S. food assistance was getting to the right people. And one of our problems—I will give you an example.

Right now, during the last year that I was there, we had something like \$600 million or 800,000 metric tons of food to deliver to the people, mostly into the Ogaden area. And we were able to verify through WFP and other NGO groups about a 70-percent accuracy rate of getting the food to distribution points.

The problem was getting the distribution points to the beneficiaries, and we were only able to confirm about 20 percent. The reason is because of not only insecurity, but also the problems of delivery of food into areas of insecurity and conflict.

So, we have been working very closely with the Ethiopians to open up access and also allow our NGO groups to go into areas to ensure that the food was getting to the right, appropriate people. And so, those are some of the, you know, essential problems.

Senator ISAKSON. But there is still some difficulty of getting it there.

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Yes. Yes, sir, it is.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much.

Senator COONS. We would like to thank all members of this panel, and thank you for your testimony, thank you for your service, and thank you for your work on this very important issue. We appreciate your testimony today.

We now would like to turn to our second panel. We will take a moment here while they join us.

We would like to welcome Mr. Konyndyk, Dr. Pham, and Mr. Schaap. And I encourage all three of you to correct my pronunciation of your name. We are grateful for your taking time out of your important work to join us here today and to add your testimony to the record, and to the attention that is being paid by the Senate and the international community to this concerning challenge in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Konyndyk, I would invite you to give an opening statement. And, again, I would encourage each of you to try and contain your comments to about five minutes, and we will submit for the record any additional statement that you might have.

Please, sir.

**STATEMENT OF JEREMY KONYNDYK, DIRECTOR OF POLICY
AND ADVOCACY, MERCY CORPS, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. KONYNDYK. Thank you, Chairman Coons, thank you, Senator Isakson, for the opportunity to testify before you today. It is an incredibly important issue, and we really appreciate the focus that you and the subcommittee are dedicating to this. It is very timely and very urgent.

My name is Jeremy Konyndyk. I am director of policy and advocacy with Mercy Corps. I am here today representing a relief and development organization that works in over 40 countries, but particularly for today's purposes, in three of the most affected countries in the region, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, where we are currently providing urgently needed drought relief throughout that region.

I think that everyone has been shocked by some of the photos that have been coming out of the region, but particularly out of Dadaab and Mogadishu. In recent days, there was a very striking and shocking photo in yesterday's New York Times, of an emaciated child. As horrific as some of these images are, I think it is important that we also recognize that for every image of a child who, however unfortunate, has at least made it to a treatment center in Mogadishu or Dadaab, there are many, many more children, and adults as well, who have not made it that far. And that is a growing tragedy.

It is also critical to remember that even as much of the attention so far has focused on Somalia, the situation in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti is desperate as well. Our teams are doing assessments right now throughout Kenya and Ethiopia and initiating programs, and they are finding vast swathes of Ethiopia and Kenya that are in a state of extreme humanitarian emergency. Our teams are seeing landscapes full of dead and dying livestock, which normally would form the basis of the ability of people living there to feed themselves and support their families. They are seeing villages completely emptied by the drought because people simply cannot get water, and they have had to go elsewhere. They are seeing families and meeting families who are struggling to eat even one meal a day. It is a truly desperate situation.

The superlatives that are now being used to describe the crisis in the Horn are not hyperbole. This does threaten to become one of the worst, perhaps the worst, humanitarian crisis that we have seen in a generation.

The good news, if there is any, is that the aid community has a pretty good understanding of how to fight a crisis like this. We have learned a great deal since the famines of the 1980s and 1990s about how to respond effectively to hunger crises, and I have described this in much more detail in my written remarks that I have submitted for the record.

The big question at this point is whether aid groups will actually have the opportunity to apply that understanding that we have developed. Our entire sector is facing a massive shortfall in funding for the response. The United States in particular has been very generous so far. The rest of the world has also, with some variance,

put up a good amount of money. But it still falls far short of what we saw even a few years ago when a drought hit the region in 2008.

There does not seem to be yet a global recognition of how severe this crisis is. We are seeing just a fraction of the engagement and the level of resources that we saw after the Haiti earthquake, for example, despite the fact that the number of people at risk across the Horn now exceeds the total population of Haiti, much less the population that was affected by the earthquake there.

The U.S. Government is working very, very hard to respond and to mobilize resources, and we are deeply appreciative of that. The teams that are working this issue at USAID and in the State Department's Refugee Bureau really are the best in the business. And we deeply appreciate their commitment, their expertise, and their professionalism.

But they need resources in order to combat this crisis. So far this year, the U.S. contribution, while extremely generous and we recognize it as such, remains under half of what the Bush administration contributed in 2008 to the last major drought in the region. And we are very concerned as we look at the upcoming fiscal year budget debate that there are proposals on the other side of the Hill to slash the very accounts that are providing the assistance that the U.S. Government is using for the response to this crisis, specifically the International Disaster Assistance Account, Migration and Refugee Assistance Account, and Food for Peace. Particularly Food for Peace should be highlighted here because that is our food aid account, and that has been—there is a proposed cut of 30 percent of that budget over fiscal year 2011 levels. That would be a 50-percent cut over what we had in 2008 during the last major crisis. So, that is a real concern.

The other challenge to the USG response has been the legal restrictions, which were discussed a bit on the earlier panel. It does now appear that the U.S. Government has waived or is moving to waive these. That is a very positive step. We recognize it, and we commend the administration for taking it.

We do, nonetheless, have some remaining concerns about how this will be implemented. I would be happy to address those in more detail during questioning. But even as we hopefully move past this impasse, it is important to recognize that the fact that the administration issued this license only several weeks after a famine was declared and several months after we knew that something very, very bad was coming, represents a real systemic problem.

I do not think it makes sense to point at any particular part of the administration as bearing responsibility for this. I think that they were struggling to hash these things out the best that they could. But there is a systemic issue here that I think bears further exploration in terms of the interaction between some of our legal restrictions and our humanitarian priorities.

Very quickly to the question of whether we can get into the south and how that is going to work, I would say we do not know yet. We are going to—the waiving of the legal restrictions takes an obstacle out of the way. But there are a lot of questions about what can be achieved in the south, what kind of access we are going to

see. I think Dr. Pham can talk a little bit more about the regional politics there.

I think there are reason for optimism in terms of UNICEF and the Red Cross' success so far in getting some aid shipments in without interference. That gives us hope, so we have, I think, a posture of hope and cautious optimism, but not naivete about that at this point. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Konyndyk follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEREMY KONYNDYK

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, thank you for inviting me to testify before the subcommittee today on the critically important issue of drought and famine in the Horn of Africa. I am here today in my capacity as Director of Policy and Advocacy for Mercy Corps, a global relief and development organization that responds to disasters and supports community development in more than 40 countries around the world. Mercy Corps has worked in the Horn for many years, and we currently manage relief and development programs in the three countries most affected by the drought: Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia. In these countries we have hundreds of staff providing assistance to 900,000 drought victims. We are working in many of the areas most affected by the drought: North and Central Somalia, Eastern Ethiopia, and Northeastern Kenya. In these regions we are pursuing a range of drought-focused interventions, including providing access to water; supporting livelihoods so that people can afford to feed themselves and protect their livestock; aiding communities to better manage the scarce water resources that they have; and providing supplemental nutrition to at-risk children and mothers. We are undertaking these programs with the generous support of public and private donors, including the important contributions of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

With 12.4 million people across the Horn in already in a state of humanitarian crisis—a figure that has increased by \$3 million in just the past month—this emergency threatens to become the worst humanitarian catastrophe of the past several decades. While most attention has focused on Somalia, this is truly a regional emergency: people in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti all face major shortfalls in access to food and water as well. The situation within southern Somalia is catastrophic, with death rates in the worst-affected regions, particularly among children, up to triple the threshold for declaring a famine and levels of malnutrition that are also well beyond the famine threshold.¹ The situation in the rest of the region is less catastrophic, but still extremely dire. Across Kenya, Ethiopia, and central Somalia, Mercy Corps teams are seeing people's livelihoods collapse in real time, pushing the affected populations closer and closer to calamity. The situation, while already desperate, promises to worsen in coming months as remaining water and food stocks are further depleted. The international response, though it has accelerated in recent weeks, remains inadequate. In the hardest-hit region, southern Somalia, security obstacles continue to impede the delivery of assistance and international legal restrictions have further compounded the challenges of operating there. Without swift action on all fronts, the drought will have devastating human and regional impacts that will be impossible to roll back.

HOW IS THIS CRISIS DIFFERENT?

While drought is common in the Horn of Africa, the current situation is far graver than the normal cycles of drought that occasionally hit the region. Several factors contribute to this. First is the rainfall over the past year, which in most areas is among the lowest ever recorded. The region has two main rainy seasons per year, one in the fall and one in the late spring to early summer. Over the past year, both largely failed, leaving the driest conditions that most parts of the Horn have seen in 60 years. Seven districts across swaths of northeastern Kenya and southern Ethiopia have recorded the driest season since 1950.² The broad area across which the rains failed is also unique: a typical drought in the region would be less uniform, enabling people to temporarily relocate to other areas to find water. This time, the broad coverage of the drought has meant that people's normal "backup" locations are themselves in a state of drought. Finally, this drought comes on the heels of

¹ FEWSNET/FSNAU: Evidence for a Famine Declaration (July 19, 2011).

² USAID FEWS-NET: East Africa: Past year one of the driest on record in the eastern Horn (June 14, 2011).

another serious regional drought in 2008 which, though less severe than the current situation, left elevated vulnerability across the region.

The result has been a progressive erosion of the capacity of people in the region to cope with economic and climatic shocks. Most rural and nomadic populations in the Horn depend on livestock herding or small-scale agriculture to support themselves. Both forms of livelihood are heavily dependent on water and vulnerable to drought. In a milder drought, people would rely on a variety of “coping mechanisms” to see themselves through: shifting herds to different areas in search of alternate water sources; selling off land holdings or parts of their herds to generate extra income; substituting for less expensive foods; reducing meals; and cutting back on household expenses.

The severity of the current drought, coming on the heels of the 2008 drought, has exhausted these coping mechanisms and left people with no income and few options. The failure of the rains across the region has meant that there are few areas where livestock can be shifted to find alternate water sources. Those that exist are quickly depleted by the increased pressure. Selling livestock at market generates little to no income because the condition of most livestock is so poor that they can fetch little money. Livestock are a form of both income and savings for people in the region; as huge numbers of livestock have died off they have wiped out the savings and income potential of innumerable families. The poor rains have led to widespread crop failures across the region, greatly reducing the local supply of food both at a household level and in regional markets. The prices of locally produced staples accordingly reached record highs in June in most markets throughout the eastern Horn.³ In some parts of Somalia, prices of staple cereals like white maize have increased by as much as 350 percent above last year.⁴ This massive inflation has quickly wiped out what scant savings people may have. These factors, taken together, can quickly lead to a complete collapse in peoples’ ability to feed themselves. With their livestock assets depleted or deceased, no yield from their own agriculture, their savings spent, their land sold, and food in the market priced beyond reach, people find themselves without options. Aid or migration become their only possibilities for survival.

In southern Somalia, as we are now vividly seeing, this process has fully run its course. The result is some of the most devastating human suffering that aid professionals have ever seen. The desperation and destitution of those who have fled to Kenya, central Somalia, and Ethiopia has been well-documented: “roads of death” on which mothers are forced to leave behind the children who die en route; cases of advanced malnutrition so severe that those lucky enough to obtain treatment still have only a 40-percent chance of survival⁵; a torrent of refugees and internally displaced persons so large that camps and reception centers have been quickly overwhelmed. As disturbing as the refugee situation is, there are many more within Somalia who are too poor or too weak to even make the journey out. The slowdown in refugee arrival numbers in Ethiopia and Kenya over the past week may indicate, ominously, that the bulk of those who were capable of leaving have now done so. The numbers from FEWSNET suggest that those who remain in the south are now dying in astronomically large numbers. Child mortality in every district of southern Somalia now surpasses famine levels. In the worst-hit areas, children under 5 are dying at a rate five times the famine threshold.⁶ At this rate more than a tenth of the under-5 population in these areas is being wiped out every 2 months. Tens of thousands of people are estimated to have already died, a number that could reach into the hundreds of thousands if the situation continues to deteriorate as expected.

In Kenya, central Somalia, and Ethiopia, the wider availability of aid and the existence of government safety net programs have slowed the process of livelihood collapse. But existing aid flows are not keeping up with the growing challenges, and safety net programs are not built to handle such massive levels of need. UNICEF estimates that over a quarter of the more than 2 million acutely malnourished children across the drought-affected Horn are at risk of death.⁷ The humanitarian needs in Kenya and Ethiopia are important to address in their own right, but they have added significance given the growing refugee populations in both countries. It is well-established that provision of aid to refugees can provoke resentment and

³ USAID FEWS-NET: East Africa Food Security Outlook Update (July 2011).

⁴ FSNAU, FEWS-NET: Somalia Dekadal Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring (July 25, 2011).

⁵ Voice of America: African Refugee Children at High Risk for Kalaazar Malaria Viral Infections (July 27, 2011).

⁶ FEWSNET/FSNAU: Evidence for a Famine Declaration (July 19, 2011).

⁷ UNICEF ESARO: Horn of Africa Crisis: Situation Report #2 (July 28, 2011).

backlash from host communities, ultimately endangering the refugees, if the needs of those host communities are not also met.

Mercy Corps teams in Ethiopia and Kenya report mounting needs that are approaching critical levels in many areas. In Kenya, while most international attention has focused on the Dadaab refugee camp, the Kenyan population in the north-east of the country is entering a critical phase. The current dry spell is expected to last through at least October and food insecurity will get worse over the next few months.⁸ Livestock are dying in large numbers due to lack of water, and this crop cycle will be a near-total failure in many parts of the country due to the drought.⁹ The situation is so desperate that our assessments have found instances of herders braving security challenges to take their remaining livestock into riverine parts of Somalia to attempt to water them there. This has led to a phenomenon of “drought widows”—women whose husbands have left to seek water for their livestock, leaving their families behind indefinitely. Malnutrition rates have been rising, and an estimated 40 percent of farming households in some districts are now skipping meals.¹⁰ Our teams expect to begin seeing elevated mortality rates in the very near future if swift action is not taken. In Ethiopia we are seeing a parallel situation. Recently completed assessments by Mercy Corps in eastern Ethiopia revealed that the drought is already having a massive impact on the population. In some areas that we visited, entire villages were empty—their inhabitants forced to move as the drought devastated their ability to support and feed themselves. Dead cattle litter the landscape, and along one 40-kilometer stretch of road we visited not a single bit of foliage was visible. Many families have been reduced to eating one meal per day. Ethiopian colleagues who have been living and working in the region for decades have told us that they have never before seen anything like this.

SCALING UP THE RESPONSE

The international community’s response to the drought has been substantial, but nowhere near adequate. The United Nations estimates that nearly \$2.5 billion will be required to meet the region’s needs this year.¹¹ International contributions for humanitarian response, currently around \$1.3 billion, are well below this target, and indeed are running well behind the levels contributed just 3 years ago, when a lesser drought gripped the region. Compared to other major disaster such as the Haiti earthquake or the Indian Ocean Tsunami, the drought crisis in the Horn is receiving a fraction of the attention and support that was committed to those emergencies. This reflects the paradox that aid agencies often face with slow-onset disasters: compared to more-telegenic natural disasters, in which most of the death and injury occur instantaneously, in slow onset disasters we can potentially save far, far more of the threatened lives. Yet we typically have a much harder time mobilizing the resources required to do so. We are working hard to convey to the public in the United States and other donor states that their support is badly needed. However, private contributions for this emergency are many times lower than the generous levels contributed after other major disasters.

On the U.S. side, the work of the government’s emergency responders in USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Office of Food for Peace (FFP), as well as the State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has been exemplary. These offices possess a high level of expertise and professionalism, and they have focused on this crisis with great seriousness and energy. Their response is to be commended. But they will need ample resources well into the next fiscal year if they are to sustain an aggressive response to this emergency.

U.S. contributions to the Horn of Africa are down significantly relative to 2008. The Bush administration’s humanitarian contributions that year topped \$1 billion regionwide, while this year the United States has contributed less than half that amount.¹² To put this in perspective, the U.S. contribution toward the drought this year amounts to roughly one-sixth of the amount that Congress appropriated for the Haiti response in the 2010 supplemental; this despite the fact that the population at risk in the Horn is greater than the entire population of Haiti. U.S. support to this drought also lags far behind U.S. contributions to other major crises, as the chart below demonstrates.

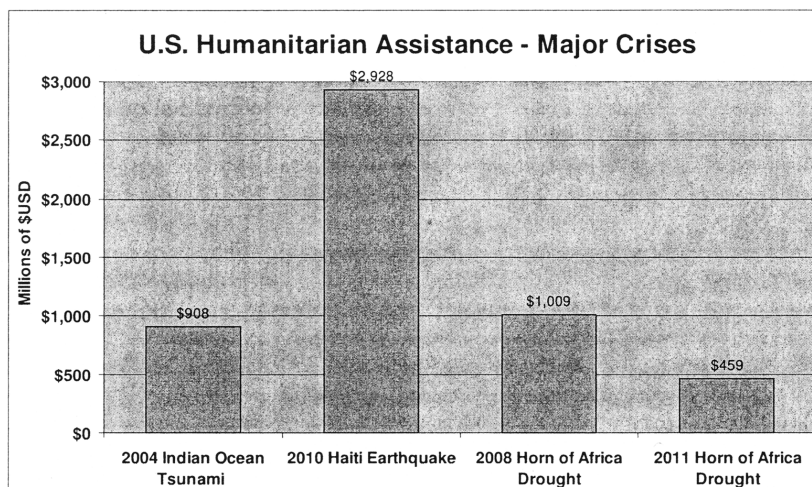
⁸UNOCHA: Humanitarian Requirements for the Horn of Africa Drought (July 28, 2011).

⁹USAID FEWS-NET: Kenya Enhanced Food Security Monitoring (July 22, 2011).

¹⁰USAID, WFP, FEWS-NET Special Report: Kenya Food Security (June 2011).

¹¹UNOCHA: Humanitarian Requirements for the Horn of Africa Drought (July 28, 2011).

¹²UNOCHA Financial Tracking System: Somalia Emergencies for 2008—Total Humanitarian Funding per Donor; UNOCHA Financial Tracking System: Somalia Emergencies for 2011—Total Humanitarian Funding per Donor.



Sources: GAO: USAID Tsunami Signature Reconstruction Efforts in Indonesia and Sri Lanka Exceed Initial Cost and Schedule Estimates, Face Further Risk (February 2007); GAO: Haiti Reconstruction—U.S. Efforts Have Begun. Expanded Oversight Still to be Implemented (May 2011); USAID Fact Sheet #10: Horn of Africa Complex Emergency (October 31, 2008); USAID Fact Sheet #4: Horn of Africa Drought (July 28, 2011).

In Somalia specifically, U.S. support dropped off drastically from 2008 to 2010, falling by 88 percent. While recent contributions have started to reverse this trend, the United States contribution to humanitarian response in Somalia still stands at only 15 percent of the international total, compared against a U.S. share of 40 percent to 50 percent in the rest of the region. The United States is the largest global donor to humanitarian relief, and other donors often follow our lead. If the United States steps up its assistance to the region, particularly to Somalia, this could have a powerful multiplier effect by influencing the behavior of other donors.

CHALLENGES TO THE RESPONSE

There are several important reasons why the impact of the drought is proving so much more severe in southern Somalia than elsewhere in the region. The first is the long history of insecurity in the south, which has impeded aid actors and prevented development investments. Even before the southern militias imposed restrictions on aid access, the history of insecurity in the area prevented the sort of sustained food security and development programming that has been common in Kenya and Ethiopia. These programs build resiliency, improve natural resource management, and help people to mitigate the challenges posed by cyclical droughts. Southern Somalia has not benefited from this kind of aid, and has been left less resilient to drought than its neighbors.

The next factor, as has been widely reported, is the restrictions on aid access by southern militias, and accompanying security risks to aid groups. The challenges to aid groups in the south have been well documented, including in the recent report by the U.N.'s Monitoring Group for Somalia.¹³ The report describes how aid groups were able to operate relatively freely in the south until 2010, when the operating environment deteriorated significantly as the militias began to impose unacceptable conditions on aid groups. Those conditions, which were inconsistent with core humanitarian principles, contributed to decisions by many aid groups to scale back their work. By the time that Mercy Corps and other aid groups were formally expelled from the south in September 2010, we had few operations left there in any case because of the deteriorating operating environment. It is important to note here that we and other groups have continued to operate in the northern and central regions of the country.

The final obstacle has been U.S. legal restrictions on aid funding to Somalia, which predate the expulsion of aid groups by the militias. Reviewing the background

¹³ UN: Monitoring Group Report on Somalia and Eritrea (July 18, 2011).

of these restrictions is important not because I believe them to have been the principal obstacle to aiding southern Somalia—they were not. But these restrictions have been the only such obstacle that the U.S. Government could unilaterally take out of the way. We are encouraged by the recent indications from the administration that these restrictions have now been modified to allow greater support to relief efforts in the south. We have some remaining concerns about how the new arrangement will be implemented, particularly the fact that it only applies to programs that are wholly or partly funded by the U.S. Government. This provides no protection to interventions implemented by U.S. organization with funding from private foundations or European donors, for example. We hope to address those issues swiftly, but nonetheless the administration should be commended for its willingness to alter the overall restrictions in light of the ongoing emergency. With this issue hopefully moving in a positive direction, I do not wish to dwell overly long on the past. But it is important, even as we look forward, to take stock of what we have until now been unable to do, and draw lessons from that.

The challenges that have arisen from the legal restrictions on aid to Somalia over the past several years are fundamentally systemic. Despite the best efforts of the professionals at USAID, the restrictions have several times caused serious delays in the efforts of USAID and U.S. relief groups, to provide aid to Somalia. USAID, for its part, has faced a thicket of legal and political obstacles but has consistently done its utmost to deal with those in a way that enables responsible aid to continue. Throughout our deliberations over the past several years, USAID's professionals have been collaborative and constructive. The blame for the delays and obstacles ultimately lies with the nature of the restrictions themselves. They are overly broad, allowing automatic humanitarian exemptions only for medical supplies and religious materials. Obtaining humanitarian exemptions for anything outside of those two categories typically requires a license that is only approved after a cumbersome and lengthy interagency process. This is a system that cries out for serious review, as I believe the last 2 years have demonstrated.

The restrictions first became an obstacle in Somalia in April 2009, when USAID raised concerns that some U.S. resources might be diverted in violation of U.S. Government prohibitions on material support to groups designated by the United States as terrorists. It was reported at the time that USAID was seeking an OFAC license for its work in Somalia, but that the Treasury Department was reluctant to grant this. Over the summer of 2009, USAID stopped processing new humanitarian response grants to U.N. agencies and NGOs while deliberations over a path forward dragged on.¹⁴ In the midst of a serious humanitarian crisis in much of the country, numerous U.S.-funded humanitarian response programs were suspended as grant agreements expired and could not be renewed. An agreement was finally struck in late October of that year—nearly 7 months after the issue first arose—to allow funding to move forward in FY2010.¹⁵

However, when the FY 2010 grants began to expire in early FY 2011, USAID again suspended grant processing. By this point, most U.N. and NGO partners were no longer operating in southern Somalia, and the grant requests that were held up were instead for northern and central regions of Somalia, which are not under the control of U.S.-designated militant groups. By the time the FY 2010 grants began expiring, the fall 2010 rainy season in Somalia had failed and it was clear that a dire humanitarian situation would arise in the coming months. Several months passed as the administration sought a way out of the impasse. In late spring, U.N. and NGO partners entered into negotiations with USAID over whether to resume funding. An agreement to allow USAID to resume humanitarian funding to northern and central Somalia was finally struck in May of this year—nearly 8 months into FY 2011.

The 8 months that were lost were a period in which the humanitarian community was well aware of the prospect of severe drought and famine. This was the very period when the U.S. Government's U.N. and NGO partners could have been working full-tilt to prepare for the coming calamity. While the south was not accessible to us at that point, a great deal could have been done to preposition, prepare communities in accessible regions of the country, and assist the already-large flows of internally displaced people. Yet the bureaucratic tie-up over U.S. legal restrictions left U.N. and NGO partners unable to obtain USG resources that would have enabled a much more robust response in the northern and central regions. This has been particularly damaging in central Somalia, which has been afflicted with drought

¹⁴New York Times: U.S. Delays Somalia Aid, Fearing it is Feeding Terrorists (October 1, 2009).

¹⁵IRIN: U.S. Government to Set New Aid Terms (October 6, 2009).

every bit as severe as the southern areas, and also hosts tens of thousands of displaced southerners in desperate conditions.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The situation across the Horn of Africa is likely to worsen in the coming months as water sources dwindle and people's stocks of food and money are depleted. In southern Somalia—assuming that the administration's moves to relax the legal restrictions will enable aid groups to resume programs there—many agencies will be eager to move ahead with relief efforts. The NGO community is strongly committed to ensuring that aid is not diverted away from those who need it most. I would emphasize that we do not know exactly what to expect in terms of access and security, and we do not discount the very real challenges that remain. But there are some reasons for cautious optimism, including the recent success of United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross in making initial aid distributions freely and without interference.¹⁶

The recent report of the U.N.'s Somalia Monitoring Group described how access for aid groups often varies considerably in different regions of the south, depending on local political and clan dynamics and their interplay with higher level political factors. That dynamic will largely shape the opportunities for response in southern Somalia, and provides further grounds for cautious optimism over what may be achievable. Regardless of the high-level political movements—positive or negative—aid groups will ultimately have to negotiate terms of safe and effective access with local leaders in communities across the south. Many aid groups will choose to work with or support local Somali civil society organizations, which have capacity and long experience working on humanitarian response. This will result in a sort of “patchwork quilt” approach to assistance provision, with different agencies providing aid in whichever communities they are able to safely access. These arrangements are likely to remain highly fluid, and aid groups will have to show extreme flexibility and responsiveness to seize new opportunities quickly.

Beyond southern Somalia, there is a great deal that can be done to prevent the rest of the region from descending into famine conditions. The humanitarian community has learned a great deal over the past few decades about how to deal more effectively with food crises. No longer does the international response to famine and drought center mainly on camps and food distribution. Instead, we follow several “best practices” learned from past disasters:

- *Work with markets, not against them:* Mass food distribution is not always the best way to deal with a food crisis; it can sometimes distort and undermine local markets, put merchants out of business, and degrade important market supply links. Mass hunger is not a result simply of inadequate local food production, but rather of inadequate resources amongst the population to access food through their normal means. This remains the case in the Horn, even in much of southern Somalia: food can be found in the markets, but it is priced well beyond the means of those who need it. This means that food voucher and cash-based interventions, which enable people to afford food, will be an important tool for combating hunger. These interventions can also be more efficient than distributing food aid, since they do not require the transport and importation of food nor complicated distribution networks. In-kind food aid will likely be needed to supplement what is available in markets, but should not be the automatic first resort.
- *Preserve livelihoods, not just lives:* Interventions that seek to support the livelihoods of at-risk populations, as well as save lives, will bear helpful dividends. The most effective way to mitigate long-term impacts of the drought is to provide assistance that protects the remnants of people's livelihoods in the near term and helps them to rebuild their livelihoods quickly in the medium term. This means interventions to protect remaining animal stocks, like veterinary services and water trucking; and agricultural support to ensure that farmers need not miss the next planting season due to depleted seed stocks. These sorts of livelihood-focused activities will reduce the need for prolonged humanitarian support.¹⁷
- *Pay attention to health:* In the 1991–92 famine in Somalia, the return of rain ironically posed major health challenges because the drought-weakened population was extra-vulnerable to water-borne diseases. Food aid and livelihood support is not enough to save lives in this kind of situation—aggressive health

¹⁶ Devex: Aid Reaches Famine-Hit Region in Southern Somalia (July 27, 2011).

¹⁷ ALNAP: Slow-onset Disasters—Drought and Food and Livelihoods Insecurity (2007).

care and emergency nutrition interventions are also necessary. Opportunistic diseases that prey on a weakened population will otherwise claim many lives.

- *Help people where they are:* Aid programs that assist people where they are, rather than inducing them to displace to other areas, are both more efficient and more humane than camp-based interventions. Preventing displacement minimizes social and economic disruptions, enables continuation of livelihood activities, and avoids the arduous and dangerous process of abrupt relocation. It also avoids creation of semipermanent refugee and displacement camps, which are expensive to maintain and often hard to close down once a crisis ends.
- *Invest in long-term resiliency:* Even as we focus on the immediate crisis, the aid community and aid donors should be thinking hard about how to build better resiliency to this type of crisis. While this drought is extremely severe, lesser droughts have become a common occurrence in the Horn in recent years and are becoming a permanent fixture. Avoiding future humanitarian crises will require that we seek to work with governments and community leaders to help at-risk populations to better manage their natural resources and develop successful coping mechanisms. This must be a long-term investment and will need to be sustained by donors even after the energy around the current crisis has waned. Fortunately, sustaining longer term investments in resiliency will save money over the long term by mitigating the impact of recurring droughts on the population, thus reducing the need for frequent humanitarian assistance.

We know what we must do; what remains in question is whether we will be able to do it. This rests on two important unknowns. The first is whether the region at large—Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti—will receive sufficient resources to enable humanitarian agencies and regional governments to respond aggressively to mounting needs. The second is whether obstacles to humanitarian access in southern Somalia—principally the local restrictions and security threats, but also legal restrictions amongst donor states—will be removed in order to enable a response to scale up in that region. With these unknowns in mind, I would like to leave the committee with several recommendations:

1. *Ensure a robust U.S. Government response:* As noted above, the U.S. response this year stands at less than half of what the Bush administration contributed to the region's drought response in 2008. While the U.S. and global contributions this year are generous, they do not approach the level that will be required to avoid a large-scale catastrophe—as Secretary Clinton herself acknowledged on July 20.¹⁸ USAID did a good job of regional prepositioning, and has been rapidly churning out new grants over the past month as the full scope of the disaster has emerged. But real questions remain about whether the United States will be able to step up like it did in 2008. The FY 2012 outlook is not encouraging, with the House of Representatives proposing to slash the very accounts that are financing the U.S. Government response: Food for Peace (a 30-percent proposed cut below FY11 levels, and 50 percent below FY08 levels); International Disaster Assistance (a 12-percent proposed cut below FY11 levels); and Migration and Refugee Assistance (an 11-percent proposed cut below FY11 levels). Enacting such cuts in the face of the worst famine the world has seen in several decades would be disastrous, and I would urge the Senate to ensure that these accounts are protected in the FY 2012 budget deliberations. But I suspect that even more must be done. In years past, a disaster of this magnitude would have been cause for a supplemental—like the \$3 billion supplemental that was passed last year to support the Haiti response. I would urge the Congress to consider a supplemental budget appropriation to address this crisis.

2. *Engage the American public:* Despite the severity of this crisis, there has been relatively little of the sort of active public engagement that we saw following the recent disasters in Haiti and Japan. This is troubling, because the ability of American aid organizations to respond robustly to a humanitarian disaster tends to track closely with the level of American popular engagement in the crisis. I would encourage all Members of Congress, as they head back to their districts for the August recess, to alert their constituents to the severity of what is now taking place in the Horn of Africa. I would also urge the White House to be much more vocal about this crisis. As we saw after the Haiti earthquake, calls by the President and First Lady for generosity can have a tremendous galvanizing impact on the American public. The ideal scenario might involve joint appeals by administration and congressional leaders to demonstrate that responding to human suffering on such a massive scale transcends political boundaries.

¹⁸ Secretary Clinton: U.S. Response to Declaration of Famine in Somalia and Drought in the Horn of Africa (July 20, 2011).

3. *Reform legal restrictions on U.S. response:* As I noted earlier, the legal restrictions imposed under the Patriot Act and related law have thrown up significant roadblocks to the humanitarian response and impeded preparedness. The safety valve provided by OFAC licensing is useful and we hope that the administration's recent announcement will be implemented in a way that truly enables us to provide relief without fear of legal exposure. As a general rule of thumb, we would ask that the protections now extended to USAID through their OFAC license be extended in full to USAID's partners as well. But this development notwithstanding, we have seen over the past 2 years that obtaining an OFAC license is often politically difficult and massively time-consuming. The fact that OFAC restrictions harmed U.S. capacity to prepare for and respond to a famine that was anticipated months in advance should give Congress pause. I suspect that those who wrote the laws did not have this sort of outcome in mind. I would strongly advise that Congress reexamine the interplay between OFAC restrictions and humanitarian aid, and explore whether a more streamlined and responsive approach can be found. A good place to start would be by expanding the list of exempted categories beyond medical supplies and religious materials, to also include assistance related to food, water, and shelter needs.

I wish to sincerely thank the subcommittee for its focus on this tremendously important issue, and for extending me the privilege of testifying today.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much.

Dr. Pham.

STATEMENT OF DR. J. PETER PHAM, DIRECTOR, MICHAEL S. ANSARI AFRICA CENTER, ATLANTIC COUNCIL, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. PHAM. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Isakson, I want to thank you for this opportunity to testify today on a very important issue.

As we meet, the situation, as the other panelists have already stated, is especially grave. The U.N. refugee agency describes it as the worst humanitarian disaster in the world, with nearly half the Somali population facing starvation, while at least another 11 million men, women, and children across the Horn of Africa are at risk.

Given this grim reality, the first concern of the international community is understandably focused where it should be: getting relief to the victims. However, in addressing immediate needs, attention should also be paid to the broader geopolitical context, as well as the long-term implications of the challenges before us.

Since other witnesses testifying today are better positioned individually or institutionally to address the technical questions relating to the humanitarian crisis, its impact on vulnerable populations, and the logistics of getting assistance to them, I will concentrate on four key points which I believe policymakers in the United States and other responsible international actors should bear in mind in assessing the current situation, in determining adequate responses to it, as well as in planning longer term engagement with this region.

First, al-Shabaab has a responsibility for exacerbating the crisis. While the group cannot be blamed for desertification trends, climate change, or meteorological conditions, the violent conflict it has engaged in, the economic and political policies it has pursued, have certainly worsened an already bad situation.

Although in the past al-Shabaab has profited either by diversion or taxation of humanitarian aid, the amounts represented at most a small fraction of its broader revenue stream. Consequently, it is

heartening to hear that the administration is working to clarify and, where necessary, ease the relevant restrictions in order to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations. However, allow me to cite just one example of where the major funding al-Shabaab directly impact the current humanitarian crisis.

For example, the industrial production for export of charcoal. It is estimated that somewhere around two-thirds of a forest which used to cover 15 percent of Somali territory have been reduced to chunks of “black gold” packed into 25-kilogram bags and shipped to countries in the Persian Gulf. One cannot underestimate the negative environmental impact of all this, which earned al-Shabaab millions in profit, which is recycled into violence and terrorism.

And if this were all not bad enough, once the famine set in, al-Shabaab leaders have alternated between denying the crisis and preventing effective people from moving in search of food. Whether or not it is a formal policy of the group, I have reports from sources on the ground in the last 24 hours of at least three “holding areas” in lower Shabelle where al-Shabaab forces are either using force or the threat thereof to keep displaced people from leaving the territory and finding help. And we can get into why they might be doing that.

Second, far from being part of the solution, Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government, the TFG, is part of the problem; in fact, a not insignificant cause of the ongoing crisis. The regime’s unelected officials may be preferable to al-Shabaab insurgents, but they represent at best the choice of the lesser of two evils.

Hobbled by corruption, weakness, and infighting, the TFG is of limited helpfulness in the face of the present humanitarian emergency. TFG leaders are likelier to see the crisis as yet another opportunity to capture rents, especially since their already extended mandate expires in 2 weeks, and it is for want of a ready-made plan B that the international community is not taking issue with the TFG leaders’ arbitrary extension of their terms of office by another year. No wonder the official position of the Government of the United States, notwithstanding its engagement with the regime, is not to recognize the TFG or any other entity as the legal sovereign of Somalia.

We need to pursue a permanent resolution to the ongoing crisis of state failure in Somalia if we want to avoid humanitarian emergencies in the future.

Third, the sheer number of people moving in and from Somali territory will have an enormous and possibly permanent consequences for the region. The potential population shifts threaten to upend delicate political balances, as well as present new security challenges for the Horn of Africa and beyond. If they are not to cause, however unintentionally, greater harm, responses to this mass migration need to be factored into these considerations.

Finally, amid the crisis, there is nonetheless an opportunity to promote stability and security in Somalia. In fact, there is a narrow window of opportunity during which it might be possible to seriously weaken and possibly even finish al-Shabaab as a force in Somali politics once and for all. The disaster has exposed divisions within the movement, with some of its local councils and militias

expressing a willingness to accept help, even as the leadership continues to spurn it.

The disaster has exposed divisions with some of the groups within it and factions, and there are ways the international community can get assistance to drought-affected populations and so where they are rather than requiring of these poor people displace themselves and create additional challenges that will be dealt with down the road.

I want to underscore that there are local NGOs with a proven ability to both deliver aid in hard-to-reach areas, all the while avoiding diversion of aid to al-Shabaab and other problematic entities.

Again, thank you for attention. I look forward to your questions.
[The prepared statement of Dr. Pham follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. J. PETER PHAM

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Isakson, distinguished members of the subcommittee, I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today on the drought and famine conditions in the Horn of Africa in general and in Somalia in particular, as well as on the response of the United States and other members of the international community to this growing crisis.

As we meet, the situation especially critical—the head of the United Nations refugee agency describes it as the “worst humanitarian disaster” in the world today—with nearly half of the Somali population, some 3.7 million people, facing starvation while at least another 11 million men, women, and children across the Horn of Africa are thought to be at risk.

Given this grim reality, the first concern of the international community is, understandably, focused where it should be anyway: getting relief to the victims. However, in addressing immediate needs, attention should also be paid to the broader geopolitical context as well as the long-term implications of the challenges before us. Since other witnesses testifying today are better positioned, individually and institutionally, to address the technical questions relating to the scope of the crisis, its impact on vulnerable populations, and the logistics of getting assistance to them, I will concentrate on four key points which I believe the United States and other responsible international actors should bear in mind in assessing the current situation and determining adequate responses to it, as well as planning longer term engagement with this region:

1. Al-Shabaab’s responsibility in exacerbating the crisis. While the group cannot be blamed for the desertification trends, climate change, and meteorological conditions, the violent conflict it has engaged in and the economic and political policies it has pursued have certainly worsened a bad situation.

2. Far from being a part of the solution, Somalia’s “Transitional Federal Government” (TFG) is part of the problem—in fact, a not insignificant cause of the ongoing crisis. The regime’s unelected officials may be preferable to the insurgents seeking to overthrow them, but they represent, at best, the international community’s choice for the lesser of two evils.

3. The sheer number of people on the move in and from Somali territory will have enormous and possibly permanent consequences for the region. The potential population shifts threaten to upend delicate political balances as well as present new security challenges for the Horn of Africa and beyond.

4. Amid the crisis, there is, nonetheless, an opportunity to promote stability and security within Somalia, if not across the Horn of Africa. In fact, there is a narrow window of opportunity during which it might be possible to seriously weaken and possibly even finish al-Shabaab as a major force in Somali politics once and for all.

AL-SHABAAB’S ROLE IN THE CRISIS

Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (“Movement of Warrior Youth,” al-Shabaab) is not only linked ideologically with the global jihadist ideology of al-Qaeda and, increasingly, operationally with Yemen-based al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), it is also an entity that richly deserves to opprobrium for its singular role in making what in any event would have been a very bad situation far, far worse.

There is no doubt that the insecurity it has caused since it began its violent insurgency 4 years ago added greatly to the sufferings of the Somali people. Moreover,

while al-Shabaab is far from a monolithic organization, its leadership does have a history of denying access to the areas under its control to U.N. relief agencies like UNICEF and the World Food. For their part, as is now well known, last year the international agencies as well as several nongovernmental organizations pulled out of several areas under the control of al-Shabaab after several aid workers were killed and the group began imposing strict conditions on their remaining colleagues, extorting “security fees” and “taxes.” Moreover, because al-Shabaab has been designated as an international terrorist organization by the United States and a number of other countries, NGOs have avoided working in areas it controls for fear of running afoul of laws against providing material support to terrorist groups.

As a matter of fact—one which a number of analysts, including myself, have noted for some time and which was confirmed by the annual report to the U.N. Security Council by its Sanctions Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea, a document released just last week—although al-Shabaab has profited, either by diversion or “taxation,” from humanitarian aid, the amounts represented at most a small fraction of its overall revenue stream. Consequently, it heartening to see that the administration is working to clarify and, where necessary, ease the relevant restrictions in order to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

A far more important source of income for the group is, in fact, more directly related to the humanitarian crisis: the industrial production for export of charcoal. While people living between the Juba and Shabelle rivers in southern Somalia have gathered charcoal for their own use from the region’s acacia forests from time immemorial, it is only in the last few years that the production has reached its present unsustainable levels. It is estimated that somewhere around two-thirds of the forests which used to cover some 15 percent of Somali territory has been reduced to chunks of “black gold,” packed into 25-kilogram bags, and shipped to countries in the Persian Gulf which have themselves banned the domestic production of charcoal. The U.N. Monitoring Group conservatively estimates that up to 4.5 million of these sacks are exported each year, primarily through the port of Kismayo, which has been controlled by al-Shabaab or other forces allied to its cause since September 2008, earning the group millions of dollars in profits. Meanwhile, where once there were the old-growth acacia stands, thorn bushes now proliferate, rendering the areas useless to the Somali people, whether they be pastoralists or agriculturalists (the former graze their livestock in the grass that flourishes where the root systems of acacia groves hold in ground water and prevent erosion, while the latter grow staple crops in neighboring lands so long as there are tree stands holding in top soil), and contributing further to the desertification that is always a persistent threat in a land as arid or semiarid as Somalia. Thus, it was both simultaneously tragic and ironic that, when a heavy rain came briefly this past weekend to what was formerly the country’s breadbasket, the result was not deliverance, but disaster as, absent any foliage to help absorb the precipitation, flash floods compounded the misery in several places.

Al-Shabaab also operates a complex system of taxation on residents within areas it controls and imposes levies not just on aid groups, but also businesses, sales transactions, and land. The tax on arable land in particular has had the effect of changing the political economy of farming communities which previously eked out a living just above subsistence. For example, in Bakool and Lower Shabelle—precisely the two areas at the epicenter of the famine—communities used to grow their own food and, whenever possible, stored any surplus sorghum or maize against times of hardship. However, when al-Shabaab imposed a monetary levy on acreage, farmers were pushed into growing cash crops like sesame which could be sold to traders connected with the Islamist movement’s leadership for export in order to obtain the funds to pay the obligatory “jihad war contributions.” However rich in antioxidants sesame seeds may be, they are of rather limited value for purposes of food security.

If all this were not bad enough, once the famine set in, al-Shabaab leaders have alternated between denying the crisis—arguing instead that accounts of hunger were being “exaggerated” in order to undermine their hold over the populace—and preventing affected people from moving in search of food. Whether or not it is a formal policy of the group or not, there are credible reports from sources on the ground of at least several “holding areas” in Lower Shabelle where al-Shabaab forces are using force or the threat thereof to prevent displaced people from leaving its territory to find help.

SOMALIA’S DYSFUNCTIONAL TFG

In congressional testimony 2 years ago, I noted that the TFG was “not a government by any common-sense definition of the term: it is entirely dependent on foreign

troops . . . to protect its small enclave in Mogadishu, but otherwise administers no territory; even within this restricted zone, it has shown no functional capacity to govern, much less provide even minimal services to its citizens.” And that was before the famine.

Despite the fact that, at not inconsiderable sacrifice, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeeping force protecting the regime has managed to extend its operational reach to now be present in 13 of Mogadishu’s 16 districts—although the force commander, Ugandan Major General Nathan Mugisha, acknowledges that his troops “dominate” in just “more than half of these”—the TFG remains hobbled by corruption and infighting. Quite frankly, the so-called “government” lead by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed is little better than a criminal enterprise—one that its own auditors reported stole more than 96 percent of the bilateral assistance it received in the years 2009 and 2010. The findings contained in the U.N. Monitoring Group report were perhaps even more damning: “Diversion of arms and ammunition from the Transitional Federal Government and its affiliated militias has been another significant source of supply to arms dealers in Mogadishu, and by extension to al-Shabaab.” The investigators even highlighted case where an RPG launcher and associated munitions, purchased for the regime under a U.S. State Department contract, found their way into a stronghold of al-Shabaab that AMISOM captured earlier this year.

It should thus come as no surprise that such “leaders” are of limited helpfulness in the face of the present humanitarian emergency. They are likely to see it as yet another opportunity to capture rents, especially since their already extended mandate expires in 2 weeks and it is for want of a ready-made “Plan B” that the international community is not taking issue with the TFG’s leaders arbitrarily proroguing their terms of office by another year—although on what legal grounds is anyone’s guess. (No wonder the official position of the Government of the United States, expressed in a brief filed before the U.S. Supreme Court last year by then-Solicitor-General Elena Kagan as well as the Legal Advisor of the Department of State, is that since the fall of the dictator Muhammad Siyad Barre in 1991, “the United States has not recognized any entity as the government of Somalia” and that federal courts should “not attach significance to statements of the TFG” absent specific guidance from the executive branch.)

MASS MIGRATION

Given this context, it should come as no surprise that Somalis are on the move. The Dabaab refugee camp in northeastern Kenya, which was built in 1992 during the last great Somali famine to temporarily house 90,000 people, nowadays hosts more than 400,000, with more than 1,000 additional persons arriving each day. Another 112,000 refugees have found shelter in the Dollo Ado area of Ethiopia. And these are the lucky ones: it is estimated that there are possibly 1.5 million Somalis internally displaced within their own country, with some unfortunates even literally caught in the no man’s land at outskirts of Mogadishu between the frontline positions of the insurgents and AMISOM troops. And, it needs to be emphasized that all of this is before the coming months when conditions are expected to be even worse.

Given the parlous conditions prevalent across the territory of the former Somali state (outside of Somaliland in the northwest, Puntland in the northeast, and possibly a few other places), it is virtually assured that any Somali who crosses the border into Kenya or Ethiopia is likely to become ipso facto a permanent emigrant (after all, Somalia’s contemporary economy, it should not be forgotten, has been transformed into one built upon remittances from the diaspora). In any event, since there has been no rush of third countries offering resettlement to the preexistent Somali refugee population before the famine, there is no reason to think that things will be different with the influx of new arrivals. Kenya and Ethiopia, however, are beset with complicated issues with their own ethnic Somali minorities; neither country is in much of a position to absorb hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of itinerant Somalis.

Consequently a population shift such as what we are witnessing in the Horn of Africa—a literal exodus of Biblical proportions—threatens to upend delicate political balances as well as present a host of new security challenges. In fact, concerns over security and the adequate screening (or lack thereof) of Somalis entering their country have already exposed one rift within Kenya’s national unity government between Prime Minister Raila Odinga, who opened the border as a humanitarian gesture, and some of his ministers who oppose the move. A quick perusal of Kenyan newspapers is enough to confirm that this question will undoubtedly enjoy a high profile as the East African country enters its electoral season next year.

Thus, if they are not to cause, however unintentionally, even greater harm, responses to the mass migration set in motion first by the prolonged Somali crisis and now the famine need to take factor in these realities.

A CHANCE FOR STABILITY AND SECURITY

If one dares contemplate a silver lining to the current crisis—although it comes at a terrible price—it is that it has apparently caught al-Shabaab off guard.

For a long time, despite the extremist ideology espoused by its foreign-influenced leaders which set them outside the mainstream of Somali culture and society, al-Shabaab could present itself as being better (even if harsher) rulers than the corrupt denizens of the TFG. The brutal hudud punishments its tribunals meted out, for example, may have been utterly alien from the Somali experience, but it was a rough justice nonetheless and better than the chaos and lawlessness that was the experience of many Somalis in the 1990s. Moreover, the group managed to wrap itself up in the mantle of Somali nationalism by portraying the African Union peacekeepers as foreign occupiers, although the fact that AMISOM troops are propping up the despised TFG and, in the process, cause civilian casualties, made this narrative all the more credible.

Within the last year, however, AMISOM has improved its capabilities and managed to lower civilian casualties even as it pushed al-Shabaab forces back within Mogadishu. In addition, the famine and al-Shabaab's clumsy response to it have thoroughly dispelled any delusions about the "good governance" capabilities by the movement. Now the effects of famine are not only exacerbated by al-Shabaab, but the disaster has exposed divisions within the movement with some of its local councils and militias expressing a willingness to accept help even as the leadership continues to spurn it. Moreover, actions like the blocking of people trying to escape the famine will sap al-Shabaab of what remains of its popular legitimacy. (Of course, if one is seeking to use this opportunity to undermine al-Shabaab, it would be helpful if a prospect more attractive than domination by the venal TFG was offered to communities just freed from the militants' yoke.)

While there is undoubtedly some risk in sending aid areas where al-Shabaab operates, it is more probable that whatever negative effects the assistance will have will fall largely on the group, either as some of its local leaders defect or populations are weaned from their reliance on them. And there are organizations—not all of them necessarily international—with a track record of delivering assistance, even within al-Shabaab held areas, without allowing resources to be diverted. One that comes to mind is SAACID, the extraordinary nongovernmental organization founded and directed by Somali women, which is engaged in conflict transformation, women's empowerment, education, health care, emergency relief, employment schemes, and development. SAACID's modus operandi is a model for others. SAACID gets food from, among other partners, the World Food Programme—when, that is, the latter agency has any. By working closely with clan elders and community members, it embeds itself in its immediate surroundings and thus can carry on in areas where, for example, the WFP can no longer go because the presence of al-Shabaab. Thus, during the height of the fighting in Mogadishu in recent years, SAACID was literally the only entity that was present in all 16 of the capital's districts, providing some 80,000 2,000-calorie meals daily to some of the most vulnerable residents.

Such a model is one way the international community can get assistance to drought-affected populations and do so where they are, rather than requiring that these poor people displace themselves and, consequently, create additional challenges which will have to be dealt with further down the road after the initial emergency has passed.

And it goes without saying that should security be improved in Somalia and the mass emigration halted, if not reversed, the prospects for the increasingly important subregion at the crossroads of the Africa and the Middle East will brighten immensely.

CONCLUSION

Confronted with the dreadful specter of mass starvation on a scale not seen in more than half a century, the priority most assuredly is to get life-giving assistance to those most at risk and to do so in the most timely, efficient, and effective manner possible. However, urgency is no dispensation from the ethical and political responsibility both to understand to what caused or heightened the emergency and to consider the possible consequences of any proposed responses to it. Increased material resources are clearly needed, but even more, what is required is sustained engagement and not a little bit of strategic vision.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Doctor.
Mr. Schaap.

**STATEMENT OF WOUTER SCHAAP, ASSISTANT COUNTRY
DIRECTOR, CARE INTERNATIONAL SOMALIA, NAIROBI, KENYA**

Mr. SCHAAP. Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, thank you very much for this opportunity you have given us to testify today on this horrible situation that we are facing in the Horn of Africa.

I speak today on behalf of CARE, a leading international humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. And we have six decades of experience in helping to prepare for and respond to natural disasters, providing life-saving assistance in crises, and helping communities recover after an emergency.

We place special focus on women and children, and yet again in this crisis, they bear the brunt of what is happening.

Myself as assistant country director for programs for CARE in Somalia, I see firsthand in my work the consequences that tens of thousands of people are facing today. I have worked in the Horn for 7 years now, traveling extensively within Somalia, both in the north and in the south. I recently returned from a trip to IDP camps in drought-affected areas in the north, and what we see there is probably less dramatic than what we see in some parts of the south, yet the stories we hear are horrible.

A woman that I met in one of the IDP camps in Gardho, with a severely malnourished child on her arm, explained to me she did not have any money to go to the health clinic to seek assistance for her child, and that assistance was not available there. You could see in her eyes she was severely traumatized by the experiences in the south and the things that she had seen there.

I met a father in the Sanaag region who had recently lost his wife. And he was there nursing his five remaining cows. The cows were bleeding from their noses, and he was trying to do something about it, but not really knowing what to do. And our staff said, well, this is a lost cause.

These kind of experiences my staff see on a very regular basis, and they are stories that remain with you for the rest of your life.

Our response to the emergency in the Horn began to scale up in 2011—the beginning of 2011—when the early signs were clear that this was going to be a major crisis. Today we are helping more than 1 million people in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya with life-saving food, water, nutrition, and other life-saving emergency assistance. CARE, for instance, is one of the largest agencies working in Dadaab. We also support longer term activities that help people become more resilient to drought.

The severity of the situation is extremely worrying, and other speakers have spoken at length about that, so I will keep my remarks on that quite short. But the worry is that the situation is not at its worst yet. The deepest part of a drought is normally the month before the rains come, and then people are weakened. And so, by September, we are going to see a significantly increased number of deaths due to diseases that affect this already weakened population.

So, as my colleagues have said, agencies know now how to deal with this kind of situation, that we need to focus on a broad range

of services—of water sanitation, health, nutrition, food—and address those multiple causes of deaths in a famine crisis.

However, unfortunately there is still a major funding gap in the region of \$1.4 billion U.S. dollars for the consolidated appeal of the U.N. This is really a worry, notwithstanding all the generous contributions from various donors. And we really appreciate the support from the U.S. Government for our work in the three countries where we have been supported by BPRN, OFTA, and others. And we really appreciate that. However, it is not enough. The crisis is so massive it needs additional support.

The access issues have been discussed at length. The ongoing conflict in the south is making it much more difficult to get access to the south. And what we are seeing is that agencies already present there, local NGOs, other international NGOs that work there have an ability to negotiate some level of access, but it is limited.

And unfortunately, aid is at risk of becoming very politicized in this environment. It is very important for all sides to this conflict to let humanitarian principles—neutrality and impartiality—guide all of our discussions on humanitarian assistance. And we are determined to provide only assistance to those people that are most in need, and assistance in place to ensure that only those people get it.

We are urging local authorities in southern Somalia to grant an uninhibited and unconditional access. But the crisis is happening now, and it needs a concerted, thoughtful, careful diplomatic work of U.N. donors and NGOs to get aid to the victims of famine wherever they are. And now is really the time to have space and reach out to all parties of the conflict and work to save the lives of tens of thousands of people, and to avoid politicization of the issues.

We have been speaking with colleagues from the U.S. Government about the legal issues that have concerned us. And we really appreciate the recent steps taken by the U.S. Government, specifically for programs funded by USAID and the Department of State. Questions, however, remain on the ability of the U.S. NGOs to program funding from non-U.S. Government donors, for instance, the U.S. public. NGOs get large sums of money from the U.S. public, but this funding does not fall under the OFAC licensing that is now being put in place for NGOs. That would only be covered if you have funding from the U.S. Government for south central Somalia. Other funding, like ECO, DFID, that would not be covered for U.S.-based NGOs, and those are major sources of funding for U.S.-based NGOs.

The long-term implications—we need to start thinking about those as well now. And I am sorry I am running a little bit over time.

These are very marginalized populations, and they are among the most vulnerable to the impact of changes in the weather patterns. When I started working on Somalia, we would see a drought every 5 years. Now, it is just a continuous cycle of mist seasons, and things are really changing. People are finding it very difficult to adjust to these changes, but we know that there are things that we can do to help that, and we need to invest in that in the years to come.

Our recommendations, I just would just sum up. The expansion and the speed of funding for the crisis is really important. The urgency is there, but we are seeing that major donors take quite a substantial time for funding to become available on the ground to support our work. And we urge donors to be faster in their processes and move things forward.

We need to start planning for increased long-term support for resilience in these areas. And we need concerted, thoughtful, and careful diplomatic work of United Nations donors and NGOs to negotiate access on the ground and help to support a public climate in which those efforts can actually take place by the agencies working there.

And the efforts by the U.S. Government to ease legal restrictions for U.S. Government-funded work is really appreciated, but it is not enough, because we are at risk when we use other governments' funding and U.S. public funding, for instance.

So, on that last item, we really need some very urgent action forward. The NGO community is ready to engage the appropriate U.S. Government agencies' developed, constructive options to alleviate the effects of famine, while controlling the risk of diversion. And there are precedents for this in Burma and Iran and more recently in Gaza, and that could be achieved in two different ways. First, issuance of a general license from OFAC that would reduce the risk of prosecution due to transactions that may be incidental to the famine response. And, second, favorable and very expeditious processing of specific license requests to OFAC from U.S.-based NGOs. Those things would really help agencies place themselves in a position where they can start negotiating for access on the ground.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schaap follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WOUTER SCHAAP

Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today and join with you in this critically important and timely hearing on the crisis in the Horn of Africa.

I speak today of behalf of CARE, a leading international humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. CARE has more than six decades of experience in helping people prepare and respond to natural disasters, providing lifesaving assistance when a crisis hits, and helping communities recover after the emergency. CARE places a special focus on women and children, who are often disproportionately affected by disasters, as is the case in the Horn of Africa Crisis with the majority of those fleeing Somalia to refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya women and children.

As Assistant Country Director for Programs for CARE Somalia, I have seen firsthand, the dire circumstances tens of thousands of individuals in the region face. I have worked in the Horn of Africa for over 7 years, traveling extensively within Somalia, both in the North and South. I recently returned from visits to IDP camps and drought affected areas in the North. I will never forget some of the individuals I met there: the mother in a camp in Gardho town in Puntland with her sick malnourished child on her arm who had fled the conflict in the South, or the pastoralist man up in Sanaag region in Somaliland desperately trying to save his remaining three cows in front of his rural homestead and many others.

East Africa is currently in the grips of the worst drought in 60 years, affecting an estimated 12 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya at risk of hunger, starvation, and other ills related to the drought. This is the most severe food crisis in the world today, with a desperate need of humanitarian aid in the region. The situation in the Horn of Africa is so dire that on July 20, the U.N. declared a famine in the Lower Shabelle and Bakool regions of southern Somalia. It is feared that all southern and central regions will be in a similar situation in the coming weeks and months if immediate measures are not taken to provide emergency relief. The situation in Kenya, Ethiopia, northern Somalia, and Djibouti is also dire, with not only

large refugee and IDP populations to take care of, but also very large drought affected populations that are in need of immediate assistance. Huge swaths of these countries are already characterized as “emergency phase,” the level immediately before famine. Overall in the Horn of Africa region, the U.N. says that \$2.5 billion is needed for the humanitarian response. While \$1.1 billion has been pledged, it is estimated that an additional \$1.4 billion is urgently needed. The United States should play a leading role in ensuring that this requirement is met.

CARE’s emergency response to the drought in the Horn began to scale up at the beginning of 2011 when the beginnings of the crisis first became apparent. Today, we are helping more than 1 million people in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya with lifesaving food, cash, water, destocking and other emergency assistance, but also drought resilience activities such as livestock health activities, natural resource management, vocational training, and savings groups that help people diversify livelihoods, save their assets, and buy food for their families. In our work we pay special attention to the vulnerable women and girls, who are especially at risk to the current crisis.

Somalia faces the highest malnutrition rates in the world. Consecutive seasons of poor rainfall have created serious food crisis and extensive displacement in southern Somalia. The crisis is only expected to get worse in the next few months as the next regular rainy season is in October. Famine may spread to other regions. The drought has caused a devastatingly high mortality rate of animals, with levels as high as 40–60 percent, especially for cattle and sheep. UNHCR reports that more than 85,000 Somalis have sought refuge in Kenya since January, 2011, with daily arrivals now exceeding 1,500. The rate of Somali refugees arriving in southern Ethiopia has also jumped from 5,000 per month to more than 30,000 per month in the June.

CARE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA (KENYA, ETHIOPIA, AND SOMALIA)

CARE’s emergency interventions in the Horn of Africa are driven by the humanitarian imperatives of saving lives, reducing suffering, restoring dignity and rebuilding livelihoods. Our work is guided by humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence.

In Dadaab, the largest refugee camp in the world, CARE is the lead implementing agency for water and hygiene, food distribution, and education, providing support for the more than 390,000 refugees in the camp. CARE in Kenya has worked in the refugee camps around Dadaab since 1992. CARE provides food and water for each of the three main camps, currently with a population of over 393,000 refugees. As part of this latest influx of refugees CARE is working with our partners in the U.N. and other INGOs to provide immediate food, shelter materials, and support to victims of sexual and gender based violence. CARE is extending our water delivery system within the camps to the temporary areas where new arrivals wait for allocation to a space within the camps.

In Dadaab, we are experiencing an influx of over 1,500 new refugees arriving every day, many of them severely malnourished. This has put enormous pressure on already overstretched resources in the refugee camps. While CARE immediately scaled up its capacity and initiated emergency response to the situation, no organization could have prepared for the dramatic influx of new refugees. CARE is working alongside UNHCR and the World Food Programme to ensure refugees in the camps are receiving live-saving support they desperately need. The State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration provides support to this vital emergency programming in Dadaab.

Apart from this work with the refugees arriving from Somalia, CARE also works with the Kenyan communities of the northeast to rehabilitate water facilities, to provide cash through relief work programs, and to partner with the Government of Kenya in disease surveillance and vaccination of the remaining animals that these pastoralist communities rely upon. Our approach is strongly focused on building the capacity of communities to manage their own water resources, rangelands and environment as the changing climate will bring more erratic rainfall and drought years in the future. It is essential that the assistance provided by the international community and the Government of Kenya emphasizes that the humanitarian response can help to increase resilience, instead of increasing the vulnerability and dependence on external support that can result from such interventions.

CARE has a longstanding presence in Ethiopia, working in the country for over 25 years. Because CARE has ongoing long-term programming in Borena zone of southern Ethiopia, most of which focuses on helping communities to build resiliency to climatic shocks, we began raising the likelihood of La Nina drought almost exactly a year ago. As that unfortunate projection has become reality, CARE has been

able to scale up its response interventions in close collaboration with local communities and government. To date, CARE's emergency response activities in Ethiopia have reached a quarter of a million people, providing them with food, water and sanitation, nutritional support and livelihoods assistance. Some of these interventions are literally and immediately life-saving, while others are aimed at saving lives in the months ahead. For example, by slaughtering cattle no longer fit for the market—with small cash payment to owners and meat distributed amongst the neediest—families receive some much-needed cash to meet immediate needs and the burden on dwindling pasture and water resources reduced, improving survival rates of the culled herds and reducing the burden on the environment. Although the situation is already quite dire throughout much of southern Ethiopia, even if the next rains are better than projected they will not arrive for several weeks. In anticipation of a worsening drought, therefore, CARE is increasing the intensity of its efforts, especially in the rehabilitation of water points and provision of nutritional support.

CARE's interventions in Somalia are also aimed at addressing the long-term underlying causes of the problems as well as responding to the immediate crises caused by drought and conflict. Many parts of Somalia have experienced several cycles of drought, which has affected the coping capacity of communities. It takes a goat or sheep 5 months to reproduce, and with the successive cycles of drought, we have seen a major erosion of people's asset base, with many people having lost hundreds of sheep or goats and dozens of camels and cattle. In drought-affected areas of North Somalia we support a large-scale cash relief program, doing both cash for work as well as immediate cash handouts to the most vulnerable within the community. Other emergency work comprises of supplementary feeding, provision of water and sanitation and nonfood items for IDPs. In some cases our staff does direct programming, and in some cases we work through partners. In all cases we have rigorous processes in place to verify quality and quantity of the works, and ensure that money ends up with the right people. The situation on the ground is extremely complex. Even in the remote parts of the North control by regional governments is at times limited and needs strong community involvement to help ensure disputes are resolved and access is maintained.

The majority of the refugees displaced or fleeing Somalia are women and children. Since January, 2011, approximately 70 percent of those arriving at the camps in Dadaab are women-headed households. To support the newly arriving refugees, CARE has increased its capacity to respond, particularly for vulnerable women and girls. In addition to severe malnutrition, the deep psychological affects that drought and subsequent movement can have on the women refugees are immense. We have witnessed high levels of anxiety, panic, and trauma due to loss of family members along the way, what U.N. World Food Programme Executive Director, Josette Sheeran, aptly referred to as "roads of death." These women are sharing with our staff stories of rape, violence, and hunger. Compounding the problems for the thousands of female refugees fleeing conflict and hunger in the Horn of Africa is the threat of rape and sexual violence. According to recent UNHCR reports, the number of sexual and gender-based violence cases has quadrupled: 358 incidents reported from January–June 2011 in comparison with 75 during the same period in 2010. At CARE's reception center screening tents in two of the refugee camp numbers have more than doubled.

FAMINE IN SOMALIA

On July 20, the U.N. declared famine in two regions of southern Somalia: Bakol and Lower Shabelle. The daily death toll due to malnutrition in these regions has surpassed 2 per 10,000 people, while around 40 percent of children are acutely malnourished. In some regions the mortality rate is now 6 per 10,000 people per day. It is feared that all southern and central regions will be in a similar famine situation within the next 6–8 weeks if immediate measures are not taken to provide emergency relief. Overall, there are more than 3.7 million Somalis that need urgent lifesaving assistance. Tens of thousands of people have died, and tens of thousands more will die if aid is not scaled up. The current dry season extends to September, and even after that it will take people months to recover. The crisis is therefore expected to last at least until the end of the year.

What is needed is food and/or cash assistance, nutritional support to malnourished children, water, sanitation and health services. In the 1992 famine a large proportion of deaths were due to preventable diseases impacting on a severely weakened population. With the rainy season approaching and the large numbers of IDPs in Somalia, this is a major concern for humanitarian workers.

Somalia is a complex emergency as both drought and conflict continue to take human lives and are forcing people to migrate to other areas in search for food and

shelter. The situation has gradually deteriorated over the course of a number of years, eroding people's coping capacity. Tens of thousands of people who have lost everything they owned due to the drought are on the move, both inside and outside Somalia. This is true both in the south of Somalia, as well as in the north of the country, over the last 2 years, we have seen a gradual increase in numbers of people moving from rural areas to towns and cities after losing all their livestock. Many people from the south are moving to the camps in Kenya and Ethiopia, whilst others are moving to camps in the north of the country. Furthermore, despite being the site of active conflict, UNHCR reports that over 100,000 IDPs have moved to the city of Mogadishu.

CARE's interventions in Somalia aim to both address the long term underlying causes of the recurring drought crises as well as respond to the immediate humanitarian needs caused by drought and conflict. Our emergency work comprises of supplementary feeding, cash relief, water and sanitation, and nonfood items for IDPs, including basic survival items, such as plastic sheeting for shelter, buckets for gathering water, and utensils for cooking. The unfolding catastrophe in Somalia has spilled over into other countries of the region. The best way to minimize the impact of the famine and to support affected communities is to provide aid directly to communities where they live rather than people having to become refugees and IDPs in order to access humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian agencies are trying in very difficult circumstances to ensure that desperately needed aid can reach the most vulnerable people within the region, the majority of them women and children. All of us are very aware that delays are costing lives. However, the ongoing conflict in the south means that it is much more difficult to get aid to this part of the country. A number of agencies have started scaling up their activities in south central, but it will still come too late for tens of thousands of Somalis living in this area, with women and children expected to suffer the most. Agencies with an established presence in the south are likely to be able to respond more effectively to the needs of communities in these areas than new agencies or agencies that have left the south. While CARE does not currently have an operational presence in the south, we are doing what we can to support others that do.

Compounding the problem is that aid is at risk of becoming politicized in this environment, and it is important for all sides to the conflict to let common humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality guide any of the discussions on humanitarian assistance. We urge governments around the world, including the U.S. Government, to avoid strong political statements that have the potential to enflame local sensitivities and thereby further reduce humanitarian access. The crisis is happening now, and it needs concerted, thoughtful, careful diplomatic work of U.N., donors and NGOs to get aid to the victims of famine where ever they are. Now is the time to ensure there is space to reach out to all parties of the conflict and work to save the lives of tens of thousands of Somalis. At the same time we urge all local authorities in southern Somalia to grant uninhibited and unconditional access to the people affected by the drought.

CARE urges all donors, including, the United States, to review and ease legal hurdles impeding provision of emergency assistance in Somalia. We anticipate that the legal restrictions are most acute in those areas controlled by armed opposition groups. Increased flexibility will ensure that organizations can more easily program funding in areas that otherwise might not be reached, therefore fully leveraging the generosity of our donors. We understand and highly value the need for accountability of aid; aid agencies are therefore doing their utmost to ensure aid reaches beneficiaries and no aid is diverted to armed groups on either side of the conflict. We also understand and take seriously our compliance responsibilities under U.S. law. We anticipate, however, that the ability of humanitarian actors to adhere to these compliance responsibilities will likely be tested in areas firmly controlled by prohibited entities.

We applaud the recent steps taken by the U.S. Government to loosen legal restrictions relating to programs funded by USAID and the Department of State. However, questions remain as to the ability of U.S. organizations to program funding from non-U.S. Government donors such as the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO), the Department for International Development (DFID), and others, as well as private U.S. donors including foundations and corporations. We anticipate that funding from such donors will be significant. We therefore urge the U.S. Government to take additional steps to provide relief from certain legal risks for U.S. organizations providing famine relief in areas controlled by prohibited entities, such as the issuance of a General License from the Office of Foreign Asset Controls (OFAC) allowing U.S. persons to engage in certain transactions that may be incidental to the delivery of humanitarian relief in Somalia. Historical and illus-

trative precedent for this practice exists, including the earthquake response in Bam, Iran in 2004, and more recently in Gaza. Additionally, we request expedited processing and favorable consideration of any specific licenses that U.S. organizations may seek with respect to their work in Somalia, as well as guidance that will allow organizations to fully understand OFAC licensing policy.

LONG-TERM NEEDS

While focusing in the immediate term on the acute needs of the populations in the Horn of Africa, we also must look at building longer term resilience among poor, vulnerable populations throughout developing countries.

We must work to address the underlying causes of hunger and poverty. Within our programs in the Horn of Africa, CARE continuously emphasizes the need to tackle the long-term, underlying causes of poverty. We are helping to break the cycle of hunger and to adapt to the changing climate and reoccurring draughts. In Kenya, for example, CARE focuses on disaster risk reduction measures lead by local communities to create resilience. This includes natural resource management, live-stock marketing, as well as activities to improve community capacity in business management and marketing skills. CARE works with communities to diversify their livelihood sources, such as milk marketing, beekeeping and fodder production, and protect assets to reduce the longer term debilitating impacts of crisis and shock.

CARE strongly supports the Obama administration's Feed the Future Initiative to reduce global hunger and poverty through a comprehensive whole-of-government approach to increase global agriculture sector growth and improve nutritional status, especially women and children. CARE supported legislation introduced in the last Congress by the ranking member of the full committee, Senator Lugar, with support from others on the committee, including Chairman Kerry—the Global Food Security Act, which passed this committee, but unfortunately that is as far as it got. One of the lessons learned in the current crisis in the Horn is evident in Ethiopia, where CARE, USAID, and other partners have been working in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia on a Productive Safety Net Program launched in 2005—the Household Income Building and Rural Empowerment for Transformation (HIBRET) program. This program is aimed at protecting resource poor households while preventing asset depletion at the household level. Programs like this have helped to increase community resilience in Ethiopia and reduced the number of Ethiopians requiring humanitarian assistance during this drought compared to the last serious drought in 2002–2003. Investing in social safety net programs those in Ethiopia is critical to alleviating chronic hunger and poverty.

Research indicates that climate change will lead to more frequent, severe, and intense extreme weather events—like droughts as well as floods and storms. What we also know from what communities are telling us on the ground is that weather patterns in the Horn of Africa have significantly changed over the last 10 years, with rains less predictable now than they were before. The world's poor and marginalized populations are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. They live on the edge of crisis already, and climate change threatens to push them off that edge. Women are often among the most vulnerable within communities and households because they are often tasked with collecting food and water—climate sensitive tasks that (as we can see in the Horn of Africa) become much more difficult in the face of extreme climate conditions.

It is critical to build the resilience of these populations to climate impacts and shocks. Building resilience among vulnerable populations is about increasing their ability to be flexible in the face of uncertainty and to access the resources and opportunities they need to adapt. At the same time, we must also tackle the underlying causes of their vulnerability. These efforts include: supporting livelihood diversification, promoting savings and insurance schemes to provide a safety net for vulnerable populations, community and government led early warning systems and other drought preparedness measures. We need to support men and women to access the resources, rights and opportunities they need to adapt to their changing environment, their ability to access land and water, and women's ability to expand their control over household income, by supporting education work and activities that address women's ability to shape their own destiny inside and outside the household.

And while some will disagree on the cause of drought, the reality on the ground in the Horn is that the weather patterns have changed—be it through climate change or other causes—and we must provide adequate resources for the mitigation and adaptation to our changing climate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the gravity of the situation we suggest a number of recommendations to be implemented urgently:

1. While efforts to date by the USG to ease legal restrictions applicable to U.S. Government-funded programs in areas controlled by prohibited entities are commendable, we implore the USG to extend the relaxation of these restrictions to all possible funding sources available to U.S. organizations. This may be achieved in two ways: first, the issuance of a General License from OFAC allowing U.S. persons to engage in certain transactions that may be incidental to the famine response; and second, the favorable and expeditious processing of specific license requests from U.S. organizations. The NGO community stands ready to engage the appropriate USG agencies to develop these constructive options to alleviate the effects of famine.

2. Expanded and speed up funding for the crisis in Somalia to match the needs, but also to match the urgency of the response. The crisis is happening now, and we need to ensure that funding is available for spending within the next few weeks—not in several months down the line. Hence we need urgent support from donor agencies within the U.S. Government to reduce the lead-time for funding and reduce the turnaround time on proposals.

3. Invest in the long-term resiliency and livelihood protections. While we must address the immediate humanitarian crisis at hand in the Horn of Africa, we should also take a long-term approach to addressing the underlying cause of hunger and mitigate future impacts of disasters. Investments in programs that support livelihoods and resiliency of at-risk populations are critical to both saving lives and saving money, by reducing the far more expensive response necessary to address future crisis.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to answering any questions, you and members of the committee have.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Mr. Schaap.

I hear a common theme. Obviously there are both naturally caused or occurring climate-driven causes for this regional drought and famine, but also those that arise directly from al-Shabaab and its control of a significant area. There are some real concerns both about the security and logistics of getting into the area, but in a more pressing way about the United States and the interaction between several of our agencies and departments. The opportunity now through OFAC now to get a license.

Mr. Konyndyk, you also had raised some concerns or questions about the implementation of the new OFAC license opportunity Mr. Schaap also reflected on. We are grateful for the role that CARE and Mercy Corps and others play.

Mr. Schaap raised an issue about how NGOs who receive funding other than directly from the United States Government would operate, some unresolved questions about the license. Would you expand a little bit, as you suggested in your statement you would like to, concerns about implementation and clarity about the necessary path forward for us to deliver assistance appropriately and in a multilateral way?

Mr. KONYNDYK. I am sorry. I would associate myself with Mr. Schaap's comments. As we understand it, and we were only briefed on this yesterday afternoon, so we are still digesting it, and we all have armies of lawyers who are reviewing this and whatnot. Our understanding at this point is that the license that has been issued would only apply to programs that are wholly or partly funded by the U.S. Government. And so, if our agencies are working there doing discrete programs that do not receive U.S. Government funding or wishing to do that, that would not be covered by the license that was issued apparently last Friday.

Senator COONS. So, your concern, if I understand correctly, from both of you on behalf of your organizations, is that relief efforts that are not directly funded by the U.S. Government may still put your organizations at some legal risk—

Mr. KONYNDYK. That is correct.

Senator COONS [continuing]. If they are operating within south Somalia.

Mr. KONYNDYK. That is correct. And then the other—

Senator COONS. And then the other hope that can be resolved promptly.

Mr. KONYNDYK. Yes, we hope so as well. The other concern on the implementation is just that at this point per our understanding, USAID has all the authorities and clearances that it needs, and it is going to be a matter of how they then translate that in terms of what applies to their partners. And that will be a discussion that we will be having with them in the coming days.

Senator COONS. And all three of you and the previous panel emphasized the time is of the essence, that there are literally tens of thousands of children who are starving, and hundreds of thousands who are at risk of or are on the verge of starvation. Would further bureaucratic delay in resolving these issues strike you as cruel and inappropriate?

Mr. KONYNDYK. Your words, not mine, Senator. I certainly think that the administration is moving now with great urgency to try and clear these things out of the way. I think that what we were told yesterday is an important step forward and a sign of sincere good faith on the part of the administration in resolving these things. I hope that we are now to a point of detailed negotiations rather than kind of big picture political will, and I do think that is the case.

But as I said in my remarks, and as I expand on them in my written testimony, I do think there is a larger issue here that bears exploration going forward by the Congress and the administration of why it even got to this point. I mean, can we find some ways of reviewing the law on this so that we do not have to go through this long, drawn-out bureaucratic process in order to do what generally everyone agrees should be done in the first place.

Senator COONS. Doctor, let us turn to the question of al-Shabaab. Understandably, they are subject to sanctions by the United States. We have done everything we can to restrict their opportunity to gain funding for their terrorist activities.

You referenced both in your written testimony and the testimony you just gave to us that there is real opportunity here because of some tensions within the organization. Speak, if you would, just a little bit further about whether it is appropriate for us to be issuing broad licenses and allowing humanitarian assistance in, if it might further strengthen this terrorist organization.

Dr. PHAM. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, the question of al-Shabaab really is to understand that it is not a monolithic organization.

Senator COONS. Right.

Dr. PHAM. At its core is a very radicalized, extremist leadership with very close connections to some very dangerous people in other parts of the world, and we need to be seriously concerned. They

have operational reach and have shown themselves capable of carrying out its acts in neighboring countries as well.

That being said, however, the organization itself is broken up. It is a marriage of convenience. Some of the factions that are now in al-Shabaab, a year ago were possibly with the government; next year—these are clan factions and militias. And this is an opportunity. Some of them in places I can name—Harardhere, for example—have stated, “Bring us aid. We are willing to switch allegiances.” So, there is an opportunity.

And this is why the secondary track, the track two policy that Assistant Secretary Carson announced last year, is important. We need to get that going. It was announced a year ago, but we still have not really developed it. This is the type of program that would allow us to have the information and the partners on the ground who can distinguish where are the areas we can work in.

Right now, it is a theory—it is a concept, a very valid one, but we really have not worked it out as well as we should have.

Senator COONS. So, if I understand you correctly, like most groups, it is made up of a variety of different splinter groups, some that are hardcore jihadists bent on international terror, others that, frankly, are local either clan or tribal groups that are aligned with al-Shabaab sort out of convenience.

You mentioned in your testimony before there is reason to believe that they may be holding by force or threat of force thousands of potential refugees who could find assistance elsewhere in Kenya or Ethiopia. Why would you think they might be doing that?

Dr. PHAM. Several reasons. First, because there have been several districts actually in lower and middle Shabelle where they did not exercise that type of control, and now they rule literally a desert. A 100 percent of the people are gone, 100 percent of the livestock is dead. They have a desert to themselves. They can enjoy it. So, quite pragmatically, if you are trying to seek control of territory, you want a population.

Second, and this gets into some of the quandaries of aid delivery, I think they have gambled as well that eventually aid is going to flow, and this is where we have to be careful how we allow that to flow. And, therefore, the more—and we have had this experience in Somalia; I was in there in the 1990s when it happened—the more refugees you have, the more displaced persons, the more resources will flow to your area, not necessarily to those people, but resources you can divert.

So, some of them may very well be simply holding people so they can increase head count and rent seeking behavior.

Senator COONS. One other country in the region we have not referenced at all today is Eritrea, one of the most totalitarian regimes in the world, that there is really very little information about the conditions on the ground, about the humanitarian needs, if I understand that correctly. As I was looking at maps, it was literally blank in terms of data. Any insight from any members of the panel on the likely humanitarian situation in Eritrea, also a country where the tension between the security situation, the governance situation, and the humanitarian situation is unresolved and with an unclear path?

Dr. PHAM. If I may begin, Senator, just to give one index of how bad the situation probably is in Eritrea, somewhere around slightly under 50,000 people have crossed the border into Ethiopia. It is a mine laden trap, and these people have risked everything, not just to walk across the desert, but a minefield, to get over the border—these are the survivors. And so, that just says something about the level of desperation.

I have met people who have made that passage, who have become refugees. I have spoken with them, and the situation is pretty dire.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I have further questions, but I will yield to Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Konyndyk, I want to ask you a specific question regarding what you referred to as a systemic problem in the administration regarding licensing. Is the systemic problem too much bureaucracy?

Mr. KONYNDYK. I do not know if I would say there is too much bureaucracy. I mean, I think that, you know, what we have—there are different agencies that have different priorities and different angles on some of these issues. And the setup we have right now in terms of the legal restrictions, the OFAC restrictions, what is prohibited in terms of what is considered to be material support, makes it, I think, very difficult for those different agencies that all have a stake in this to resolve this sort of thing quickly.

Our suggestion would be to look at, maybe as a first step, to our understanding, the Patriot Act exempts medical supplies and religious materials from the definition of what would constitute material support. We would be interested in exploring whether that carve-out could be broadened to include other sorts of urgent humanitarian assistance in situations like this so that it would not require a long, drawn-out bureaucratic process to enable aid agencies to have the legal permissions they need to respond in this kind of situation.

Senator ISAKSON. On that point, Dr. Pham, it is my understanding, well, I know, in fact, in your testimony you said that in many cases local NGOs are better equipped to deliver aid than might be a nonresident NGO. And SAACID, I think, is a group of Somali women that deliver support within Somalia, but would probably be prohibited from having assets because of this restriction that it only be United States delivered funds. Is that correct?

Dr. PHAM. Well, Senator, SAACID—to cite that specific NGO, one of their problems was that they were falsely accused about a year and a half ago in a U.N. report of having made payoffs to al-Shabaab. They were exonerated in the subsequent U.N. followup report, but that meant 18 months where they were cut off from the international funding. And those were 18 months they lost.

But they work very effectively by partnering with traditional clan elders, local community members, and that is their protection. During the period of fighting in Mogadishu, they were only entity, governmental or not, that had operations in all 16 districts of the city. It is a tremendous organization today. And the scale of what they are delivering is amazing, so I want to pay tribute to them.

If I can turn back—I know my two colleagues are somewhat constrained by relationships to comment on the—

Senator ISAKSON. That is why I asked you—

Dr. PHAM. Yes. We focus a lot, and we are Americans—we focus a lot on perhaps obstacles in our own processes. I think we also—in fairness also look at obstacles at the international level. The World Food Programme works on a 3-month delivery cycle. How is it—and I ask myself, how is that knowing that this was coming down the line, although they are a major resource in the region, they did not put more food in the region? Over the weekend, they had two flights that for all intents and purposes to Badoa and Mogadishu were for show. They took 4 tons of Plumpy to Badoa, about 14 tons, I understand, to Mogadishu.

SAACID is the NGO we spoke on earlier, in a month goes through 65 tons just in Mogadishu alone. So, 4 tons is helpful, but it really was more for the cameras than anything else frankly.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I wanted to be quite clear. I understand that it is important that the administration and our country do everything they can to prohibit U.S. aid getting into terrorist hands, and that is one of the reasons for some of the restrictions. But when you do reach a crisis point in a humanitarian problem like this, it seems like there ought to be expedited procedures, or else the people you are trying to help are going to be dead. And that is the comment that I was trying to get to, because there is no question these organizations in Africa operate on cash flow from corruption. And many of them are organizations that are affiliated with al-Qaeda or with other nefarious groups around the world. But it is important with this many people at threat of losing their lives that we have an expedited procedure to the maximum extent possible.

I noted that Bob Laprade was supposed to testify today, but you are in his place. That causes me to make an observation for the people here today. Mr. Laprade, who is with CARE International, could not be here today because he is suffering from malaria. That reminded me that my first trip with CARE to Ethiopia, in Awaze Ethiopia, the CARE representative that I worked with also had malaria. And so, I want to thank you for the risk that you take in very dangerous parts of the world to deliver humanitarian aid and hope. People do not, I think, sometimes equate the risk and the exposure of their own health that CARE and many other NGOs like it put themselves in to help other people. So, thank you for doing that.

One last question for Dr. Pham. You talked in your remarks about al-Shabaab keeping people from getting help. They are actually stopping refugees from leaving the country to get help. Is that correct?

Dr. PHAM. From sources on the ground that I have spoken with in the last 24 hours, there appear in lower Shabelle to be three different areas. One appears to be a camp of sorts where they are actually holding people. Two are just areas where they have created enough violence around them more or less to corral them in, so it is not a guarded situation, but it is a threatening one. And they are preventing people in, it appears in two of those cases, from heading to Mogadishu, crossing the line over to the area controlled by the African Union peacekeepers where aid can get to them. A hundred thousand people have already crossed, and

they're preventing more from going. The other area seems to be to prevent people from heading south toward Kenya.

Senator ISAKSON. And the goal is to just strike fear in the population, or what?

Dr. PHAM. I think it is several fold, and I think it is hard to disaggregate. One, to keep people that they can still rule. They aspire to rule and ruling on empty land is not what they were planning to do. And, two, I think some of it might be local interests of local al-Shabaab commanders to have people as resources, because people will attract aid, which they hope they will be able to tax, divert, or otherwise tap into.

Senator ISAKSON. Last quick question. One of the big problems in Africa is in a lot of cases, organizations will use rape and violence against women as a tool of accomplishing their end goal. Do your people on the ground give you any indication that al-Shabaab is using that as a tool?

Dr. PHAM. I am not getting reports of anything. There are cases of violence against women very clearly, and some of those are being documented, but not as a systematic attempt to exert control or terror, unlike other tragic cases in Africa.

Mr. SCHAAP. May I—

Senator ISAKSON. Yes.

Mr. SCHAAP [continuing]. Add a point on that? In various camps in the region, sexual violence against women is a serious problem, and not just within in Somalia, but also outside.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much for testifying today, all of you.

Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. I would like to follow up, if I could, Mr. Schaap, on a comment you made earlier in response to the earthquake that was in Iran. I think 2003 that there was an exception to the licensing procedure by OFAC that was granted more broadly that might be a useful example here. Could you elaborate on that?

Mr. SCHAAP. I do not have the technical details as such, but we can get back to you on that.

Senator COONS. I mean, certainly from all of our witnesses today, we are looking for a responsible, swift, and appropriate path forward. I understand that—just by my comment earlier—I understand that different entities within the United States Government are charged with enforcing different legal obligations, and that sometimes the desire for prompt and effective humanitarian assistance runs up against the barriers that we put in place in order to prevent assistance from being provided, wittingly or unwittingly, to those who are also enemies of the United States and pose a real threat to the international order.

I would be interested in your input, if I could—it is for my three questions here—first, about future planning, about how the United States can better assist the countries in the region, particularly here in the Horn of Africa, where the climactic conditions seem to be worsening. How do we help them build resilience, sustainable capacity, to deal with these crises so that we do not face them periodically?

Second, several of you have referenced threatened cuts to U.S. aid. The House has taken up the relevant budget and has pro-

posed—I think Mr. Konyndyk suggested it was a 30-percent cut over last year, 50 percent over the year 2008 funding levels. How do you see our efforts to sustain American engagement with development, with assistance, playing out, and what suggestions might you have for us on how to help the average American understand why there is value in doing this, not just from a humanitarian perspective, but a strategic perspective?

Mr. SCHAAP. I think the need for recovery and resilience programming is extremely high, and I think it is important to get the planning for that started now even while we are in such crisis.

There are other things that NGOs and others are doing in these areas around ensuring livestock health, ensuring improvement of natural resource management, vocational training to diversify the income streams that people have. CARE does a little work on savings groups to help ensure asset diversification so people have some liquid assets during a drought.

So, there are a lot of things that can be done, and this needs to be scaled up in response to the drought because people have lost all of their assets. And we want to avoid a situation where after this drought and after this massive crisis, because it is going to be massive, people are left for a long period of time while agencies are planning for recovery and resiliency programming afterward.

If I may add a point on your earlier comment on bureaucratic obstacles and aid delivery coming through quickly, this is a serious concern. We are looking at a 2- or 3-month window of opportunity in which we can still save lives. The pace we have seen, not just with U.S. Government donors, but other donors as well, it take multiple, multiple months to get through the process. And the added complications of U.S. antiterrorist regulations have added significant periods of time. And that's really worrying also going forward now that we have a short timeframe to prevent more deaths.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Schaap.

Mr. Konyndyk.

Mr. KONYNDYK. Yes, I would, again, fully endorse what Mr. Schaap has said about the need to build resiliency. The sorts of programs that the U.S. Government has funded many of its partners to do in Ethiopia, in Kenya, are a really important reason why the impact of the drought there is not as severe as what we are seeing in southern Somalia.

I mean, it is important to note that regardless of the political and security factors, the lack of sustained development programming going back years in southern Somalia, far before the current political configuration was in place, is a significant factor in why it is so much worse there.

And looking forward, we need to invest in a response right now that is not thinking just about the next 3 months but about the next 5 to 10 years, and trying to rebuild people's resiliency and livelihoods as quickly as possible.

In terms of the U.S. Government's support, the specific USAID budgets and engaging the American public, we have been very concerned so far that this situation does not seem to have really broken through yet in terms of the American consciousness in a way that the recent crises in Haiti and Japan did. I think that—there

is a very clear link between the level of American public engagement in a crisis and the level of private donations and private support that the public provides, but also then the level of support that the U.S. Government is motivated to provide.

And so, I think that obviously we strongly support the accounts that I mentioned earlier, and we think that protecting those is critical. But it is also really important for U.S. political leaders to, I think, to signal to the American people just how serious this situation is. After the crisis in Haiti, the President and the First Lady were very vocal about the needs there, about the importance of providing aid there. We have not seen that level of engagement out of the White House yet, and I think that that would be really important and really helpful. I understand the President has been dealing with some other issues lately, but hopefully in the coming month we can see more engagement on that.

And I think as well, you know, for Members of Congress, all of them are going back to their districts now for recess. I think this is an important to discuss with your constituents. And we would love to see, you know, joint calls from the Congress and the administration for greater American engagement. Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Following up, Mr. Konyndyk, what guarantee or assurance does Mercy Corps give that the funds made available to it actually get to the needy communities?

Mr. KONYNDYK. Well, we have a range of measures in place for that. As with any private American charity, there are laws and procedures that are in place. We get audited every year and we make those audit findings public. Those audits are very, very intensive, and they are every year.

We also are part of and collaborate with various accountability networks within our sector. There is a group called Interaction, which is sort of the umbrella organization for all American international charities, which has member standards that we adhere to that get to exactly that. And then also, as a partner of the U.S. Government, there are very, very rigorous standards that we have to adhere to in order to qualify for U.S. Government funding.

So, there are a lot of kind of overlapping accountability standards and audits, and all of those things which help to hold us to account.

Senator ISAKSON. In those standards, or in your own internally controlled standards, is there an acceptable amount of—I understand we are dealing in very difficult areas of the world and very difficult circumstances is there an acceptable level of leakage and then one upon which there is no tolerance?

Mr. KONYNDYK. There is no—you never want to say “here is our acceptable level of leakage,” because then you will be sure to get that level of leakage.

Senator ISAKSON. Right. I understand that is how things get worse.

Mr. KONYNDYK. So, I mean, our priority is absolutely to ensure that the aid gets where it is supposed to go. I think that we have a very low tolerance for leakage. It is always on a case-by-case basis. Looking at Somalia specifically, and as I written in earlier

articles on this, one of the factors that caused us to scale back our operations in the south back in 2010 even before we were formally expelled, was that we were seeing unacceptable levels of interference. And so, no level of leakage is really tolerable, and I think that what we are willing to work with is minimal, but it cannot be defined except on a case-by-case basis.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Schaap is nodding his head in agreement with that answer I think, but I want to be sure and give you a chance to express yourself.

Mr. SCHAAP. Yes. I just want to add to that is that there is also in Nairobi with agencies working in Somalia a constant dialogue about what mechanisms we have in place to severely limit the ability of diversion to happen. And there is the leadership of the U.N., the humanitarian coordinator on this has been quite strong in the last couple of months to really push back on those initiatives that have been pushing for taxation, et cetera, et cetera on the ground. And our systems internally are very tight to make sure that whatever we pledge to provide to beneficiaries are actually going to beneficiaries and not anywhere else.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Senator Isakson, thank you very much for joining me. I would like to thank Mr. Konyndyk, Dr. Pham, and Mr. Schaap for your personal service, for the risks you've taken, in order to deliver relief, for the leadership role that your organizations have taken, and for the insight you have given us and the world as folks have deliberated over this humanitarian crisis.

As you have helped make clear today, this is the gravest humanitarian crisis facing the world today. It was foreseeable. It was one for which preparations were made and where there is investment that has made it less severe than it otherwise might have been. But it is one that can be expected to occur again because of the combination of governance, climactic, regional, economic, and social factors in the Horn of Africa.

And so, it is my hope that we will be working together, the people of the United States, the nonprofit community, have private citizens to heighten public concern, to strengthen international engagement, to not just respond to this immediate and very real crisis that will likely take tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of lives, but to lay the groundwork for preventing a recurrence of this crisis, those parts of it that were entirely preventable.

Senator Isakson and I share a view that Africa is a continent of enormous promise, and it is tragic to have this particular crisis be what most Americans will be seeing about Africa in the month ahead. It is my hope that they will be seeing more of it, and I am grateful for your role in highlighting and addressing this very serious humanitarian crisis.

Thank you for your testimony. I will keep the record open for the Senators who were not able to join us today to submit statements until the close of business, Friday, August 5.

Senator COONS. And this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:52 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

Chairman Coons, Senator Isakson, members of the subcommittee, thank you for focusing attention on the unfolding tragedy in the Horn of Africa, and for providing UNICEF with this opportunity to share our perspective on this devastating situation.

This is a children's crisis. The haunting images we have seen and the facts of this emergency speak for themselves.

Across Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, an estimated 2.3 million children are acutely malnourished. These are already among the world's most disadvantaged children, living on the brink and becoming more vulnerable by the day, deprived of virtually every human need. More than a half million severely malnourished children are at risk of imminent death. Those children who do survive face huge threats to their physical and mental development.

While the situation is most dire for those inside Somalia and the refugees arriving in Kenya and Ethiopia, a large number of people affected by the drought live outside the camps, in communities across the region. The impact of the drought is threatening people's livelihood and, for the large nomadic population, their way of life. This is important to consider when we look beyond immediate life-saving needs, and focus on building resilience to avoid this situation in the future.

UNICEF has worked in Somalia for decades. We are currently one of the few agencies operating in southern Somalia. We are gearing up to increase delivery of critical supplies to some of the hardest hit areas there. Over the next 2 months, we expect to expand blanket supplementary feeding to reach 150,000 families, including 180,000 children under the age of 5 in Somalia.

We are also planning to more than double the capacity for treatment of severe malnutrition in Somalia, increasing coverage from the current 7,500 children per month to at least 17,000 children per month through a network of over 200 outpatient therapeutic feeding facilities in southern Somalia.

But food alone is not enough. For children, an effective response requires much more. To save their lives and safeguard their futures, we need an integrated response that includes miracle foods like Plumpy-Nut and therapeutic milk; breastfeeding support; clean water and proper sanitation; basic immunizations against killers like measles and polio; and child protection programs to keep children safe. In fact, in many instances it is diseases like these that kill children who are too weak from lack of food to fight infection.

With our partner U.N. agencies, including the World Food Programme and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF is doing everything we can to provide this critical support. This includes: supplying health clinics and outposts that serve an estimated 2.5 million women and children with sufficient essential drugs, vaccines, basic equipment and training; reaching millions of children with measles vaccinations, Vitamin A supplementation, and deworming. At the same time, we are working to expand access to education to hundreds of thousands of primary school-age children, and we are working to establish 343 new Child Friendly Spaces to provide psychosocial support, recreational materials, food, education activities, health and hygiene education, and clean water for an additional 30,000 children.

UNICEF is also scaling up our response in Kenya and Ethiopia in health, nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion. In Kenya, an emergency measles vaccination campaign is underway for more than 230,000 children in Dadaab camp and neighboring host communities. We are leveraging this campaign to provide other emergency health interventions such as polio vaccinations, Vitamin A supplements, and deworming.

In Ethiopia, we are expanding our response to measles outbreaks in drought-affected areas for more than 650,000 children, and working with UNHCR for the vaccination of refugee children upon arrival as part of the routine screening.

The need for all of us—U.N. agencies, NGOs like those represented at this hearing and others—to expand these efforts is urgent, and securing immediate funding is crucial. We at UNICEF greatly appreciate the generosity of the donor community, including the U.S. Government. And for the U.N. as a whole, public and private donors have committed more than US\$1 billion this year to help respond to humanitarian needs in the Horn of Africa. But there is a significant shortfall in funding. To reach the greatest number of children possible, we must close this gap as quickly as possible.

As we noted at the outset, this is a children's crisis. The magnitude of suffering and loss is tremendous, and the stakes have never been higher. With no significant harvest in sight for the next 6 months, this crisis may well deepen. But we must

not despair. For we have the obligation, and potentially the means, to save literally hundreds of thousands of children's lives—if we act now.

Once again, we thank the subcommittee for its leadership in addressing this humanitarian catastrophe.

RESPONSES OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NANCY LINDBORG TO QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

LONG-TERM AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT

Question. With over 12 million people in the Horn that currently need life-saving assistance and access to food, water, and sanitation, this crisis clearly requires a response now. However, it also points us back to the need for continued investment in long-term agricultural and food security programs. In order to put an end to the cycle of recurring crises and vulnerability in the Horn, we must continue to invest money in programs abroad that support infrastructure development such as roads and irrigation systems, value chain development, and environmentally sustainable agricultural practices. We need to expand economic opportunity for women, through strengthening their access to markets and decisionmaking power and help them to sustain economic livelihoods that can be resilient in the face of crisis. How can the U.S. Government and its partners ensure that they are not only responding to the current crisis but also working to lay the foundation for stronger, more sustainable local and regional food systems that can withstand crises and better respond to emergencies in the future?

Answer. This question is at the heart of our drought response as we see the positive impact of programs that have built resilience and the critical challenges of building longer term sustainability even as we meet emergency needs.

In countries prone to cyclical droughts and floods, reducing social and economic vulnerability is a necessary step toward sustainable (and equitable) food security. The primary responsibility for this rests with government, which means that the prospects for reducing vulnerability in Somalia are unlikely to improve until a legitimate form of governance is in place. Even in Kenya and Ethiopia, despite good policy frameworks, governance issues contribute significantly to chronic vulnerability and food insecurity. However, both governments have publically committed to increasing their investment in these previously marginalized areas, and the U.S. Government is well positioned to work with other donors and development partners to align resources and programs in support of these efforts.

The Senator's question raises an issue that is at the heart of the Presidential Initiative, Feed the Future (FTF). While the bulk of resources provided directly through FTF tend to be focused on achieving broad-based agriculture growth, the initiative provides a framework for the integration of a wide range of program approaches necessary for increasing the resilience of households and communities to the impacts of repeated climatic shocks, including community management of acute malnutrition, disaster risk reduction, productive safety nets, livelihood diversification—all supported by food and other disaster relief programming. These are activities on which development programming can build, as long as appropriate levels of investment in those areas and commodities most likely to trigger and drive sustainable long-term economic growth can be maintained. This approach recognizes that in several of our Feed the Future focus countries—most notably Kenya and Ethiopia—a “comprehensive” approach to food security will require a deliberate focus on reducing chronic vulnerability as well as stimulating economic growth.

The current crisis has underscored the need for a mechanism to increase coordination and resource integration. The Administrator has established a “Joint Planning Cell” (JPC) comprising humanitarian and development experts from the Kenya, Ethiopia, and Regional missions, and the Bureaus for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance; Food Security; Africa; Global Health; and Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade.

Externally, we are working with the Africa Union, government counterparts, regional authorities, other donors, and development partners to ensure that emergency efforts are sustained while a process for coordinated action and investment in medium to longer term development in the region's arid and semiarid lands—those areas most vulnerable to climatic shocks and chronic food insecurity—is established.

Momentum is building, and a series of high-level events in East Africa, the United Nations General Assembly, and the World Bank fall meetings, are being used to build an international coalition focused on this effort. The U.S. Government is increasingly looked to for leadership in the areas of early warning, nutrition, and cli-

mate-sensitive agricultural research and development—the key components of sustainable global food security. We are in the position to leverage significant foreign and domestic development resources, however, we must continue to demonstrate a sustained level of commitment—of both humanitarian and development resources—something that is increasingly being challenged in FY 2012 budget negotiations.

CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT WITH WOMEN

Question. As in almost all crisis situations, women have been disproportionately impacted by the drought and famine in the Horn. Women and children have been identified as most vulnerable to malnutrition, communicable disease, and ultimately, death. Recently, Deputy Administrator Don Steinberg insists that women be front and center in the response to the crisis, not just as victims but as a key part of the solution. How are the U.S. Government and its partners involving women and women's civil society organizations in the planning and execution of its programs and working to ensure that women are active participants in the response efforts?

Answer. The U.S. Government's humanitarian assistance partners in the eastern Horn of Africa are taking steps to ensure that the most vulnerable community members, including women and children, are both targeted by the assistance and are able to participate in the response. From August 11 to 15, 2011, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) visited and conducted a focus group with Masai pastoralist women and girls in drought-affected Kajiado County, Kenya. USAID/DART members, including a gender specialist, also conducted an assessment in Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) regions to assess protection and gender mainstreaming in ongoing nutrition and water, sanitation, and hygiene programs. The assessment in both Kenya and Ethiopia found that relief agencies have put in place careful targeting procedures that involve community-wide consultation to ensure that the most vulnerable community members, including women and girls, are included in beneficiary lists. Additionally, agencies have put in place complaints procedures that enable community members to notify the relief agency if, for any reason, they do not receive assistance that was targeted for them.

Relief agencies also design assistance to ensure that women and girls can participate in the response intervention. For example, agencies implementing cash-for-work programs design work activities that are physically feasible and culturally appropriate for women, and enable women to work on a flexible schedule, which allows them to both participate in income-generating opportunities and to attend to household responsibilities. USAID implementing partners also rely heavily on female health extension workers to implement health and nutrition programs in health posts and stabilization centers that target vulnerable women and children. The programs use gender-balanced teams and predominantly rely on female staff to attend to female patients. These health extension workers also make referrals in the communities they work in for the transport of women and children to stabilization centers, minimizing dangers they would face during long distance travel.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Question. Violence against women and girls is often severe in situations of crisis and natural disasters and the current famine in the Horn of Africa is no exception. Women and girls are facing rape and sexual violence as they travel to and live in refugee camps. Reports of sexual violence for the month of June alone are four times the amount from January through May. Women just arriving to camps, who are living in tents and makeshift shelters, consistently report sexual violence as a threat to fuel collection and access to basic services such as water and food. How are USAID and the Department of State working with humanitarian organizations and U.N. agencies to prevent and respond to this violence?

Answer. USAID strongly encourages its humanitarian partners to incorporate protection measures into all humanitarian assistance activities through protection mainstreaming. Protection mainstreaming seeks to minimize risks for harm, exploitation, and abuse for disaster-affected populations—including gender-based violence. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to harm, exploitation, and exclusion, and many protection mainstreaming efforts are designed to ensure their inclusion, participation, and safety in accessing relief activities.

There are a variety of ways in which USAID-funded relief programs in the Horn response are mainstreaming protection; for example, NGOs implementing cash-for-work and cash grant activities consult with all community members, including women and other potentially marginalized groups, to target the most vulnerable households. Additionally, relief agencies design cash-for-work activities and schedules that enable women to participate, by offering work activities that are culturally

appropriate and safe for women, and by allowing a flexible schedule that enables women to manage both household responsibilities and income-generating activities.

USAID's implementing partners also consult with women and girls about the placement of water points, latrines, and distribution sites, to ensure that they are safely accessible for women and girls. To limit the risk for domestic violence when women are targeted with food assistance, humanitarian agencies may conduct awareness-raising within communities to explain to men and boys the reasons for providing assistance to the women, and pointing out to benefits to the entire household. In addition, USAID's gender and protection advisors routinely review all NGO funding proposals to encourage potential partners to incorporate protection and gender mainstreaming efforts in their proposed activities.

USAID also works closely with the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) to ensure a coordinated USG response supporting refugee, host-community, and internally displaced populations. USAID is currently exploring opportunities with PRM to coordinate support for the provision of fuel efficient stoves with the multiple goals of preventing GBV during wood collection as well as mitigating tension between refugee and host community populations while reducing impact on the environment.

RESPONSE OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY REUBEN BRIGETY TO QUESTION
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. Violence against women and girls is often severe in situations of crisis and natural disasters and the current famine in the Horn of Africa is no exception. Women and girls are facing rape and sexual violence as they travel to and live in refugee camps. Reports of sexual violence for the month of June alone are four times the amount from January through May. Women just arriving to camps, who are living in tents and makeshift shelters, consistently report sexual violence as a threat to fuel collection and access to basic services such as water and food.

- How are USAID and the Department of State working with humanitarian organizations and U.N. agencies to prevent and respond to this violence?

Answer. The State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) prioritizes the protection of refugee women and girls, including prevention and response to gender based violence (GBV), in all displacement crises, and has supported GBV interventions for refugees in the Horn of Africa and beyond for many years. Despite significant gains on this issue, the recent influx of new refugees is posing new challenges that require additional resources. Refugees are at particularly high risk during flight and upon arrival at camps where humanitarians are struggling to ramp up to keep pace with the rate of new arrivals (1,500 a day to Kenya and 100-300 a day to Ethiopia). Women and girls are particularly vulnerable.

PRM is working with our main partner, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners and has provided emergency funding to ensure that efforts to prevent and respond to GBV are scaled up. UNHCR has completed a rapid GBV assessment to identify priority interventions and also increased its registration capacity—a critical step in accessing services. UNHCR has also deployed protection and community services officers to both Kenya and Ethiopia and stood up protection teams to increase protection monitoring, systematically interview new arrivals and conduct border monitoring. It is also training implementing partners on vulnerability screening in order to fast track those with special needs through the registration process.

PRM emergency funding to UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and NGO partners is supporting a number of activities including: (1) expansion of transportation for refugees from borders to camps to mitigate the risk of attack in transit, (2) awareness raising campaigns, particularly for new arrivals who may not know of services available, (3) referral pathways which inform humanitarian staff, survivors and communities about response procedures, (4) safe havens for survivors, (5) emergency medical interventions, (6) mental health services, (7) shelter, and (8) hygiene. PRM has also deployed staff to monitor the refugee response in Dadaab, Kenya, and in Ethiopia.

While PRM is focused mainly on the refugee situation, we are working closely with colleagues at USAID to ensure a coordinated and thorough response as refugee-hosting communities are also very vulnerable and disputes over limited resources often incite GBV. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has provided nearly \$80 million in support to drought-affected populations and USAID's Office of Food for Peace has contributed nearly \$400 million in food aid toward the crisis in the Horn, a portion of which goes to refugees but also to the drought-af-

affected host communities. We are exploring with OFDA opportunities to support provision of fuel efficient stoves with the multiple goals of preventing GBV during wood collection as well as mitigating tension with host communities and reducing impact on the environment.

