



S. HRG. 114-612

NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION—MARCH 10 THROUGH DECEMBER 2, 2015

SECOND SESSION—FEBRUARY 11 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

S. HRG. 114-612

NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION—MARCH 10 THROUGH DECEMBER 2, 2015

SECOND SESSION—FEBRUARY 11 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

21-581 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2017

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

BOB CORKER, TENNESSEE, *Chairman*

JAMES E. RISCH, Idaho

MARCO RUBIO, Florida

RON JOHNSON, Wisconsin

JEFF FLAKE, Arizona

CORY GARDNER, Colorado

DAVID PERDUE, Georgia

JOHNNY ISAKSON, Georgia

RAND PAUL, Kentucky

JOHN BARRASSO, Wyoming

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, Maryland

BARBARA BOXER, California

ROBERT MENENDEZ, New Jersey

JEANNE SHAHEEN, New Hampshire

CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, Delaware

TOM UDALL, New Mexico

CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, Connecticut

TIM Kaine, Virginia

EDWARD J. MARKEY, Massachusetts

TODD WOMACK, *Staff Director*

CHRIS LYNCH, *Democratic Staff Director*

ROB STRAYER, *Majority Chief Counsel*

MARGARET TAYLOR, *Minority Chief Counsel*

JOHN DUTTON, *Chief Clerk*

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

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

Hon. W. Stuart Symington, of Missouri, nominated to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria
Andrew Robert Young, of California, nominated to be Ambassador to Burkina Faso
Joseph R. Donovan, Jr., of Virginia, nominated to be Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:31 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jeff Flake, presiding.

Present: Senators Flake [presiding], Rubio, Gardner, Markey, and Murphy.

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

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

Today the committee will consider the nomination of three highly experienced career Foreign Service officers to be U.S. Ambassadors to Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Indonesia. We never knew that Indonesia had become part of Africa. [Laughter.]

Senator FLAKE. But we will take it for the day.

Glad to have you here. I met with each of you in my office last week and appreciated you making time for that. I was, as I usually am, very impressed at the expertise and commitment and experience that you all bring to this potential new post.

As the largest sub-Saharan African country, Nigeria remains of critical importance to the U.S. interests especially in the effort against Boko Haram. However, the stress of low global oil prices on Nigeria's economy is creating numerous challenges for President Buhari's administration and Nigeria's broader security.

Burkina Faso is another West African country that recently achieved democratic transition of power first since its independence in 1966 with newly elected President Kabore. He enjoys considerable domestic and international goodwill. There are many economic, political, and security challenges he faces.

Finally, Indonesia is the largest and one of the most important countries in Southeast Asia, a vital element to Asia's future development. Our close bilateral ties with the Indonesian Government in areas of trade, counterterrorism, and maritime security will need careful stewardship in the years ahead.

I thank each of you for your time today. I am aware of the sacrifices that you make but, in particular, the sacrifices that your families make for you to serve in these posts.

And with that, I will recognize the distinguished ranking member for a few comments. Senator Markey?

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

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. Thank you for having this hearing.

Each of these countries presents important opportunities to advance American interests while helping to ensure peaceful and prosperous lives for hundreds of millions of people in two of the world's most dynamic and fastest growing regions.

In August, I led a congressional delegation to West Africa that included a visit to Nigeria, a country that plays a critical role not only in its region but for the entire continent. When many think of Nigeria, they think of the security threats of Boko Haram and other extremist groups in the northeast or from piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. These threats are real and they are serious.

But our visit also showed a dynamic and hopeful Nigeria. In Lagos, I met many brilliant young entrepreneurs whose innovative startups are creating a new knowledge-driven economy. Their work has extraordinary potential to lift many millions of Nigerians out of poverty and make the country a major player in the 21st century economy. The United States can be a critical partner in supporting the efforts of these Nigerian pioneers.

Burkina Faso, which translates in English to the land of the upright people, also offers reasons for optimism about the future of West Africa. After decades of autocratic rule, the people peacefully demanded democratic reforms. They are now working to further those reforms, strengthening their political institutions and civil society and preserve a culture of peace and tolerance in a region threatened by growing extremism. Also essential are their efforts to reduce poverty by building inclusive and sustainable economic development in one of Africa's poorest countries.

And last, at the center of economically dynamic Southeast Asia, Indonesia is a democracy and a secular state that also has a larger Muslim population than any other country in the world. Those facts stand as a clear rebuke to those who say that Islam is inherently antagonistic to democracy.

So I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and we thank all of our nominees for being here today.

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you, Senator Markey.

We will now turn to our nominees. The first nominee is Stuart Symington who served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Africa and African Security Affairs since 2015. His previous positions include serving as U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda and Djibouti. We were commenting in the office that Djibouti, Nigeria,

about the same population, and everything else. So this is going to be a big change.

Our second nominee, Andrew Young, most recently served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Mali. Previous assignments include South Korea, France, New Zealand, Burma, India, and Hong Kong. And I am sure he is going to find a way to practice his Korean skills in Mali as well.

Last but not least, Joseph Donovan, who currently serves as Managing Director of the Washington Office of the American Institute in Taiwan, previously served as Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, also served in Hong Kong, Japan, China, South Korea, and Qatar.

With that, we will recognize Ambassador Symington.

**STATEMENT OF HON. W. STUART SYMINGTON, OF MISSOURI,
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Chairman Flake, Ranking Member Markey, to you and to all the distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I want you to know how deeply honored I am to sit before you today as President Obama's nominee to serve as the Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Kerry for their confidence in my ability to lead U.S. engagement with one of, as you said, our most important partners on the African continent.

I am also delighted to share with you the special pleasure I have to have my wife Susan; my son Stuart; my mother and father, Stuart and Janie Symington; brother John; and nephew Jack with us today. It is a remarkable testament to how at home and abroad they serve also with me, as they do with all other Foreign Service officers.

Senator FLAKE. Where are they? Can they raise their hands here? The Symington family. All right.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Thank you, Senator.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent half of my 30 years of public service working to advance peace, security, and prosperity for the people of the African continent. In all of these endeavors, including during my two jobs as Ambassador and my previous job in Washington as Deputy Assistant Secretary and Special Representative for the Central African Republic, I have learned one thing that matters most, and that is the partnerships that we form with the people of the place we work to advance our interests and the wellbeing of people.

Nigeria is home to more than 180 million people. And as you said, Senator Markey, some of the most vibrant and entrepreneurial people in the world are there. The United States has in Nigeria a unique opportunity to engage productively in that vital partnership.

In 2015, we showed that by the relentless U.S. diplomatic efforts and technical assistance, helping their national electoral commission that supported the people of Nigeria in a vote that became a peaceful change from one party to another for the first time in that nation's history.

Additionally, our engagement with Nigerian health authorities helped to stop in the City of Lagos an Ebola epidemic which could have wreaked havoc with the most populous city in Africa.

We welcome profoundly President Buhari's call to fight corruption and to make steps towards achieving that goal. I would just highlight his high profile public campaign, the institution of a single account, and his work to investigate corruption.

Mr. Chairman, despite such progress, I am keenly aware of the profound challenges that remain. These include, as you pointed out the other day, Senator Markey, improving the climate for the telecommunications industry that could put so many people to work. They also include energy. The Power Africa legislation and the Electrify Africa effort that you all backed can make a profound difference on the continent. It includes health where we are spending most of our money and the governance of health, which is so critical to make sure it gets where it is needed. It also includes justice, human rights, and education.

Finally, with all the other countries of this region and many others around the world, Nigeria faces, as you mentioned, an extraordinary terrorist threat from Boko Haram. Boko Haram, which in March 2015, declared its affiliation to ISIL, has killed tens of thousands, kidnapped thousands, displaced many more, and today threatens a large segment of the population. Nigeria and its neighbors have driven Boko Haram out of much of the territory that it controlled in 2015. However, its attacks have now created a humanitarian crisis of extraordinary proportions, and the group still continues to challenge state authority in many places as the government works to reengage with and provide services to the people in that territory.

Nigeria also faces serious security and governance challenges in the south in the Niger Delta where militants have attacked critical oil infrastructure, slashing oil output and slowing Nigeria's economic growth at a time of falling oil prices.

Security problems are significant. Addressing them is critical, but it has to be done in a proactive, consensus-oriented, and achieving manner that prioritizes both security and the connection with the local communities that is the true heart of lasting security in any part of the world.

As the people of Nigeria pursue solutions to these challenges, for both practical and moral reasons, the United States has a profound interest in their success. As we work together to address those challenges, we will continue to work with Nigerian partners to ensure human rights are fully protected. These rights are profoundly important to the people of Nigeria and their future, just as they are to us. Nigeria has the resilience and ability to overcome these problems by drawing on the strengths of its people, on their energy and vitality, and on Nigeria's other great natural resources.

If confirmed, I will work with those in the public and private sector to create opportunities for the people of Nigeria to grow and diversify their economy. Its success is not just important to Nigeria. It is important to the continent and to the world. Facing the tough challenges ahead together, our partnership with Nigeria aims to see that Nigeria becomes both an anchor of prosperity and stability

and an outstanding role model for other developing countries around the world.

Mr. Chairman, these are great challenges, but if confirmed as your Ambassador and the Ambassador of the United States, I look forward to working with every member of what is a truly extraordinary U.S. mission, a team both in Abuja and in Lagos, to advance U.S. interests, to strengthen our partnership with Nigeria, and to ensure the safety and security of all our citizens. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward especially to working on this critical agenda with you and your colleagues and with all those who are inspired, as you are, to continue this effort on the continent of Africa.

I thank you very much for your invitation today and welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Symington follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF W. STUART SYMINGTON

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to serve as the next Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Kerry for their confidence in my ability to lead U.S. engagement with one of our most critical bilateral partners on the African continent. It is a special pleasure to have my family with me here today as they have been at every step of my diplomatic career.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent half of my more than 30 years of public service working to advance U.S. efforts to support the peace, security, and prosperity of Africa and its people. In all these endeavors, including during two prior postings as Ambassador and my present work in Washington as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, I have seen that what matters most are the partnerships we form that advance the well-being of people.

Home to as many as 180 million people and Africa's most populous country, Nigeria provides a unique opportunity to engage productively in partnerships. We have a chance to build on recent successes as we face the challenges ahead. In 2015, relentless U.S. diplomatic efforts and technical assistance to Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission supported the people of Nigeria as millions voted in a credible elections process. Nigeria saw the peaceful transition of power from one political party to another for the first time in its history.

Additionally, U.S. engagement with Nigerian health authorities helped contain Ebola in the dense population center of Lagos, averting a public health catastrophe in Africa's most populous city.

We welcomed President Buhari's call to fight corruption and his government's initial steps towards that goal. These include high-profile investigations, the use of a single auditable treasury account for receipt of all public funds, and steps to reform the state oil company and the military procurement process, as well as an ongoing public campaign against corruption.

Mr. Chairman, despite such progress, I am keenly aware that profound challenges remain in many areas, including health, energy, economic growth and job creation, governance, justice, human rights, and education. Similar to other countries in the region, Nigeria continues to face an extremist threat. Boko Haram, which in March 2015 declared its affiliation to ISIL, has killed tens of thousands, displaced many more, and threatened large segments of the population. Nigeria and its neighbors, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, successfully drove Boko Haram out of much of the territory the group had controlled in 2015. However, Boko Haram still challenges state authority in the Northeast as the government endeavors to hold and provide services in territory it has regained, and Boko Haram's attacks have created a humanitarian crisis.

Nigeria also faces serious security and governance challenges in the Niger Delta, where militants have attacked critical oil infrastructure slashing oil output and slowing Nigeria's economic recovery in a period of already reduced oil revenue. Security problems are significant and addressing them in a proactive, consensus-oriented manner that prioritizes dialogue with local communities is one of Nigeria's heaviest responsibilities.

As the people of Nigeria pursue solutions to these challenges, for both practical and moral reasons, the United States has a profound interest in their success. As we work together to address those challenges, we will continue to work with our Nigerian partners to ensure human rights are fully protected. Those rights are profoundly important to the people of Nigeria and to their future, just as they are to us.

Nigeria has the resilience and ability to overcome these problems by drawing on the strengths of its people, on their energy and vitality, and on Nigeria's other great natural resources. If confirmed, I will work with those in the public and private sector to create opportunities for the people of Nigeria to grow and diversify their economy.

In conclusion, Nigeria's success is not just important to Nigeria but it's important to the continent and the world. As President Obama said in advance of his bilateral meeting with President Buhari in Washington D.C., "We are looking forward to hearing how the United States can partner with Nigeria so that Nigeria ends up being an anchor not only of prosperity and stability [on the continent], but can also be an outstanding role model for developing countries around the world."

Mr. Chairman, I have been fortunate to work in public service and particularly on African issues for so many years. If confirmed I look forward to working with our truly extraordinary U.S. Mission team in Nigeria and, as Chief of Mission, to ensure the safety, security, and productivity of all U.S. citizens as we work together to advance U.S. interests in Nigeria.

Should I have the fortune to receive the confirmation of you and your Senate colleagues, I look forward to working on this critical agenda and inspiring others to contribute to this effort. I thank you for your invitation today, and I welcome any questions you might have.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Ambassador Symington.
Mr. Young?

**STATEMENT OF ANDREW ROBERT YOUNG, OF CALIFORNIA,
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO BURKINA FASO**

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, for a diplomat who has spent 25 years serving his country on five continents across the globe, there is no greater honor that I can feel today than to be before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the next Ambassador to Burkina Faso. I am humbled by the support that Secretary Kerry entrusted in me for this nomination.

I am joined today by Margaret Hawley, my spouse, my partner, and fellow Foreign Service officer, and my son Nathan, who is a student at American University. My daughter Claire, a student at Yale; and my mother, who is in an adobe house in California; sister Dance and brother Jon and broker Blair and in-laws are monitoring this from the feed from the west coast. And if my dad were here, he would be the fellow with the big grin smiling and illuminating the rest of the room with his irrepressible enthusiasm.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, my love for Africa began 30 years ago as an intern at our embassy in Central African Republic-Bengui. You know, while we endured the power outages and gamma globulin shots that hurt like the dickens and we had terrorist attacks and monitored the trial of former Emperor Bokassa for unmentionable crimes, we also engaged the team to help people lift themselves out of poverty, to address health care concerns, and to address education for women and girls and human rights.

I cherished what I learned in a small town in the heart of Africa and it inspired me to take a master's degree in African studies and to work for the Commerce Department in the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to support private sector investment in Africa.

I then joined our diplomatic service where I saw firsthand the importance of putting promotion of democracy at the forefront of U.S. foreign policy.

Last year, I was honored to receive the State Department's Mark Palmer Award for Democracy for work that I had done in Burma with Aung San Suu Kyi and my work here on Capitol Hill as a legislative fellow and also in Mali where, as you said, Mr. Chairman, I served for 3 years as Deputy Chief of Mission.

If confirmed as the next Ambassador to Burkina Faso, I will draw upon these experiences to advance our interests prioritizing three core areas: good governance, security, and equitable development. As Senator Markey mentioned, the Burkinabe people bravely demonstrated their commitment to democracy in 2014 by standing firm to stop ex-President Campaore from undermining the constitution and extending his 27-year rule. Doing what is right and not what is easy, Burkinabe civil society with the support of friends, including the United States, stood firm and faced the guns of the presidential guard who attempted to seize power in 2015. And when given the opportunity to express their views at the ballot box, the Burkinabe people again stood up and voted in record numbers in elections in 2015 and 2016, elections that were judged widely as free, fair, and transparent. And today, as Senator Markey said, the leadership that is in place in Burkina Faso consents with the consent of the governed. But that democracy, that democratic transition, as you said, Senator, remains fragile.

If confirmed, I would seek your support and your guidance to help the Burkinabe people consolidate that democracy as a bulwark against the instability that reigns in that tough neighborhood, which is the Sahel. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups based in Mali—they export death and insecurity throughout the region.

If confirmed, my second priority would be to address those security concerns, including the types of deadly attacks that have occurred in Ouagadougou and in Mali that I saw firsthand during my time in Mali. But in security, we have a strong partner in the people of Burkina Faso. They have deployed more than 12,000 peacekeepers in the toughest spots around the world, standing watch in our common interests—to promote our common interests since 1993.

So if confirmed, I would work through these existing programs and also new opportunities like you know, like the National Guard State Partnership Program to help emphasize and support indigenous capacities for Burkina Faso to deter and to respond to the types of terrorist threats that we have seen and to advance our common goals to combat violent extremism in the Sahel.

Priority three would be equitable development, which reinforces good governance and security. One of the brakes on Burkina Faso's growth has been inadequate infrastructure. Burkina successfully completed a 5-year, \$480 million Millennium Challenge compact in 2014 that made great advances to unlock the country's potential. Our adept USAID and Centers for Disease Control teams—they play key roles in multi-sector resiliency programs. And Burkina Faso, as you said, Senator, a land of integrity, of upright people, they have earned high praise for their effective use of valuable ex-

ternal assistance. New resources could jump start Burkina as that bulwark against instability in the Sahel.

Strong people-to-people ties embrace innovative exchange programs and a vibrant Peace Corps presence that includes efforts focused on an issue near and dear to my heart, engaging youth and empowering women and girls.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, you know, as we meet in this historic chamber, I am struck again by the awesome responsibility levied on an ambassador to protect fellow Americans. I have faced that responsibility during my time in Mali and when we confronted terrorism and defeated the Ebola threat. If confirmed, I will, above all, endeavor to protect American citizens and interests abroad. I will work to support good governance, which is the bedrock of effective society that reflects our shared values. And I would seek to advance U.S. national security while promoting equitable development.

And finally, if confirmed, I would look to you for counsel and support to advance these common interests.

I welcome your questions and thank you so much for considering my nomination.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Young follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANDREW R. YOUNG

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and other members of the committee, for a Foreign Service Officer who has spent 25 years serving his country on five continents across the globe, I can tell you there is no greater honor for me than to appear before you as President Obama's nominee for United States Ambassador to Burkina Faso. I am humbled by Secretary Kerry's support to take on this responsibility. I am joined by Margaret Hawley, my wife, partner and fellow Foreign Service Officer for the past 26 years and my son Nathan, who studies at American University. My daughter Claire, a sophomore at Yale, is following the live stream as is my mother, Joyce, who is watching from her adobe house in Bakersfield California, and my sister Danee from Denver, brothers Jon from California and Blair from Oregon. Were he still with us, I think my irrepressible father, Bob, would be literally glowing from the front row.

My love for Africa began thirty years ago as an intern at the U.S. Embassy in Bangui, Central African Republic. While we endured power outages, gamma globulin shots that hurt like the dickens, a terrorist hijacking, and the trial of former Emperor Bokassa for unmentionable crimes, we also worked as a team to support human rights, empower women and girls, and encourage self-help projects to lift people out of poverty. I cherished what I learned from life in a small town in the heart of Africa. After that, I received a Master's Degree in African Studies, and worked at the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to support the private sector in Africa. Joining our diplomatic service, I saw first-hand the importance of promoting democracy as a key component of our foreign policy. I was honored last year to receive the State Department's first Mark Palmer Award for the Promotion of Democracy for actions taken in Burma, on Capitol Hill when I was a Legislative Fellow for Senator Lieberman and in Mali where I have just completed three years as Deputy Chief of Mission. If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Burkina Faso, I will draw upon these experiences to advance U.S. interests in Africa.

There is a good reason that the name Burkina Faso means "Land of the People of Integrity." Integrity is a key value for the Burkinabe who are strong partners of the United States in our common struggle to promote democracy, development, and to fight instability. Inspired to do what is right, not what is easy, Burkinabe civil society, with the support of friends including the United States, took actions in 2014 to stop the actions of then President Compaore to undermine the institution of the constitution, to restore democratic governance, and to confront some elements of the Presidential Security Regiment's attempt to disrupt democratic transition in 2015. Presidential, legislative, and municipal elections in 2015 and 2016 were judged free and transparent. New leadership is in place, empowered by the consent of the gov-

erned. But that democratic transition remains fragile. If confirmed, I would prioritize supporting the Burkinabe to consolidate their democracy and seek your support to nurture a nation that confronts a host of challenges.

Burkina Faso is in a tough neighborhood. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups like al-Mourabitounne based in Mali export death and violence to the region. I witnessed this first-hand during multiple terrorist attacks in Mali. Within its means, Burkina Faso has been a valued partner in promoting regional security and combating terrorism. Deploying peacekeeping troops in places like Mali and Darfur, Burkina Faso has been a security provider in Africa. Since 1993, Burkina Faso has contributed more than 12,000 peacekeepers around the world and currently has more than 3,000 deployed. Burkina Faso hosts more than 32,000 Malian refugees with humanitarian assistance from the United States. If confirmed, I would work to build on this solid base through these programs and others like the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) to enhance Burkina Faso's capacities in our common efforts to combat and prevent violent extremism.

One of the brakes on Burkina Faso's growth has been inadequate infrastructure, especially in the energy sector. Burkina Faso completed a five-year \$480.9 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact in 2014 focused on agriculture, girls' education, and rural development. The positive reports on Burkina Faso's effective use of these scarce and valuable resources and the country continuing to pass its scorecard would make Burkina Faso eligible to be considered for a second compact.

People-to-people links between the United States and Burkina Faso have grown ever stronger through a vibrant Peace Corps presence that today includes more than 114 volunteers who serve throughout the country in Health, Economic Development, and Education—particularly focused on an issue near and dear to my heart; engaging youth and empowering women and girls. In addition, our people-to-people links include engaging future leaders such as the innovative Young African Leaders Initiative that includes the Mandela Washington Fellows, Fulbright, Humphrey, and International Visitor exchange programs. If confirmed, I would welcome your support for these programs that help empower Burkinabe partners to address the root causes of the challenges facing the region.

If confirmed, my priorities will be to promote democracy and good governance; advance peace and security; and, promote equitable economic opportunity and development. With the interagency team and the support of Congress, I would draw on my recent experience in Mali and innovative whole-of-government programs to work in tandem with the host government to strengthen democratic and governance institutions to support transparency, human rights, religious freedom, rule of law and justice, and citizen participation and representation.

Having seen first-hand the challenging security environment of the Sahel during a number of terrorist attacks, if confirmed, I would prioritize security cooperation in ways that support Burkinabe forces' efforts to enhance capacity and professionalism to maintain public order, protect borders, counter terrorism, cooperate regionally, and continue peacekeeping operations. To do so, I would ask for your support for the sustained partnership and mentoring programs I have seen work well in neighboring countries. Finally, if confirmed I would seek to build on previous efforts—such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Power Africa, and Millennium Challenge Corporation investments to increase and sustain economic well-being with trade and investment in Burkina Faso. Together, our team would build on efforts to foster Burkinabe resilience and capacity to address the challenges of economic opportunity, demographic and environmental change in our common interest.

If confirmed, my priorities would be to maximize the effectiveness of our cooperation with Burkina Faso. I will above all endeavour to protect American citizens and interests, advance U.S. national security in the Sahel region support good governance as the bedrock of an effective society that reflects American values in all interactions with the government and people of Burkina Faso. If confirmed, I will look to you for counsel and support as I seek to build on the achievements of Ambassador Tulinabo Mushingi and his team in advancing our shared values and common interests. I welcome any questions you may have.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my nomination.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Mr. Young.
Mr. Donovan?

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH R. DONOVAN, JR., OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Markey, thank you very much for this opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to become the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for placing their confidence in me and for the incredible opportunity to serve the United States in this country of such importance to us.

I would also like to introduce my wife, Meo Chou, and our two sons, James and Matthew. Without their love, support, and sacrifices, I would not be here before you today.

Mr. Chairman, Indonesia is an increasingly important player on the world stage. It is the world's third largest democracy, the most populous Muslim majority nation, and an emerging economic leader. Indonesia is a member of the G-20, the World Trade Organization, APEC, and a leader in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Indonesia is also a tolerant and diverse Muslim majority country, and its historic peaceful transition to democracy has important lessons for other nations in transition.

Put simply, it is in our national interest to continue to grow an effective partnership with this dynamic nation. Today, the United States and Indonesia enjoy excellent relations. During President Jokowi's October 2015 visit to Washington, we committed to forge a strategic partnership based on shared interests and common values that focuses on deepening people-to-people ties, enhancing security cooperation, strengthening our economic ties, and increasing collaboration on global and regional issues.

We share an abiding interest in addressing challenges on the international stage. The United States looks to Indonesia as a valued partner in areas such as counterterrorism, environmental conservation, peacekeeping operations, and the regional promotion of human rights and democratic governance. Indonesia is a key partner in our efforts to promote regional prosperity and stability.

Our development cooperation through USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation is a key tool for our strategic engagement with Indonesia. Working with a wide range of partners, government, the private sector, civil society groups, and educational institutions, we are advancing U.S. interests by promoting a more prosperous, democratic, and resilient Indonesia. Our development partnership focuses on areas of importance to the Indonesian people. We seek to augment their efforts to build capacity and improve governance, including in such areas as environmental protection, health, and countering violent extremism.

U.S.-Indonesia defense cooperation has never been stronger or more comprehensive than it is today, and we are proud to be Indonesia's top defense partner in joint exercises and other engagements.

If confirmed, my priority will be to continue to forge an even more effective strategic partnership between our two nations. I will pursue opportunities for U.S. business, for example, by promoting U.S. solutions to Indonesia's requirements in the power and aviation sectors. Likewise, I will endeavor to use our trade and invest-

ment framework agreement talks to reduce legal and regulatory impediments to trade and investment.

I will continue our close cooperation on counterterrorism, as we combat the threat of ISIL.

I will look to enhance education cooperation by increasing the number of Indonesian students studying in the United States, promoting U.S. education, and facilitating partnerships between U.S. and Indonesian universities and scientific institutions.

I will utilize public diplomacy programs such as the Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative to project America's values and emphasize our respect for human rights and the rights of members of religious minorities, as well as our opposition to human trafficking.

Mr. Chairman, during my Foreign Service career, I have been fortunate to serve the United States in both Washington and in East Asia and the Middle East. If confirmed, I will use my experience to lead our mission in Indonesia to tackle the challenges of the 21st century, including the oversight of security and safety for our personnel in Jakarta and our two constituent posts in Surabaya and Medan. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with this committee and with the Asia Subcommittee and the full committee and engaging with each of you, whether here in Washington or during your visits to the region, as we continue to promote our interests in Indonesia.

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Donovan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOSEPH R. DONOVAN, JR.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Markey, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to become the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for placing their confidence in me and for the incredible opportunity to serve the United States in this country of such importance to us.

I would also like to introduce my wife, Mei Chou, and our two sons, James and Matthew. Without their love, support and sacrifices, I would not be here before you today.

Mr. Chairman, Indonesia is an increasingly important player on the world stage. It is the world's third-largest democracy, the most populous Muslim-majority nation, and an emerging economic leader. Indonesia is a member of the G20, the World Trade Organization, APEC, and a leader in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Indonesia is a tolerant and diverse Muslim-majority country and its historic, peaceful transition to democracy has important lessons for other nations in transition.

Put simply, it is in our national interest to continue to grow an effective partnership with this dynamic nation.

Today, the United States and Indonesia enjoy excellent relations. During President Jokowi's October 2015 visit to Washington, we committed to forge a strategic partnership based on shared interests and common values that focuses on deepening people-to-people ties, enhancing security cooperation, strengthening our economic relationship, and increasing cooperation on global and regional issues.

We share an abiding interest in addressing challenges on the international stage. The United States looks to Indonesia as a valued partner in areas such as counterterrorism, environmental conservation, peacekeeping operations and the regional promotion of human rights and democratic governance. Indonesia is a key partner in our efforts to promote regional prosperity and stability.

Our development cooperation through USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation is a key tool for our strategic engagement with Indonesia. Working with a wide range of partners—government, the private sector, civil society groups, and

educational institutions—we are advancing U.S. interests by promoting a more prosperous, democratic and resilient Indonesia. Our development partnership focuses on areas of importance to the Indonesian people. We seek to augment their efforts to build capacity and improve governance, including in such areas as environmental protection, health, and countering violent extremism.

U.S.-Indonesia defense cooperation has never been stronger or more comprehensive than it is today, and we are proud to be Indonesia's top defense partner in joint exercises and other engagements.

If confirmed, my priority will be to continue to forge an even more effective strategic partnership between our two nations. I will pursue opportunities for U.S. business, for example, by promoting U.S. solutions to Indonesia's requirements in the power and aviation sectors. Likewise, I will endeavor to use our Trade and Investment Framework Agreement talks to reduce legal and regulatory impediments to trade and investment. I will continue our close cooperation on counterterrorism as we combat the growing threat of ISIL. I will seek to enhance education cooperation by increasing the number of Indonesians studying in the United States, promoting U.S. education, and facilitating partnerships between U.S. and Indonesian universities and scientific institutions. I will utilize Public Diplomacy programs, such as the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), to project America's values and emphasize our respect for human rights and the rights of members of religious minorities, as well as our opposition to human trafficking.

Mr. Chairman, during my Foreign Service career, I have been fortunate to serve the United States in both Washington and in assignments in East Asia and the Middle East. If confirmed, I will use my experience to lead our mission in Indonesia to tackle the challenges of the 21st century, including the oversight of security and safety for our personnel in Jakarta and our two constituent posts in Surabaya and Medan. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with this committee and engaging with each of you, whether here in Washington or during your visits to the region, as we continue to promote our interests in Indonesia.

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to take your questions.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you all. Thank you all for your testimony. I will start the round of questions.

Ambassador Symington, what is the biggest difference with the new government now, the Buhari government, as opposed to the Jonathan government in terms of our security cooperation with Nigeria? What opportunities do we have now that we did not before?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Senator, thank you for that question and for the focus on the differences.

The single greatest difference is Buhari's forthright understanding of the importance of tackling both security challenges and the corruption that feeds them in many parts of the world.

I think that as he thinks of the tasks ahead, what he needs in part is the kind of teamwork with his neighbors and with other partners, including us, that is essential to address this issue. And he also needs to keep working across the board to make sure that his government is seen to deliver the sorts of services to those who have been affected by terrorism that can win them to the cause because the security threats they face are too great for governments alone to handle.

And so I would say that as we work with him in the days ahead, as we think of ways that we can train, ways that we can equip, ways that we can inform, ways that we can help with logistics and flesh out strategies and teamwork, what we have in President Buhari and his government is a willing partner genuinely interested in using resources well to enhance the welfare of his people. So if in the days ahead we can continue on that course, making wise decisions about how best we can help deal with one part of what is an absolutely clear global threat against not just Nigerians but us, I think we will be well served, Senator.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Mr. Young, talk for a minute, if you can, drawing on your experience in other African countries as well and most recently in Mali. How does our soft power or programs through USAID and Millennium Challenge and others help in terms of security cooperation in these countries? Is it a necessary part? Is it helpful or not?

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Senator. I think you have honed in on exactly one of the great attributes we have to advance our national interests in places like Mali and in places like Burkina Faso, were I confirmed to be able to serve there.

We have an extraordinary high level of public support in both those countries. The United States is perceived to be a partner who looks to support the common interests of our partners in Burkina Faso and our partners in Mali where I recently spent 3 years. And I think that that opens the door for us to find that common interest to solve a problem. I can give you some examples.

When we were in Mali, the team worked very, very carefully to develop a security component, and in that security component, we had a national guard team that showed goodwill but lacked training and capacity. Through a series of interventions, we helped this team respond and create a quick reaction force that helped provide security around our embassy. Later we continued a mentoring program. That quick reaction force was able to follow behind some of our teams that responded to the attack on the Radisson Hotel, again showing their capacity to take the fight to the enemy under the leadership and partnership with Americans.

And then finally, a neighbor was attacked about 400 meters from the embassy a few months later. That quick reaction force responded directly under their own initiative to provide lifesaving aid to their fellow citizens. I think that sort of teamwork that we empower enables us to advance our common interests.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Mr. Donovan, we are right now in discussions, obviously, or negotiation with TPP. Can you talk a little about the importance of engaging trade with Indonesia? Obviously, we want to make sure that Southeast Asian countries are part of our trade orbit and do not only have China as an option. How important is it for us to engage?

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Senator.

Certainly when we look at the rebalancing strategy, it has at least three legs to it. One is on the security area. Another is the growth and development of regional organizations or regional architecture, if you will. And the third is trade. And TPP plays a major role in the trade leg of this. Indonesia has expressed an interest, as have others in participating in TPP, and as we have with others, we have welcomed Indonesia's interest in participating at some point in the future in TPP and, as we have said with others, if and when they are qualified to take the steps in order to do that.

Overall, though, I think it is also important to recognize that our overall trade with Indonesia last year was about \$27 billion. The American Chamber of Commerce, just in a meeting last week—the American Chamber of Commerce in Jakarta in a meeting last week stated that our economic relationship with Indonesia is very strong, but the opportunities are immense. And I think that says it all in

terms of the possibilities for going forward that we can do with Indonesia on trade. We look at it in terms of regulatory issues and encouraging them through our trade and investment forum agreement meetings to relax some regulatory restrictions that are placed on American products. Also we look for ways to encourage American investment in Indonesia, which we think also is a very positive force.

All of these areas I think combine as part of our economic relationship and showing that the future could be immense for us in Indonesia.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Mr. Markey?

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

Mr. Symington, I was in Nigeria last month, and I was told that 1 million doses of the medicine for HIV/AIDS had actually just been stolen and disappeared even though that government is part of our program to help to ensure that that type of aid reaches the people who need it the most. And of course, that medicine could then be sold on the black market for a lot more money.

So I guess my question to you is that the Buhari government has promised reforms that promised that they are going to try to root out the deep corruption that has historically existed inside of that country. Can you give us, from your perspective, a progress report on how successful this new government has become?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Senator, thank you for highlighting what is I think their greatest challenge. It is to go beyond the statements to the practice.

Let me just say that one of the most important ways to make sure that you tackle corruption is to get the facts. And one of the things that we have done is to engage with them across the board to ensure that we have accurate information on the use of not only our resources but theirs. And that statistical challenge is one that we are working with our partners on every day.

The second thing is that when there are problems, you need to hold people accountable, and my understanding is that some changes in the team that work on health in Nigeria reflect an effort to ensure accountability.

So I think that they have got remarkable challenges ahead, but none is more important than to actually deliver the kind of goods and services not just supplied by the Nigerians but by their international partners, including the United States, to the people of Nigeria. They have said that that is their goal, and I think it is vital that we work with them to make sure that they achieve it.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

Mr. Young, the people in Burkina Faso—they live in a very dangerous neighborhood. There are terrorist groups coming from pretty much all directions towards that government. And I guess my question to you is what do you think the chances are of this government not ultimately being able to withstand its own internal stresses and that it could be overturned in a way that did not reflect its democratic values.

Mr. YOUNG. So thank you, Senator. You highlight the challenge before us, but I think you also in your introduction highlighted the core resource upon which we can build to address that problem.

Burkina Faso, a land of people of integrity—this is an historic opportunity for us to invest in that fragile democracy and invest in those nascent security institutions to ensure that our interventions and the will of the Burkinabe people to build a democracy at this crucial point in their history reaches its fruition. So I would say this is an opportunity for us to inoculate this fragile democracy from the challenges, and if I were confirmed, I would keep your question and your themes at the forefront of every activity that I would do to move forward.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

And, Mr. Donovan, there is a country of vast size and resources that you are being nominated to represent the United States. They have, unfortunately, much illegal logging that goes on. Their forests are ultimately central to, like the Amazon, providing the lungs for the planet. There is much corruption around this entire sector inside of their country, and yet we are hoping and expecting them to comply with these international goals that were set in Paris last December.

Could you talk, from your perspective, about the role that you expect Indonesia to play and how you would intend on keeping them accountable to meeting the goals that have been established for them?

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Senator. I think you point out two very important areas of cooperation that we have with Indonesia. One would be on the fight against corruption, and the other would be on climate change and biodiversity and environmental protection. They are, as you noted, very closely interrelated with each other.

And I cannot emphasize enough these are areas that we partner with Indonesia together, but they are also areas that Indonesia has identified as important priorities for themselves and for cooperation with us. This is really a true partnership and it is a two-way street.

With regard to corruption, we cooperate with not only the Indonesian Government, President Jokowi and his government, but also with civil society in Indonesia. And we really have three objectives as we move forward on it. One is to strengthen the Government of Indonesian bodies that are responsible for the fight against corruption. The most prominent of them is an organization called KPK, which is corruption eradication commission.

Another area that we work on is to promote an anti-corruption culture within Indonesia.

And the third would be to take steps to strengthen the rule of law.

All of these again we do in cooperation with the Indonesian Government and with Indonesians themselves. We work on these in different ways. We offer assistance and training for prosecutors. We speak out in public. We attempt to work with civil society organizations to build on this culture, but also we provide training and other assistance on it.

With regard to biodiversity and climate change, we are working very hard to help Indonesia to achieve its goals that it has declared in terms of curbing its own carbon emissions. We have programs both from the Millennium Challenge Corporation and from USAID

in such areas as land use, also in terms of both training and how you manage the land, what you can do to reduce emissions, and also in health areas as well.

So all of these I think are areas that we work very, very closely with the Indonesian people and the Indonesian Government on.

Thank you.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Senator Gardner?

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for accommodating Mr. Donovan's hearing this morning. Thank you very much for making that happen on the itinerary today.

And to the fine members of the Foreign Service, thank you for your service and commitment to our country.

Mr. Donovan, I had the pleasure of meeting you in my office a couple of weeks ago and look forward to this confirmation hearing and the remaining of the process.

A couple of questions that we covered in the office when we had a chance to visit. What do you think the highlights of the U.S.-Indonesia relationship have brought to us so far, areas that we should look at as examples of success to this point?

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I think there are a number of areas where our cooperation has increased and where Indonesia is certainly demonstrating regional leadership. One area would be in the fight against counterterrorism. For instance, in the last several weeks, Indonesia has hosted regional conferences, both on the fight against foreign fighters and in a second conference, on the effort to curb foreign terrorist financing. And that certainly is a major step forward and a good thing as far as we are concerned.

Also we are partnering with Indonesian civil society in the formation of a religious diversity, Muslim diversity, conference that was just held several days ago. In this particular conference, the State Department representative to Muslim communities and the embassy both participated. And this is an example of Indonesia showing leadership as a diverse but tolerant, moderate Muslim nation and acting as a role model. I think all of those areas have been particularly important.

Senator GARDNER. You mentioned the issue of counterterrorism. How many Indonesians are currently fighting with ISIL in Syria or other terror groups?

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Senator.

I have seen a number of different statistics, and what I am going to give you I think is probably a better idea of not the specific numbers, but just an idea of the extent of it such as we understand it.

One of the problems in estimating the number of foreign fighters from Indonesia is the fact that their family members go with them. So I have seen estimates of a total of perhaps as much as 1,000, but of those, many members would be family members. And perhaps a more realistic figure would be about 300 to 600. But, again, please do not hold me accountable for the exact numbers on this. Of these, I think we also estimate approximately 100 or so have returned to Indonesia in one form or another.

Senator GARDNER. And what are the Indonesian Government's policies for domestic militants and the threat that they pose to the Government of Indonesia, the people of Indonesia when they return and how we can work with them on that issue?

Mr. DONOVAN. First of all, I think it is important that we share the very common goals with them, and that is, one, preventing foreign terrorists or local terrorists for that matter from conducting attacks; second, from spreading hateful ideologies; and third, for recruiting vulnerable populations, including youth, and recruiting them.

What we are cooperating with Indonesia on is in such areas as information sharing. We cooperate in areas including the prison management and the monitoring of prisoners after they have been released to make sure that that is handled properly, and also in speaking out in the community, engaging with members of civil society and civil society organizations, to make sure that we do not vacate that field to foreign terrorists or to extremists.

Senator GARDNER. And would you consider this area to be the greatest counterterrorism gap that Indonesia has? Is there another area of greater concern to the U.S.?

Mr. DONOVAN. Well, certainly one thing that we are very cognizant and we support Indonesia on is their counterterrorism programs are civilian and law enforcement-led. And I think this is a very important priority for us as it is for Indonesia as well. And so we work again with the law enforcement agencies to make sure that they play the leading role. There have been a number of successes just in the past month or 2 in Indonesia. One was the death and the killing of Santoso, who was the leading terrorist in Indonesia. Just last week, his deputy was captured, and there was a press report today saying that another member of his group was killed within the last several days. So I think that is a very good sign.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Donovan.

And shifting to trade, what are the biggest barriers right now that you see between the U.S. and Indonesia in matters of trade?

Mr. DONOVAN. One of the issues that we have to deal with is excessive regulation, regulatory restrictions on our products coming in, which I might add also raises the price for Indonesian consumers. And I think that that is an area that we need to be working on and working with Indonesia through the Trade and Investment Forum Agreement mechanism that we have. Our most recent meeting was in April in Indonesia.

Another would be in the area of investment. Indonesia has a negative investment list that makes it difficult sometimes for foreign investors and certainly for U.S. investors to really engage in ways that they would like to do. And I think in all those areas, we need to work a little bit harder.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Donovan.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Ambassador Rubio?

Senator RUBIO. Not yet. [Laughter.]

Senator FLAKE. Senator.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you for the promotion, but not yet. I appreciate it.

Mr. Donovan, let me ask you. In 2006, Indonesia passed a law requiring minority religious groups to collect signatures from the local majority group before building houses of worship. So since the passage of that so-called religious harmony bill, more than 1,000 Indonesian churches have reportedly been shuttered and untold numbers of others have never been built.

To what extent do you plan to make religious freedom a priority in your dealings with the Government of Indonesia?

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Senator.

Obviously, every society and every government and every country is judged in part by the way that it treats its minorities. Within the Indonesian constitution, it contains guarantees of religious freedom. But there have been instances of abuses involving religious minorities. We certainly urge the Indonesian Government and work with civil society in Indonesia to look at those and do what they can to have—you know, Indonesia really regards itself and is very proud of its tradition as a diverse society. And we encourage Indonesia to live up to that. And we work—again, I mentioned the religious commission that was just formed—to try and move forward in that area. In terms of my efforts on that, I can assure you that one of the priorities I will have, if confirmed, is helping Indonesia to deal with issues involving religious minorities, to make sure that they not only are entitled but receive the same freedoms of other Indonesian citizens.

Senator RUBIO. We had a hearing here last week in the subcommittee about child marriages, which I think is a misnomer because a marriage is supposed to be a consensual relationship between two people. In the case of a 14- or a 13-year-old I do not think that is accurate. In fact, I know it is not.

But this particular case about protecting women and girls abroad has become a priority of U.S. policy. In your view, what more can the Indonesian Government do to protect women and girls from the rampant abuse and to promote more quality for all women and young girls in the country?

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Senator.

Certainly one area would be to shed a little bit more light on this and to make sure that the Indonesian people are aware of issues like this going on. I think certainly when you look at public opinion polling in Indonesia, there is a great desire to move forward to protect the rights of minorities. And I think practices like this—one of the things that we can do is work with civil society organizations to make sure that the Indonesian people are aware of what is going on.

Senator RUBIO. Mr. Symington, I want to ask now about Nigeria for a moment.

The independent bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has recommended that Nigeria be designated a country of particular concern. Here is the quote from their report. Quote: the Nigerian federal government fails to implement effective strategies to prevent or stop terrorism and sectarian violence, and it does not bring to justice those responsible for such violence, thus fostering a climate of impunity. End quote.

In your view, why has the Department of State failed to make this designation, and do you believe that Nigeria has the capacity to improve religious freedom conditions, particularly while more fully and effectively countering Boko Haram and sectarian violence? I guess the first question is the most important. In your view, why has that designation not happened?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Senator, thank you for both this question and the previous question about the importance of religious liberty.

I do not think that there is a single issue more important in Nigeria than that the country continue to be seen by all of its citizens as a country that protects the rights of each one of them regardless of what their religion is. This issue comes up every day.

It is true that in the northeast, most of the victims of terrorist attacks are Muslims. But there are conflicts that continue to try to rip the country apart and try to rip it apart along religious lines.

I think that the single most important thing that we can do is to stress every day that the notion, *e pluribus unum*, out of many, one, is not an idea that is just American but universal, and at the core is belief. And at the core is the individual person.

We have spoken to and will continue to engage with not just the president but with state and local leaders, with religious leaders, with civil society throughout the country in Nigeria, and if confirmed, I look forward to contributing to that.

Senator, I do not know the answer to the question regarding the designation, and I will find it out and submit it to you.

Senator RUBIO. Let me then in closing ask you in general do you believe the Nigerian Government and its security forces are taking sufficient steps to protect civilians, especially young girls, from human rights abuses such as kidnappings and forced conversions.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Senator, thank you again.

I think that not just the Nigerian Government, the Nigerian people and their partners, including the United States, need to continue and increase the steps that we take. Boko Haram and others have been reduced, but awful things continue to happen on a daily basis. And in a country as vibrant and as important to its own people and to the world as Nigeria, we cannot stop where we are. We have to go forward together. There literally is nothing more important.

There is a bond of trust that must be forged between the people of any place and the leaders of that place, and when that is threatened, it undermines all governance, all justice, and all opportunity. Forging with them that bond to make it stronger is essential for them but also for us, for as we think about the world ahead, I cannot imagine a more important relationship than the one that we have with the African continent. And I think our efforts there begin by thinking about individual people and starting with conscience, a fundamental freedom as well as a right.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Senator Rubio.

I want to thank the witnesses today.

One other question for Mr. Donovan. In 2015 I think, the President of Indonesia announced the intention to join TPP at some point. Is that still the understanding?

Mr. DONOVAN. It is my understanding, yes, Mr. Chairman. During President Jokowi's visit here in October of 2015, he did announce that Indonesia was interested in joining the TPP. I understand just overnight there have been some press statements that I cannot confirm that one of the things that the Indonesian Government will be doing is waiting to see how our handling of TPP will be undertaken.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you all for your testimony today. I appreciate my colleagues for the questions. And once again, thank you to the families that are here. We understand and appreciate greatly the sacrifices that you all make to have family members serve in these posts.

The hearing record will remain open until close of business Wednesday. We ask the witnesses to respond promptly to questions that may be submitted.

And I also ask for unanimous consent that Senator Klobuchar's statement be added to the record. She has some nice things to say about Ambassador Symington.

[Senator Klobuchar's statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR IN SUPPORT OF
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE STUART SYMINGTON

Mr. Chairman, My good friend Stuart Symington is before the committee today regarding his nomination to be Ambassador to Nigeria. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the hearing due to my obligation to serve as the ranking member for an anti-trust hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee. If I were able to attend today, I would provide my full support for Ambassador Symington's nomination.

I have known Ambassador Symington and his family for many years. I have long known that the Ambassador has a passion for furthering America's interests in the world and improving the lives of those struggling most. Through his decades of work at the State Department, this passion has become clear to everyone that meets the Ambassador. Ambassador Symington has spent his life representing our country in some of the most dangerous places in the world. In 2004 and 2005, he served under Ambassador Negroponte in Iraq managing the election process in a country that had been ruled by military dictators for decades. Before that, he served in Niger and dealt with military uprisings and terrorist threats. This experience is vital as we face new and evolving security challenges abroad and is especially relevant in light of the recent violence in Benue, Nigeria.

Ambassador Symington understands the complexities and long-lasting effects of civil war from his time as Ambassador to Rwanda. During his time there, the Ambassador helped build civil society and institutional capacity, vastly improving how people receive health care. He also strengthened economic integration and agricultural production. He did the same as Ambassador to Djibouti in the years prior to his time in Rwanda. Ambassador Symington's current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Africa and African Security Affairs brings more valuable experience to an already impressive history of service in Africa. These experiences uniquely qualify the Ambassador to represent the United States in Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa.

As Nigeria struggles to address terrorist groups like Boko Haram, and lift its economy from a deep recession, we need a steady and experienced hand leading the U.S. Embassy in Abuja. There is no doubt that Ambassador Symington is the person for the job. I am honored to give my full support for his swift confirmation.

Senator FLAKE. And with the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:53 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF HON. W. STUART SYMINGTON, NOMINATED TO BE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

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

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

Answer. In every post, I have worked in partnership with people inside and outside government to promote human rights and democracy. Together, we have acted to improve electoral processes, to reduce ethnic and religious tensions, to promote equal justice, and to stop violations of human rights. For example, as Deputy Assistant Secretary, I visited Burundi, met with opposition, religious, and human rights leaders, and pressed government leaders in public and in private to stop using incendiary language that risked inciting ethnic violence and to retract earlier statements.

More recently, as U.S. Special Representative for the Central African Republic, I worked with civil society, an ecumenical group of religious leaders, youth, and leaders of all political parties to stop spoilers who threatened to derail the democratic transition, and ensure a successful, democratic election process. Earlier in my career, as Political Advisor at U.S. Northern Command, I worked successfully with our U.S. Mission in the Bahamas to advocate for increased government action to combat trafficking in persons, and with our Mission in Mexico to ensure military cooperation complied fully with the Leahy Law.

If confirmed to be U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, I can assure you that I will make human rights and democracy one of my top priorities and I will make certain that my team at Post does the same.

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

Answer. Stopping the horrific attacks of Boko Haram and providing support to those affected by that group is the most pressing human rights issue in Nigeria today. If confirmed, I will act to ensure that the United States continues to support Nigeria and its neighbors as they tackle the Boko Haram threat contributes to lasting security in the region. To do that, it is vital that the Nigerian government enlist the full support of its own people, by acting with precision and in accordance with its laws when using force, and ensuring that justice, good governance, and the delivery of essential services quickly follow when Boko Haram is displaced and defeated. It is also essential that the Government of Nigeria take responsibility when instances of security force abuse do occur, and that accountability and respect for human rights are key tenets of their security operations, including those against Boko Haram.

We will continue to act as true partners, working together to ensure that our efforts truly benefit Nigeria's people and our own. We will act together with civil society and government alike to ensure that those who seek to do good—including advocates of human rights and good governance—are protected by the law, and those who violate the law are held accountable.

Our objective is not just to degrade and ultimately defeat Boko Haram, but to help Nigeria change the conditions that gave rise to this group, and prevent the resurgence of other violent groups. There are no overnight solutions, and for Nigeria and its partners, this will require a sustained, long-term effort. Through our actions we aim to improve governance, strengthen the rule of law, and promote respect for human rights by supporting the development of strong governmental institutions focused on delivering fair and equitable treatment to all Nigerians.

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

Answer. While the Government of Nigeria has made some progress to address human rights issues, several obstacles remain. Nigeria's large population and territory and its extraordinary diversity challenge the National and State governments

as they respond to crises and seek to deliver services. A culture of impunity exists in Nigeria and there are inefficiencies in the judicial and criminal justice systems. President Buhari is right to underscore the fundamental importance for all Nigerians of stopping corruption. Additionally, there is a need for professionalism in the security services including both the police and military. There is a tendency of some powerful politicians at the local and national level to support electoral fraud and voter intimidation, and to foment ethnic and sectarian divisions.

We continue to emphasize to the Nigerian government that human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law by security forces undermine security goals; improvements in accountability for violations will enhance security force legitimacy; and, impunity for violations by security forces not only tarnishes Nigeria's reputation, but eliminates our ability to engage with those units accused of violations.

Following the violent clashes between members of the Nigerian Army and the Shiite group Islamic Movement of Nigeria in Zaria, Kaduna State, last December, the United States immediately called for a transparent and credible investigation into the killings of civilians. Transparent and comprehensive inquiries into incidents like this are crucial, along with no immunity for those found to be responsible, regardless of rank or position. The report issued by the independent commission appointed by the Kaduna state government notes just that.

I note too that President Buhari has made public statements demanding better behavior by the security forces and respect for human rights. We continue to press his government to follow through on this rhetoric by taking action regarding alleged security force abuses from before and after the start of his administration.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I am fully committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the United States, and with human rights NGOs and advocates in Nigeria. I will work in partnership with the entire U.S. Mission staff to underscore to all our Nigerian interlocutors the fundamental importance of the Leahy Law and the principles behind it. The Leahy vetting program at the Embassy in Nigeria has been characterized as impressive and suggested as a model for the entire Department. As we work together to build security and strong democratic institutions, we will continue to also protect human rights and thus strengthen the bonds between citizens and their government.

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

Answer. If confirmed, my Embassy team and I will continue to actively engage with the Government of Nigeria at all levels to redress cases of any political prisoners or persons unjustly targeted by the government. I will continue to press the Nigerian government to promote respect for human rights, civilian protection, appropriate detention procedures, and accountability for abuses effectively. A key component of our security assistance to Nigeria has been the importance of respect for human rights and professional military conduct that focuses on protecting the civilian population, humane treatment of prisoners, and adherence to the rule of law.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with Nigerian leadership on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance. I will stress to the Government of Nigeria the importance of upholding freedoms of expression and assembly and inclusion of all citizens in the political process, while simultaneously continuing to demonstrate our support for civil society. If confirmed, we will continue to take allegations of human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law very seriously.

Question. The 2016 U.N. humanitarian response plan for Nigeria is currently funded at 22 percent, and sources on the ground have indicated that corruption and profiteering-including the looting of food aid by security forces-are hampering aid delivery.

- ◆ What more should the United States do to help improve humanitarian conditions in the north? If confirmed, how will you work with the Nigerian govern-

ment and international partners to draw attention and channel resources towards the emergency?

- ◆ How can we help stop the diversion of food aid?
- ◆ How do we combat sexual exploitation and abuse by security forces of those living in the camps?

Answer. Changing the grave trajectory in the Northeast will require the urgent and robust collective efforts of the Government of Nigeria and the international community. Over the past few months, the U.N. has scaled up its response and coordination mechanism to the highest levels, recognizing the truly dire conditions of many living in the Northeast. Concurrently, the Government of Nigeria has decided to establish an Inter-Ministerial Task Force to coordinate among national authorities and the international community—a sign of Nigeria's recognition of the complexity and scale of the humanitarian crisis in the Northeast. The Government of Nigeria, the UN, and the broader humanitarian community must dispatch a fully coordinated and cooperative response to maximize the effectiveness of the relief effort at this crucial time. We will continue to urge the Nigerian government to act with a greater sense of urgency with respect to taking a stronger lead role in providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance to ensure that needed assistance reaches its intended beneficiaries. Similarly, we are pressing our United Nations colleagues to deploy appropriate and sufficient staff to effectively support the Nigerians' efforts.

The humanitarian crisis in Nigeria and the broader Lake Chad Basin is a critical priority for the United States, and we have worked to draw much-needed attention and funding for the response, including through high-level visits by U.S. government officials such as Secretary Kerry, Ambassador Power, senior USAID officials, and others. We have provided robust humanitarian assistance to Nigeria and the broader region to support Boko Haram's victims. We are the largest international donor, and we are constantly exploring how we can use our assistance to reach more people.

In FY 2015 and FY 2016, the United States provided more than \$318 million in aid in the Lake Chad Basin region, of which more than \$165 million was for Nigeria alone, and we are working to do more. We are working in close coordination with other donors, in particular the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK), and look forward to continuing to support the efforts of the U.N. and the Government of Nigeria to marshal resources for this response, reaching beyond the normal base to include the private sector and international financial institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate that the United States provide a robust response to this acute humanitarian crisis.

At the highest levels, we continue to urge the Government of Nigeria and the U.N. system to streamline the delivery of humanitarian support to the Northeast. Furthermore, we are working with the Government of Nigeria to ensure that life-saving resources are used for their intended purposes. Nigeria is taking allegations of stolen food aid seriously; Nigeria's Senate and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission have announced investigations into allegations of food aid theft. We are supporting the Nigerian government's efforts to curb this behavior by building government capacity to ensure effective monitoring mechanisms are put in place. We will continue to press for improved coordination with the United Nations to strengthen the collaborative international response to the crisis.

USAID is working closely with its partners on the ground to safeguard assistance, requiring all implementing partners to have acceptable risk management plans in place, and to monitor aid distribution closely. In Nigeria, a variety of tools are being employed to respond to the food security crisis including electronic food vouchers that help reduce risk by improving tracking and reporting of aid. Further, USAID has multiple feedback mechanisms in place for reporting possible diversion or theft and will begin using a third party monitor in FY 2017. We will continue to press for improved coordination with the United Nations to strengthen the collaborative international response to the crisis.

We have also been disturbed by reports that Nigerian officials and security personnel have taken advantage of displaced persons in camps and settlements in northeastern Nigeria, including cases of sexual abuse. I am keenly aware and we are actively engaged in addressing the appalling allegations of sexual misconduct toward internally displaced persons who are already victims of terror. We have shared these reports with Nigerian officials and urged them to take immediate steps to stop such behavior. Allegations of sexual misconduct against military and official personnel must be investigated in a timely manner. Such allegations, whether true or not, risk further undermining trust in legitimate institutions of governance—strengthening the hand of Boko Haram. Our Embassy continues to urge that all

such allegations be swiftly and frankly addressed. If confirmed, I will join in pressing the Nigerian federal and state governments to fully implement a zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, to quickly investigate allegations, and to publicly hold accountable those found guilty of committing abuses against civilians.

At the same time, it is important to assist those who have suffered sexual violence. USAID is already providing health care, psycho-social support, and gender-based violence programs directly to internally displaced persons, including recently arrived women and children. We will continue to work with the Nigerian government, communities, and international organizations to support victims of gender-based violence. Boko Haram itself employs systematic rape and brutality against women and girls. These victims have suffered profoundly. They need help so that they and the region can move forward together.

Question. The Nigerian government is taking steps to restore security in areas of the Northeast "liberated" from Boko Haram, but abuses by police and other security forces now and in the past are a major obstacle to building trust in these communities.

- ◆ What steps are being taken by the government to investigate past abuses, and mitigate the risk of further abuses. What are we doing to help the government in these efforts?
- ◆ If confirmed, will you commit to making accountability for security force abuses a top priority?

Answer. President Buhari has made public statements demanding better behavior by the security forces and respect for human rights. Transparent and comprehensive inquiries into incidents like this are crucial, with no impunity for those found to be responsible. We have been very clear with the Government of Nigeria that we take allegations of human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law by security forces very seriously. Our military assistance to Nigeria, as with all countries, is subject to Leahy vetting. We are required by law not to provide training or assistance to units or individuals for whom we have credible information of gross violations of human rights.

When the Nigerian Army clashed last December with an Islamic sect in Zaria, we immediately called for a transparent and credible investigation. The Kaduna State Judicial Commission of Inquiry released a report on its investigation into the Zaria incident. We have stressed at high levels the need to bring to justice those who perpetrated the violence.

I was pleased when then-President Goodluck Jonathan allowed international human rights observers access to Giwa Barracks, which was reported by Amnesty International to have been the site of hundreds of deaths. If confirmed, I will press the current administration for continued access and for all military detention facilities to offer humane detention conditions, including for suspected Boko Haram ex-combatants.

State and USAID democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) programs are critical tools to strengthen civil society's capacity to monitor security force conduct and enhance community and state actors' ability to address threats from Boko Haram. DRG assistance is increasingly deployed to address violent extremism and its drivers and support core security goals around the world, and Nigeria is a strong example of such efforts.

I am committed to encouraging and helping to expand Nigeria's efforts to address human rights violations. If confirmed, I will make accountability for security force abuses a top priority. I will stress that transparency is the key when instances of human rights abuse occur. My goal will be to encourage the Nigerian government to be transparent about how Nigeria addresses human rights violations, to publicly share the results of human rights investigations, and to hold those who violate the law to account.

Question. The Nigerian government appears to have adopted a heavily militarized approach to counter two simultaneous threats, one in the Northeast, and one in the Delta. This approach does not address the root causes of radicalization and violent extremism, which in the Nigeria context, seem to be similar whether aggrieved populations are in the Northeast or the Niger Delta. Nigerian authorities are working with regional and international partners to address security challenges, but, as far as I know, there is no comprehensive government strategy to address the root causes of violence.

- ◆ How is the Nigerian government working to address the root causes of violent extremism, such as inequitable resource allocation and local level corruption? What, in your view, still needs to be done?

- ◆ How can the United States assist the Nigerian government in ensuring its planning to address root causes is as robust as its security approach?

Answer. There is no purely military solution to the security issues that Nigeria faces. It is critical that the Government of Nigeria address the drivers of extremism, including through the development of educational and economic opportunities. As Secretary Kerry said, "To effectively counter violent extremism, we have to ensure that military action is coupled with a reinforced commitment to the values this region and all of Nigeria has a long legacy of supporting—values like integrity, good governance, education, compassion, security, and respect for human rights." If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Nigeria to encourage policies and practices that will help to strengthen the Nigerian people's trust in their government and in their own security institutions.

The Nigerian federal government must do more in partnership with Nigerian state governments to address the local conditions that create grievances and give rise to insecurity. This is particularly true in the Delta, where our embassy and consulate are working with both the federal and state governments to fully engage in this challenge. However, just as in the United States, the federal government cannot be responsible for addressing all community grievances; state government leadership must play a more responsible role in supporting development in both regions using the considerable resources available to them, especially in the Niger Delta. We are also working with a range of local non-governmental actors, including the business community, religious leaders, and civil society organizations to develop their capacity to manage and mitigate disputes before they give rise to insecurity.

The Government of Nigeria and leaders in the major faith communities have improved inter-religious relationships in the North. The federal government is also working with state governors in northern and Middle Belt areas of Nigeria to establish specific grazing territory to address herder/farmer conflicts, and it is working with local communities to improve conflict mitigation.

President Buhari has taken key steps in the past year to counter corruption. These efforts include: (1) high-profile investigative and prosecution efforts by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission; (2) the use of a single auditable treasury account for receipt of all public funds to prevent graft; (3) reforms in the state oil company; (4) investigations into corruption in military procurement; (5) a public campaign against corruption, including anonymous public tip lines; and, (6) formally joining the Open Government Partnership. We will work with the Government of Nigeria to strengthen its anti-corruption efforts at all levels.

The United States continues to provide security assistance to support the professionalization of the Nigerian security forces in order to increase the military's ability to counter extremism and its ability to monitor and patrol Nigeria's waters. Yet, we are keenly aware that our principal objective is not just to defeat Boko Haram, but to help Nigeria change the conditions that gave rise to such groups in the first place. This requires a sustained long-term effort to address the underlying drivers of insecurity.

There is a critical link between improving the democracy and human rights climate and countering violent extremism in Nigeria. USAID supports a number of programs that promote inter-religious and ethnic tolerance, as well as conflict mitigation and reconciliation, including efforts through the Office of Transition Initiatives to promote the legitimacy and capacity of governance structures in the conflict-affected Northeast. If confirmed, I will focus intensely on our work with civil society to better understand the root causes of these drivers, and I will use all our available tools at the Mission to help the Nigerian people counter violence and bend the arc of extremism towards reconciliation and peace throughout Nigeria.

Question. Our relationship with Nigeria is one of the most important on the continent. I understand the administration's Nigeria strategy is being updated.

- ◆ When will it be approved and when do you plan to share that with Congress?

Answer. The administration has a long-standing strategy that is classified, and that has been updated from time to time. We would be happy to brief you in the appropriate setting on the strategy. The overarching policies that guide our engagement with Nigeria have been described publicly in multiple documents. Our top policy priorities align closely with President Buhari's objectives:

- ◆ Defeating Boko Haram/Islamic State West Africa and restoring security and governance to northeastern Nigeria, as well as relieving the humanitarian crisis there. The Government of Nigeria has made progress in its campaign against Boko Haram, but that fight is ongoing and requires a committed and sustained response.

- ◆ Reviving oil production, preventing attacks on pipelines, and promoting dialogue and development in the Niger Delta. Preventing militant attacks on pipelines is critical, and this requires a broad dialogue in the Niger Delta and efforts to encourage economic development.
- ◆ Furthering economic policy reform by encouraging the adoption of market-friendly practices, encouraging international trade as well as local production of goods, and ensuring sound monetary policy. We will continue to promote U.S. business investment in and trade with Nigeria.
- ◆ Improving governance, strengthening the rule of law, and respect for human rights by supporting the development of strong governmental institutions with built-in accountability mechanisms, focused on delivering fair and equitable treatment to all Nigerians.
- ◆ Reducing corruption by encouraging transparent governance of public institutions.

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE SYMINGTON'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR RUBIO

Question. Nigerian President Buhari has initiated a crackdown on government corruption, are we satisfied with the anti-corruption campaign? Are there areas Nigeria should focus on to root out corruption?

Answer. The United States remains a committed partner with Nigeria in the fight against corruption. I am encouraged that Nigeria is carrying out significant investigations and is willing to prosecute senior officials credibly accused of corruption. Prosecuting officials regardless of political affiliation will be key to the ultimate success of the anti-corruption effort. I believe the establishment of a Treasury Single Account is an important step in the right direction to better public financial management. While we are encouraged by this progress, there is still work to be done.

It is crucial that Nigeria continue to improve the transparency of its finances and those of its state-owned enterprises, such as the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, in order to reduce opportunities for corruption. If confirmed, I will continue to stress the importance of doing more, for example, by encouraging the government to make public audit reports of its annual financial statements, exercise adequate oversight over off-budget, and demonstrate willingness to partner with civil society on specific transparency and accountability efforts, including the development of an Open Government Partnership National Action Plan.

Question. Is Nigeria doing enough to combat Boko Haram? Is there more the U.S. could do to assist Nigeria and neighboring countries?

Answer. The Government of Nigeria has made progress in its campaign against Boko Haram, but that fight is ongoing and requires a committed and sustained Nigerian response with support from the United States and other partners. Nigeria and its regional partners must lead the fight against Boko Haram, and I am absolutely committed to supporting our partners in that effort.

Through our whole-of-government strategy, the United States is focused on assisting the efforts Nigeria and the other Lake Chad Basin countries to weaken Boko Haram's capacity, financing, and cohesion through both military and law enforcement; counter and prevent the drivers of violent extremism; promote more inclusive and capable local governance to address the underlying drivers of insecurity; improve respect for human rights and accountability for security force behavior; and, respond to the humanitarian needs of civilians affected by Boko Haram.

One component of our strategy is providing support to the Multinational Joint Task Force, which includes elements from Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Benin. This is part of a regional approach to a problem that transcends borders. Another component is bilateral security assistance to Nigeria and its neighbors. Through multiple channels, we are providing advisors, training, logistical support, and equipment. This assistance is vetted in accordance with our obligations under the Leahy Law. The fight against Boko Haram goes well beyond the battlefield. It is a fight that requires long-term solutions. Nigeria and the other Lake Chad Basin countries must address the drivers of extremism that gave rise to Boko Haram, including ineffective and exclusionary governance, corruption, lack of education, lack of accountability for heavy-handed security force responses, and a lack of economic opportunities for the growing young population.

Question. In March, two Nigerian girls were kidnapped and subject to forced conversion and marriage in Northern Nigeria. Only after public outcry and unprecedented public pressure were they ultimately returned. Of course we have seen simi-

lar tactics employed by Boko Haram. Is this issue prioritized in our dealings with the Nigerian government?

Answer. Yes it is. We are committed to working together with Nigerians to keep young women from being forced into marriage. We prioritize efforts to empower adolescent girls so that they are given opportunities to thrive in school. In northern Nigeria, we have programs that provide psycho-social support for women and young girls affected by the violence perpetrated by Boko Haram. USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance life-saving protection services—including health care, livelihoods assistance, and psychosocial support—for displaced women and girls, particularly survivors of gender-based violence, in northeastern Nigeria.

I have heard disturbing reports of women and girls, who have survived horrific ordeals while being held by Boko Haram, returning to their communities, only to be ostracized. For them, the struggle is not over. If confirmed, I will strongly encourage increased assistance from the Government of Nigeria to support these women and girls and reintegrate them back into their communities.

If confirmed, I will also continue our efforts to assist the Government of Nigeria in its efforts to return the Chibok girls safely to their families. We will continue to raise this issue in our interactions with the Nigerian government.

Question. Do you believe the Nigerian government and its security forces are taking sufficient steps to protect civilians, especially young girls, from human rights abuses, such as kidnappings and forced conversions?

Answer. The Government of Nigeria has made clear that it is committed to protecting its citizens, especially young girls, from abuses including kidnappings and forced conversions. But it is clear that the government needs to take additional steps to stop terrorist attacks and end such abuses. We are committed to working with them to achieve that goal.

Question. The independent, bipartisan, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has recommended that Nigeria be designated a Country of Particular Concern. "The Nigerian federal government fails to implement effective strategies to prevent or stop terrorism and sectarian violence and it does not bring to justice those responsible for such violence, thus fostering a climate of impunity." In your view, why has the Department of State failed to make this designation? Do you believe that Nigeria has the capacity to improve religious freedom conditions by more fully and effectively countering Boko Haram and sectarian violence?

Answer. In making a designation of a Country of Particular Concern, the Department of State assess the full range of information available, including from civil society, religious organizations, and domestic and international human rights groups. A key component of the Department's consideration is based on recommendations from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The International Religious Freedom (IRF) Act states that the Secretary of State may designate a country a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) when the government is responsible for, or indifferent to, sustained, systematic, egregious violations of religious freedom rights. While both Muslims and Christians report discrimination or abuse based on religious affiliation in some parts of the country, the Government of Nigeria has worked to end, not foment such violence, and has actively worked to stem violence and to protect its citizens. Therefore, the Department of State has concluded that the government of Nigeria does not meet IRF Act criteria for CPC designation at this time.

Understanding that there is still work to be done, the United States will continue to urge the Government of Nigeria to do all that can be done to stop communal violence and prosecute those involved in attacks. If confirmed, I will build on the Embassy's work to promote religious freedom and tolerance in my discussions with government and with civil society and religious leaders. I will conduct regular outreach on the importance of religious freedom and engage journalists, academics, entrepreneurs, civic organizations, teachers, students, government officials, the armed forces, clergy, and traditional rulers in this effort.

Question. If confirmed, would you commit to ensuring that U.S.-funded education efforts in northern Nigeria to increase access to schools and reform traditional Islamic schools include lessons on the promotion of freedom of religion or belief and fundamental human rights?

Answer. The education of girls and boys is essential for the realization of a stronger democracy, informed civic participation, improved health, and economic growth in Nigeria. When we invest in education, we are investing in peace and prosperity, and expanding a population's ownership of its democratic system. Such investment enables Nigerians to tackle the great challenges facing health, human rights, and

human security in their country. If confirmed, I will prioritize the protection and promotion of the fundamental human rights of all people in our programmatic efforts and engagements.

RESPONSES OF ANDREW YOUNG, NOMINATED TO BE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BURKINA FASO, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

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

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

Answer. I have always made the promotion of human rights and democracy a lynchpin of my political advocacy work. As the democracy and human rights officer in Burma, I developed and implemented strategies to support Nobel Laureate Aung Sang Suu Kyi and other National League for Democracy (NLD) supporters in their quest to bring non-violent democratic transition to the junta-led dictatorship. I traveled the country, documenting abuses and developing a close relationship with the democratic movement in the country, much to the antipathy of Burma's ruling generals. When Aung Sang Suu Kyi was released from house arrest and received the Congressional Gold Medal, she invited me to sit in the front row with 16 other champions of human rights, including Madeleine Albright and former Secretary of Defense William Cohen.

Working as Foreign Policy Fellow for Senator Joe Lieberman, I worked with a bipartisan team to debate, negotiate and then draft S. 516, the Advance Democracy Act of 2005, a bill which was condemned at the time by North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il and simultaneously praised by Russian democracy advocate, Natan Sharansky. The bill strengthened the U.S. government's ability to promote democracy abroad and today authorizes "practical steps to advance liberty, freedom and democracy around the globe."

In my most recent assignment, I served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Mali, after dangerous civil strife had stripped the embassy of much of its leadership. Following the brutal coup d'état and under the threat of al-Qaeda linked extremists in the north, I worked to implement the Ambassador's vision for democracy, securing \$10 million in election support funds, mobilizing 20 election monitor teams, and helping support this crucial step to re-establishing democratic government with the consent of the governed. If confirmed, I would prioritize supporting Burkina Faso's fragile new democracy using a similar set of tools.

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

Answer. Burkina Faso faces a number of human rights issues that continue to affect the country's population. The most significant human rights problems in the country include harsh and life-threatening prison conditions, as well as violence and discrimination against women and children, including female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). Additionally, the government has made efforts in recent years to combat human trafficking, yet does not currently meet the standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). In particular, child labor and the abduction of children into Koranic schools around the country remains a pressing concern. The fight for increased women's rights continues, and despite being illegal, FGM/C remains prevalent in some rural areas.

If confirmed, I will work with the Burkinabé government to address these top human rights concerns and encourage them to hold accountable any members of the security forces found responsible for committing abuses. I will also urge the Burkinabé government to rigorously enforce its legislation against human trafficking and to prosecute, convict, and punish traffickers, including increasing penalties imposed on convicted trafficking offenders to reflect the longer terms permitted under the May 2008 anti-trafficking law.

If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Burkina Faso to mobilize more effective national and international resources to fight the scourge of human trafficking, promote education for girls and women's rights, and combat female genital mutilation throughout the country.

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

Answer. As one of the poorest countries in the world (183 out of 186 countries in the 2015 U.N. Human Development Index), newly democratized Burkina Faso can only mobilize limited national resources to address these challenges. President Kabore's government has expressed a commitment to advancing justice and accountability efforts, but after two years of political turbulence, sustained efforts in these areas will take time to implement. The main challenges include limited resources for the Burkina Faso government and law enforcement to address human rights issues, lack of trust in the justice system, social and cultural practices that are often at odds with the rule of law, and the lack of consistency in enforcing the rule of law.

If confirmed, I would work with government and civil society actors to advance efforts on the key human rights and democracy challenges facing the country. I would specifically seek to bolster Burkina Faso's vibrant, strong civil society, which played a crucial role in democratic transition to improve democratic governance, address outstanding human rights issues, and strengthen rule of law and accountability.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to support and proactively meet with the members of human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations that act as the backbone to Burkina Faso's vibrant civil society. As history shows, these groups play a large role in maintaining favorable human rights conditions in Burkina Faso and in holding their government to account on a range of issues.

If confirmed, I will continue the consistent use of the Leahy vetting process to ensure that the recipients of U.S. security assistance meet our stringent human rights guidelines.

Question. If confirmed, will you and your embassy team actively engage with Burkina Faso's leadership to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted across in Burkina Faso?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage, not just with the government of Burkina Faso, but also with its civil society and human rights organizations to address cases of political prisoners or those unjustly targeted by the state.

I will continue to ensure open channels of communications between myself and those actors within the government who are responsible for ensuring respect for human rights, rule of law, and credible judicial processes in Burkina Faso.

Question. Will you engage with Burkina Faso's leadership on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the sustained engagement U.S. Embassy Ouagadougou has with the Government of Burkina Faso on the issues of human rights, civil rights, and governance.

Question. How are we helping the Burkinabe consolidate its recent democratic transition? What level of funding are we providing, and what activities are and will we support?

Answer. We are helping Burkina Faso consolidate its democratic transition by strengthening key institutions like Burkina Faso's civil society and independent media as well as by reinforcing the country's resilience and ability to provide its citizens with security. Our strategy will build on the U.S. government's longstanding support for civil society, which has a long and vibrant history in Burkina Faso. Much of this support for civil society comes from two USAID projects, one entitled Peace through Development II (PDEV II) and the other called Providing Youth with Opportunities for Peaceful Political Engagement, which is implemented by the National Democratic Institute (NDI). PDEV II began in November 2011 and will continue through the end of this fiscal year. It was intended to help reduce the risk of instability and increase resilience to violent extremism in the Sahel. Although PDEV II is scheduled to conclude in December, USAID will continue similar Countering Violent Extremism programming in Burkina Faso. Providing Youth with Opportunities for Peaceful Political Engagement, a program designed to enhance the

capacity of youth to advocate and engage directly with political party leadership, ran from September 2012 to 2013.

Additionally, Embassy Ouagadougou has consistently worked with civil society groups throughout Burkina Faso. For example, the Embassy, through a Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)-sponsored United States Institute of Peace (USIP) program, has been working with two well-known local civil society organizations on a community driven policing program. The program helps civil society and police work together to improve security and build trust. In addition, the Public Affairs Section takes advantage of various exchange programs to send members of civil society to the United States to expand their knowledge and networks.

U.S. support for elections continued throughout the transition period between the end of the Compaore regime in October 2014 and the election of President Kabore in November 2015. In addition to the ongoing PDEV II program, in February 2015, USAID launched its Partnership for Participation and Poise in Epic Polls program, implemented by the NDI and the International Federation for Electoral Systems (IFES), designed to support the Presidential and Parliamentary elections (November 2015) and the local elections (May 2016). The election fostered greater participation of youth and women in the election process and supported the National Independent Election Commission (CENI) to put in place a modern electoral results transmission system whereby preliminary voting results were available within 25 hours of the closing of the polls. The United States also served as the donor lead, coordinating more than \$18 million. Recognizing the importance of a strong and independent media, the Public Affairs Section also trained approximately 60 journalists on the media's role in civic engagement and responsibility. In addition to civil society and elections support, and among other efforts to improve governance, Embassy Ouagadougou is helping Burkina Faso establish effective, legitimate and responsive law enforcement institutions in hopes of solidifying the country's democratic foundations, reducing the chance of future governance breakdowns, and fighting long-term drivers of violent extremism. Our efforts have been funded by the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), including the aforementioned community-driven police reform project that helps law enforcement and communities collaborate to improve security and trust and approximately \$374,000 for community outreach programs targeting youth. In addition, by September 30, 2016, the United States will publicly commit \$3.75 million in countering violent extremism funds to build on these efforts through programs to improve dialogue between communities and law enforcement, enhance road safety, and improve the effectiveness and accountability of public order management.

Finally, to support Burkina Faso's ability to provide security, since FY 2014, USAID and State have programmed over \$39 million in bilateral assistance to support security and development in Burkina Faso, specifically to combat terrorism, support health and agriculture programs, including water and sanitation, and address humanitarian needs. Most recently, USAID inaugurated a program to build the capacity of the new National Assembly to position it as a truly independent second branch of government.

The joint Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)-sponsored United States Institute of Peace (USIP) program has focused on training and coaching local organizations to facilitate and manage workshops that help local governments and communities identify the most pressing security needs and develop and implement collaborative, regional approaches to address them. These types of partnerships are more time- and staff-intensive, but the results are better tailored to local needs and create more durable capabilities that make it worth our investment.

Question. The 2016 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report lists Burkina Faso as a Tier 2 country, citing "significant efforts" being undertaken by the government. The report offers a number of recommendations for Burkinabe authorities, including vigorous investigation and prosecution of traffickers, increased resources for victims, and improved coordination among national and regional anti-trafficking committees.

If confirmed, how will you work with Burkinabe authorities to encourage progress in these areas? If confirmed, I would like to follow up with you on this after you arrive at post.

Answer. If confirmed, I would continue working with the government on this issue, focusing on concerns including victim protection measures and long-term services for adults which remained inadequate during the 2016 reporting period. I would encourage the national anti-trafficking committee to hold regular meetings, as they did not meet for the second consecutive year. I would also encourage the government to implement the recommendations outlined in the TIP Report, including vig-

orous efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict trafficking offenders-including traffickers posing as Koranic school teachers-and apply penalties prescribed by the 2008 anti-trafficking law. Similarly, I would advocate for the allocation of increased resources for victims, including social reintegration, to prevent re-trafficking of identified victims. If confirmed, I will look forward to sharing the results of these efforts with you once I arrive at Post.

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE YOUNG'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR RUBIO

Question. Is Burkina Faso doing enough to combat terrorist groups that may target Western businesses?

Answer. Although not a persistent target for Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) or al-Mourabitoun, Burkina Faso's location and relatively porous borders make it an easy target for terrorist groups looking for opportunities to exploit. AQIM and al-Mourabitoun perpetrated an attack on a Ouagadougou hotel on January 15, 2016, killing 30 people, including one American. Burkina Faso understands it must improve its counterterrorism capabilities in order to protect its people and attract and keep foreign investment.

AQIM's new strategy to attack so-called "soft targets," including hotels and restaurants, outside of its traditional area of operations in northern Mali, is a difficult one for governments to address. Although training and equipment can make incremental improvements, the long-term development of well-managed and accountable security institutions that inspire public confidence is the key to sustainable progress against these threats.

As a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), Burkina Faso has worked closely with the United States on border security, regional counterterrorism capacity development, and on preventing the spread of violent extremism through improved trust between citizens and government. These efforts help to address terrorism through improved law enforcement response but also, importantly, by reducing the vulnerability of communities to the appeal of terrorist groups. Burkina Faso is a charter member of the G-5 Sahel and has, correspondingly, increased its focus on enhanced regional coordination.

The democratically elected government in Burkina Faso faces high expectations for providing more effective security for its citizens from both terrorism and broader criminality. Burkina Faso has a strategic counterterrorism plan, which involves deploying its anti-terrorist task force to the north, establishing new police and military counterterrorism units, strengthening intelligence collection, monitoring and regulating religious messaging, building new border control stations, and increasing the size of the gendarmerie and police force.

Finally, Burkina Faso has been a valued partner in promoting regional security and combating terrorism. Currently, Burkina Faso has 1,881 military and police personnel deployed to Mali as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). This includes a recent increase in its commitment from one to two 850-member infantry battalions, along with one formed police unit.

RESPONSES OF JOSEPH R. DONOVAN, JR., NOMINATED TO BE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

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

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

Answer. The promotion of human rights and democracy remains a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy and has been central to my work throughout my career. During my tenure as Director of the Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs and later as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, we regularly engaged with our missions in the field, the NGO community, and Chinese government officials to discuss human rights concerns. As Director of the China Desk, I testified before the China Human Rights Caucus to publicly register U.S. government objections to human rights practices in China. While I cannot claim individual success in improving the overall human rights situation in China,

there were significant moments in my career that underscored the importance of our efforts.

One of the most memorable moments for me was calling a family to inform them that their mother had been freed from a Chinese prison and would arrive in the United States the following day. Her release was the result of months of hard work by State Department officials, and I am proud to have played a role as China Director.

In another case, while serving as Consul General in Hong Kong, I ensured that we heard from dissidents and countered efforts by the People's Republic of China to prevent their participation in a Consulate event. As Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, I met with the parents of a young woman who had been abducted from Japan by North Korean agents. I worked with U.S. and Japanese officials to ensure that the North Korean abduction issue was one element of negotiations with North Korea. If confirmed, I will bring these experiences to my work to defend and protect the universal values of human rights that remain so important for the United States.

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

Answer. We support Indonesia's efforts to continually improve its human rights record and promote the rule of law, consistent with its international human rights obligations, as well as the aspirations of the Indonesian people. To maintain the positive momentum built over the last two decades, we encourage Indonesia to actively protect freedom of expression and assembly; conduct transparent and thorough investigations into unjustified killings, torture, and abuses by security forces; proactively protect the rights of members of minority groups, including ethnic minorities, religious minorities, and the LGBTI community; reinforce civilian leadership and the provision of fair trial guarantees in addressing internal security concerns; and protect religious freedoms as outlined in Indonesia's constitution. We also encourage openness, transparency, and accountability for past human rights violations and abuses.

The U.S. government regularly engages on human rights issues with Government of Indonesia officials and civil society representatives, and also uses high-level visits to address these issues. Officers at our U.S. Mission in Indonesia consistently discuss, at the highest levels, issues of concern as well as areas in which we can work together with the Indonesian government to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. government uses its assistance programs—including under USAID, the Department of Justice, and the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs—to support Indonesia's efforts to improve the administration of justice. We will continue to leverage our military engagement to conduct training and exercises that develop the professionalism of the Indonesian military and help to further strengthen civilian control over the military. We will continue to support Indonesia's successful, civilian-led law enforcement approach to counterterrorism that upholds the rule of law and protects human rights. I look forward to meeting with Indonesia's women leaders to encourage their economic participation and equal access to important services like health care. And, I will continue outreach to academics, activists, human rights NGOs, and religious leaders to improve our understanding of and cooperation with Indonesia's diverse and pluralistic society.

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

Answer. Indonesia has made solid progress on human rights, and will have to continue efforts to reinforce rule of law and human rights as it responds to security threats and counters terrorism. Indonesian society must also balance cultural mores and traditions while protecting space for minority groups.

Civil society has flourished in Indonesia since the end of military-backed authoritarian rule in 1998, contributing to improvements in democratic governance and accountability. Government and an independent civil society must work together to further this success because greater protection of human rights leads to stability, prosperity, tolerance, and opportunity for all. We will continue to engage civil society, use technical assistance to support Indonesian efforts to bolster administration of justice in Indonesia, and leverage our military partnerships to conduct training and exercises that strengthen Indonesia's efforts to develop the professionalism and

civilian control of the military. Our mission also works to support Indonesia's efforts to counter the corruption that can undermine transparency and accountability important to human rights protection. We conduct programs to strengthen the key anti-corruption bodies, including the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), and support Indonesia's participation in the Open Government Partnership.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Indonesia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and related efforts?

Answer. If confirmed, I am firmly committed to meeting with human rights and non-governmental organizations within the United States and Indonesia. I look forward to continuing the positive interactions and collaboration U.S. Mission Indonesia has already forged with established NGOs and civil society organizations, while also reaching out to newer and smaller advocacy groups.

If confirmed, I will proactively support the Leahy Law by ensuring our Mission maintains its stringent vetting processes for any member, former member, or unit of the Indonesian military or law enforcement nominated for training. I will also consistently highlight the importance of professionalism, rule of law, and respect for human rights in our engagements with Indonesia's police, military, and law enforcement counterparts.

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

Answer. The Jokowi administration has taken positive steps in releasing some political prisoners. The political atmosphere has improved in recent years, and there are fewer cases of political prosecutions. Still, some Indonesians have been arrested and remain in prison for peacefully expressing political beliefs. If confirmed, I will work with my Embassy team to further engagement on this issue, underlining that for democracies to flourish they must protect and provide space for a diversity of ideas and political discourse.

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

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will engage robustly with Indonesian leadership on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance. As the second and third most populous democracies in the world, the United States and Indonesia share many values, and Indonesia's peaceful transition to democracy offers useful lessons to other countries in transition around the world. I will use our bilateral engagement to highlight Indonesia's successes and offer cooperation to ensure our shared democratic principles are upheld, and to promote respect for human rights.

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE DONOVAN'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR RUBIO

Question. As the largest Muslim country that has largely controlled radical Islam groups, does Indonesia's approach offer any lessons learned for combatting terrorism?

Answer. We support Indonesia's successful, civilian-led, law enforcement approach against known violent extremist organizations and its efforts to foster community resilience against violent extremist mobilization. In addition to an effective law enforcement campaign led by the Indonesian National Police, the Indonesian-style practice of Islam has served as a bulwark against the spread of violent extremism. Indonesia's open, vibrant, and diverse civil society organizations play an important role in promoting narratives that counter violent extremism, and work at the local level to strengthen core democratic values. Indonesia has led regional and international cooperation, including hosting an August 10 International Meeting on Counter-Terrorism, and it actively participates in efforts to counter the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and terrorism financing in the UN, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, ASEAN, and other venues.

Question. Are we concerned that Indonesia's counter-terrorism tactics are hurting the government's chances of bolstering its counter-terrorism laws?

Answer. Indonesian political and law enforcement leaders recognize the importance of upholding the rule of law and fair trial guarantees even as they continue to successfully detect, disrupt, and arrest violent extremists and their networks. We support Indonesia's open discussion on amending its counter-terrorism laws to ad-

dress the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, prevent terrorist acts, and provide security to the public, while at the same time protecting the rights of individuals in an open, democratic society.

Question. As freedom of expression has been restricted in Indonesia; what more could the U.S. do to encourage the government to respect freedom of speech and expression?

Answer. Any restrictions on freedom of expression in Indonesia are of great concern to me personally and to the United States. The U.S. Mission in Indonesia directly engages with Government of Indonesia counterparts to share our views on the importance of protecting freedom of expression. The Mission supports Indonesian efforts, led by civil society organizations and human rights activists, to advocate for freedom of expression, a key component of Indonesia's constitution, and its international human rights and obligations. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for freedom of speech and expression and support efforts and programs in this areas.

Question. Religious freedom and violence remains a serious problem in Indonesia. Do you believe the Indonesian government is doing enough to protect religious minorities and allow space for all groups to practice their religion peacefully?

Answer. Indonesia's international human rights obligations and its constitution guarantee freedom of religion or belief to everyone, including all individuals who are members of a minority faith. This freedom includes the right to worship according to one's own beliefs. President Jokowi has included religious minorities in his cabinet, and the current governor of Jakarta, one of Indonesia's most popular politicians, is from the ethnic Chinese minority group and the minority Christian faith. The state should continue to protect individuals within its borders, particularly members of vulnerable religious minorities who often face the most discrimination at the local level. We appreciate President Jokowi's calls for tolerance, especially among religious communities.

Question. Protecting women and girls abroad is a major priority for the United States. What more can the Indonesian government do to protect women and girls from rampant abuse and promote gender equality?

Answer. Indonesia has made strides in advancing gender equality. Indonesian women serve in the most senior levels of government, and Indonesia has had a female president. One-third of President Jokowi's current cabinet members are women, including the Ministers of Finance, Foreign Affairs, and Fisheries and Maritime Resources. Women also lead top companies, and act as academicians, scientists, and researchers. Indonesia has ratified the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and implemented laws at the national and sub-national level to address gender disparities. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection works to mainstream gender in government policies, programs, and budgets and eliminate gender discrimination and violence against women.

Despite these advances, more can be done to support efforts to empower women in Indonesia. Mission Indonesia has incorporated gender equality and the advancement of women and girls into overall policy objectives, programming, and outreach. In collaboration with the Government of Indonesia, the Mission organized a multi-stakeholder planning conference to prioritize efforts to combat violence against women. Additionally, the U.S. Consulate General in Surabaya supports, through a PEPFAR grant, a local women's hotline project to prevent and respond to gender-based violence among women and girls in East Java and throughout eastern Indonesia. A recently announced \$7.3 million USAID-funded project, "Bersama," supports Indonesia's efforts to reduce acceptance of gender based violence.

If confirmed, I will ensure that advancing the status of women and girls remains a top priority for U.S. Mission Indonesia.

Question. In 2006, Indonesia passed a law requiring minority religious groups to collect signatures from the local majority group before building houses of worship. Since the passage of this so-called "religious harmony" bill more than 1,000 Indonesian churches have reportedly been shuttered and untold numbers of others have never been built. To what extent do you plan to make religious freedom a priority in your dealings with the government of Indonesia? Are reforms to this legislation a current focus in U.S.-Indonesian relations?

Answer. Indonesia's international human rights obligations and its constitution guarantee freedom of religion or belief, which includes the right to worship according to one's own beliefs. Mission Indonesia supports the efforts of the Indonesian government, the public, NGOs, and civil society organizations to promote religious tolerance and understanding. We also regularly raise the issue of religious freedom

and tolerance with the government, including expressing concern over the closure of houses of worship and supporting the freedom for all religious communities to build and maintain their respective houses of worship. Civil society leaders from Indonesia and the United States jointly launched in August 2016 a Council on Religion and Pluralism to foster religious understanding. If confirmed, I will continue to engage Indonesian government counterparts, NGOs, and civil society to promote religious freedom and freedom of worship.
