

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

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—————
MARCH 16 THROUGH DECEMBER 8, 2011
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Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
112TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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*Note: WILLIAM C. DANVERS (assumed *Staff Director* position as of October 3, 2011)

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2011

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

Susan Denise Page, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan
Adrienne S. O'Neal, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde
Mary Beth Leonard, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mali
Mark Francis Brzezinski, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to Sweden

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:06 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher A. Coons, presiding.

Present: Senators Coons, Lugar, Inhofe, and Isakson.

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

Senator COONS. Good morning. I would like to call this nomination hearing to order.

I am honored to chair this hearing for the ambassadorial nominees to South Sudan, Mali, Cape Verde, and Sweden. All four nominees have impressive records of accomplishment in international affairs, and I very much look forward to hearing their priorities for advancing our national interests and goals.

If confirmed, all three nominees for Africa will serve at an exciting, critical, and challenging time as we seek to deepen our economic ties and investments, promote essential development and health initiatives, expand our security cooperation in counterterrorism and counternarcotics, and broaden our conversations about our shared values and priorities for the future of Africa.

In Europe, we expect, we hope, to continue our long tradition of close cooperation with Sweden as it works through the United Nations, the EU, and NATO on shared international priorities.

Our first nominee this morning is Susan Page, nominated to be the United States very first Ambassador to the new nation of South Sudan. This nomination recognizes the central role the United States played in the birth of that country and the importance of our longstanding relationship with the people of South Sudan.

The jubilation surrounding the July 9 independence has subsequently been somewhat tempered by the sobering realities of the challenges facing the world's newest country. Many issues with Sudan remain unresolved, including the status of Abyei, arrangements on oil transit and revenues, the demarcation of disputed borders, and many others. Fierce fighting in the regions of South Kordofan and Blue Nile has resulted in death, displacement, and a lack of access for humanitarian workers. South-south violence is also significant. Poverty is endemic. Health and education infrastructure are all seriously inadequate.

And despite these challenges, South Sudan is a place of hope for millions of residents who have waited decades for their freedom. The south has significant oil reserves and, with the proper agricultural assistance, the potential to be a regional bread basket.

Ms. Page is no newcomer to Sudan, having served from 2002 to 2005 as the legal advisor to the Sudanese mediation process where she helped negotiate and draft key provisions of the CPA, or the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. She also served as Director of the Rule of Law and Prison Advocacy at the U.N. peacekeeping mission to Sudan in Khartoum. Ms. Page has worked previously for the State Department and USAID in Botswana, Rwanda, and Kenya, and currently serves as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs at the State Department.

Moving westward, we consider the nomination of Mary Beth Leonard to be Ambassador to Mali, a poor, land-locked nation which has emerged as a model of democratic governance in the past 2 decades and has developed vibrant economic sectors in gold mining and cotton production. After decades of dictatorship, Mali's transition to democracy in the 1990s led to unprecedented civil liberties for their people and resulted in their first-ever democratically elected President turning over power peacefully to his successor after serving two terms.

The United States has had excellent relations with Mali and found it a committed partner in fighting terrorism in the Sahel. We remain deeply concerned about the activities of AQIM and the possible spillover of arms from the current conflict in Libya and concerned about Mali's low standards of living as evidenced by its rankings near the bottom of the world in indicators of health and education.

Ms. Leonard is well placed to answer these challenges, having served previously as Deputy Chief of Mission at our Embassy in Mali and currently serving as Director of West African Affairs at the State Department. Her other Foreign Service postings include Surinam, South Africa, Togo, Namibia, and Cameroon, as well as a number of tours here in Washington.

Adrienne O'Neal is Ambassador-nominee for Cape Verde, a small island nation off of Africa's West Coast with historic ties to Portugal and a striking record of economic growth in recent years with an average per capita income of \$3,000, a literacy rate of 84 percent, high rates of immunization, and low rates of maternal death. Cape Verde's average standard of living is much higher than many of its regional neighbors, and in 2010, it successfully completed a 5-year MCC compact focused on improving the investment climate and upgrading infrastructure. Cape Verde's sandy beaches bring

tourists to its shores, and its fishing industry provides important employment as well as export revenue. U.S. interests in Cape Verde include a large expatriate diaspora community in the United States, particularly in New England, as well as maritime security and counternarcotics cooperation with the government.

Ms. O'Neal brings to her position experience as a senior Foreign Service officer currently serving as director in the Office of Career Development. She is a Portuguese speaker who served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Lisbon and held positions in Mozambique, Rome, Rio de Janeiro, and Buenos Aires, and in the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs.

Finally, we welcome a nominee to a country far from Africa, Mark Brzezinski, to be Ambassador to Sweden. Sweden is a strong ally of the United States, supporting NATO and the U.N. and participating in critical multilateral military missions in both Libya and Afghanistan. Sweden is well known in the developing world as a generous and effective donor in the fields of humanitarian and development work.

Sweden's responsible management of its own economy spared it from the fiscal woes currently facing many of its European neighbors and I might dare say our own Nation, but even Sweden faces critical challenges in the future. The rise of the Sweden Democrats as a political party with supremacist and racist, arguably, roots signal wider discontent among the younger and unemployed and raise questions about the direction they might take.

Mr. Brzezinski brings to this challenge of serving in Sweden significant experience and background. He is an attorney currently at McGuire Woods, focusing on international law. He made a name for himself as an expert in Russian affairs, worked at the NSC in the Clinton administration as Director of Southeastern European Affairs, serves on the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, and has worked at Columbia University School of International Affairs where he has taught.

I welcome all four of today's distinguished nominees and look forward to hearing from each of you in turn.

I will now turn the floor over to Senator Isakson for his opening statement.

Senator Isakson.

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

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to all of you and congratulations on your nomination. And thank you for your willingness to serve the United States of America.

I particularly want to welcome Mr. Brzezinski. I will have to show a little preference here. I am a second generation Swedish American. So when I learned today that you would be here for confirmation, I got here promptly on time—

[Laughter.]

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Because, A, I wanted to meet you and, B, I wanted to share with all my relatives I had talked to the new Ambassador who is on the way to Stockholm.

But Sweden is a great country. My grandfather emigrated here in 1903. He was a stone mason who built the first post office in

George West, TX, and later came to Atlanta, GA. Fortunately for me, he and his wife, Josephine, had a young son, who was my father, and I became a second-generation American when I was born here in 1944.

But Sweden is a great country and a great partner and a great visionary in terms of clean energy and green energy and a lot of things that they have taken a real leadership role in. So you will enjoy your stay in Sweden and we appreciate very much your accepting the nomination.

To Ms. Leonard, Ms. O'Neal, and Ms. Page, thank you very much. You are all going to some very challenging places. You are going to a place where you will have to work overtime and do a lot of things probably no other ambassador would ever think they had to do. But all of you are going to places that are critical to the United States of America and critical to our relationship with the African Continent.

I have said on many occasions I think Africa is the continent of the 21st century for the United States of America. I think it is critical that we continue to do what we have done there in terms of PEPFAR and MCC, but also in building democracies, doing away with corruption, and elevating the economy of the African countries.

And, Ms. Page, I have been to the Sudan. I have been to Darfur. I worked with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement team, led by the U.N. team. And I know you worked with the U.N. leading up to some of the laws that are currently being implemented now in a free South Sudan. So we have many challenges in the next 2 years and we are going to go one way or another. I hope it goes to new heights for that country, but there are lots of challenges and your leadership is going to be critical in seeing to it that neither terrorism nor corruption end up dominating a new fledgling nation in the South Sudan.

But to all of you, thank you very much for your willingness to serve your country, and thank you for being here today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

I would now like to invite the ranking minority member of the full committee, Senator Lugar, to make an opening statement.

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

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

I join my colleagues in welcoming each of the nominees today. I have reviewed your credentials. I believe that each of you is well qualified to represent the United States at embassies in Africa and, in the case of Mr. Brzezinski, in Europe.

I appreciate the willingness of each of you to serve at this critical time to undertake the family sacrifices that often accompany such an ambassadorial post.

Somewhat like my colleague, Mr. Isakson, I want to offer a special welcome to Mark Brzezinski who is a near neighbor and has been nominated to be Ambassador now to Sweden. We were, many of us, in the House of Sweden last evening, state persons from all over the world celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Nuclear

Threat Initiative, and we appreciate very much the hospitality of the Swedes. They are looking forward to having you aboard representing our country, Mark.

I have known Mark personally for many years. He possesses a first-rate intellect, a talented communicator who would be adept at framing United States interests for the people and the Government of Sweden. His extensive knowledge of European history, culture, and politics are informed both by his scholarship and his personal experience. His academic and legal credentials are impressive, having earned a law degree from the University of Virginia, a doctorate in political science from Oxford University.

As he has pursued his legal practice, he has made foreign policy analysis and civic involvement a central part of his career. In addition to his service on the National Security Council, he has written prolifically about U.S. foreign policy, the Atlantic alliance, Middle East dynamics, and many other topics.

Beyond his outstanding credentials, he is a serious and thoughtful individual of high character, demonstrating a keen sense of responsibility to lead a life of achievement and service to our Nation. I am confident he will make an excellent Ambassador to advance our interests in Sweden.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to make this statement.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Inhofe, also a member of the committee and whose interest and engagement with Africa is legendary, also would like to make an opening statement.

Senator Inhofe.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA**

Senator INHOFE. I will make it very brief because I may have to leave before the conclusion of this meeting.

But I support all four nominees, and I have met personally with three of the four. I think I recall saying to Ms. O'Neal, having visited Cape Verde on numerous occasions, I might consider swapping jobs with you. [Laughter.]

And I want to say to Ms. Page 4 days ago I was in South Sudan. It is so exciting to see a new country to develop intimate relations with the leadership of that country. We had 20 Members of Parliament and five members of the ministry in one room for over 2 hours, getting to know each one of them individually, as I told you in my office we were planning to do. Well, that happened.

And I can see the challenges are incredible there. I mean, just the fact that it is a new country.

So I think you are the right one to do this, but I wanted you to know that we broke them in for you. So they will be waiting for you when you get there. And I will look forward to spending some time with you and with those 25 that we have met and gotten to know on a personal basis.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

We will now hear in order, if we might, from each of our four nominees, our witnesses today. Please start, if you would, by also

introducing your families. As each of us has commented, we recognize the significant sacrifice that taking on these posts will mean for you and for your extended families. So we are grateful for their willingness to join with you, work with you, and support you in undertaking these missions as well.

So if we might first, Ms. Page.

**STATEMENT OF SUSAN DENISE PAGE, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**

Ms. PAGE. Thank you very much, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the first United States Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Ambassador Johnnie Carson.

First, let me acknowledge my family members as you have invited me to do. My husband, Damien Coulibaly, and my son, Marius. And I have extended family and friends who have been longstanding supporters of me both professionally and personally, and I really thank them for being here. My parents, although they are not with us here today—they are hopefully watching on TV. But I would like to thank them especially for their support and instilling in me a desire to serve and my love of foreign affairs.

Let me turn to South Sudan and also acknowledge the presence of members from the Government of South Sudan who are here today, and it is a pleasure to see them in the audience.

Mr. Chairman, as the newest member of the international community and the 193rd country admitted to the United Nations, the Republic of South Sudan is home to American Embassy Juba, the newest U.S. mission in the world. If confirmed, I would be honored to lead Embassy Juba in advancing U.S. interests with our growing team of mission personnel. The work Embassy Juba will do in South Sudan will represent a new chapter and a deep history between the United States and the people of South Sudan. And I am delighted that already Senator Inhofe has made his way and made things easier for me if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, our main interests in South Sudan are stability, strengthening democracy, economic viability, and internal and regional peace and security. As the largest bilateral donor since 2005, the United States will need to multilateralize our approach as we work with the South Sudanese on meeting its development needs, enabling prosperity and success for all South Sudanese.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, our focus will remain on promoting a peaceful relationship between the Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of Sudan, particularly in Abyei Area and in the two Sudanese states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. The avoidance of a return to war between Sudan and South Sudan and the speedy resolution of the remaining CPA issues will remain a priority.

We also remain concerned by the regional threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army. The United States will need to assist the south in navigating these challenges, maximizing civilian protection, individual human rights, and fundamental freedoms. The

United States will need to continue to promote the professionalization of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, the SPLA, under civilian control with respect for human rights.

Mr. Chairman, the establishment of a strong economic and development foundation is critical to the long-term success of South Sudan. If confirmed, I will work closely with USAID to help South Sudan provide basic services to its citizens, diversify its economy, and accelerate the development of critical infrastructure, human capacity, investments in the agricultural sector, and strong regional economic relationships.

South Sudan will receive an estimated \$4 billion to \$5 billion in oil revenues annually and will have the necessary resources to invest in building strong institutions run by capable individuals. This is a unique opportunity to get it right by managing its resources efficiently, creating fiscal transparency, ending corruption, and avoiding the pitfalls that beset so many resource-rich nations. The United States has been the leading donor in the area of democratic reform and good governance, and if confirmed, I will work to ensure the effective financial oversight of these programs.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the protection of American citizens and the promotion of American business interests. We will need to expand opportunities and trade for American companies by emphasizing that South Sudan is free from sanctions and is open for business.

Currently assignment to Mission Juba is unaccompanied, and I like everyone else at post will leave behind my family. As the U.S. Embassy expands in South Sudan, the mission will need to consider its current infrastructure and footprint, as well as future needs, ensuring that we have the safest and most secure facilities available.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed as the first U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan, I will draw upon my experience negotiating and drafting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, my time living and working in Khartoum and in Juba, and my current management experience as the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs at the State Department.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with the members of this committee and I would hope to welcome you to Juba during my tenure.

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

[The prepared statement of Ms. Page follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUSAN D. PAGE

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the first United States Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position, and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Ambassador Johnnie Carson.

First, Mr. Chairman, let me acknowledge my immediate family members who are here today. I am truly grateful for the love and support of my husband, Damien Coulibaly, and my son, Marius, who is a freshman in high school. They have endured numerous separations from me, particularly as I worked for nearly 3 years away from home on the mediation team to negotiate and draft what turned into the

Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) for Sudan. Their understanding and encouragement have meant more to me than they can possibly know. I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends who are present today. They have offered me wisdom, guidance, and friendship on a wide range of subjects—both professional and personal—throughout the years. I'm delighted that they could be here today. While my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Harold Page, are not here in person today, they deserve much of the credit for my accomplishments and for instilling in me a desire for service and the love of foreign cultures and international travel.

Mr. Chairman, as the newest member of the international community, and the 193rd country admitted to the United Nations, the Republic of South Sudan is home to American Embassy Juba, the newest U.S. mission in the world. If confirmed, I would be honored to lead Embassy Juba at this unique moment in history, in advancing U.S. interests with our growing team of Foreign and Civil Service personnel, military staff, and locally engaged employees. The work Embassy Juba will do in South Sudan will represent a new chapter in a deep history between the United States and the people of South Sudan.

Mr. Chairman, our main interests in South Sudan are stability, strengthening the nascent democratic state that came about through a historic self-determination referendum this past January, economic viability, and internal and regional peace and security. As you know, the United States has long been a steadfast partner to South Sudan; we are its largest bilateral donor, having provided its people more than \$10 billion in humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, and security assistance since 2005 when the CPA was signed. However, given shrinking budgets, the United States will need to work hard to expand the number of countries and organizations involved in South Sudan to ensure its long-term political and economic success moving forward. As the South begins to address its capacity-building and development needs, the United States will need to be prepared to work more closely, collaboratively, and creatively with a wide range of actors to build on previous and ongoing local and international efforts to assist the Republic of South Sudan, enabling the achievement of its goals of prosperity and success for all South Sudanese regardless of ethnicity, political affiliation, or origin.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, our focus will remain on taking the necessary steps to ensure a peaceful relationship between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, particularly with the unresolved status and borders of Abyei Area, and the ongoing violent conflicts in the two Sudanese states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile being waged between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-North (SPLM/A-N). The avoidance of a return to war between Sudan and South Sudan and the speedy resolution of the remaining CPA issues will remain a priority in these nations, and, if confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues at Embassy Khartoum, as well as through multilateral organizations like the African Union and the United Nations to secure a peaceful future for the citizens of South Sudan. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to reinforce our bilateral relationship as well as contribute to efforts promoting a stable, functioning, and peaceful South Sudan.

Mr. Chairman, South Sudan remains confronted with internal conflict and violence incited by former military commanders and political actors who seek to destabilize the south. The actions of militia groups and ethnic disputes continue to create instability in regions of South Sudan, and could have devastating consequences for the newly formed country. We also remain concerned by the regional threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army. The United States will need to continue to assist the Republic of South Sudan in navigating these challenges, in a manner that maximizes civilian protection and individual human rights and fundamental freedoms. To this end, the United States is actively engaged in supporting international partner efforts to help transform the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) into a sustainable and professional military that operates under civilian control and respects human rights.

Mr. Chairman, the establishment of a strong economic and development foundation also will be critical to the long-term success of South Sudan. If confirmed, I will work closely with our USAID colleagues to help the South Sudanese deliver on their promises to end corruption, provide basic services to its citizens, and accelerate the development of critical infrastructure, human capacity, investments in the agricultural sector, and strong regional economic relationships with neighboring countries and organizations. I look forward to working with our South Sudanese partners on these issues and firmly believe that inclusiveness, good governance, diversification of the economy, access to basic social services, (including adequate health care and education), as well as the development of all of the people of South Sudan, are the cornerstones of the country's future success and internal and external peace.

South Sudan is recovering from decades of war and will require continued support and assistance to develop strong institutions. South Sudan also will receive an estimated \$4–\$5 billion in oil revenues annually, and will have the necessary resources to invest heavily in building strong institutions run by capable and strong individuals. South Sudan is now faced with a unique opportunity to manage its resources efficiently, ensuring effective budgeting, and taking the necessary steps to create fiscal transparency to avoid the pitfalls of corruption that beset so many resource rich nations. While the CPA timeline has ended, critical agreements must still be reached between the new country and the Government of Sudan. While part of the promise of the CPA was realized by allowing the people of South Sudan to chart their own future, some of the broader goals, albeit intended for a united Sudan, should continue to apply for the new Republic of South Sudan: democratic governance; fair and equitable distribution of resources and revenue between the center and the peripheries; and the right of all people to participate in the running of the affairs of the country. The United States has been the leading donor in the area of democratic reform and good governance and, if confirmed, I will continue to make these programs a priority.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the protection of American citizens, including mission personnel, living and traveling in South Sudan, and the promotion of American business interests. With only a few private Americans in-country, we will need to work hard to welcome American companies and expand opportunities and trade, by emphasizing that South Sudan—having emerged as an independent state, and free from the sanctions that still plague its northern neighbor, Sudan.

Currently, assignment to Mission Juba is unaccompanied, and I, like everyone else at Post, will leave my family behind. As the U.S. Embassy expands in South Sudan, the mission will need to consider its current infrastructure and footprint as well as future needs. We will need to carefully consider both the living and working environment to ensure that the Embassy compound will provide the safest and most secure facilities available.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed as the first U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan, I will be drawing upon my prior experience negotiating and drafting the CPA and my time living and working in Khartoum and Juba from 2005 to 2007 while heading up the U.N. peacekeeping mission's (UNMIS) Rule of Law and Corrections Advisory Unit. I also expect my current management experience as the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs, my previous work as a State Department legal adviser and Foreign Service officer, as well as my work as regional director for Southern and East Africa at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, will serve me well, if confirmed as U. S. Ambassador to South Sudan. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with the members of this committee, and would hope to welcome you to Juba during my tenure.

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

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Page.
Ms. O'Neal.

**STATEMENT OF ADRIENNE S. O'NEAL, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE**

Ms. O'NEAL. Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the committee, I am here today as President Obama's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde. I am honored and grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for this tremendous vote of confidence and for this opportunity to appear before you.

I have no family members here this morning. However, I did receive very early text messages from my son, Quincy, and my sister, Deborah. Welcome to the 21st century.

But I do have here today with me two of my oldest and dearest friends, Professor Patricia Aufderheide who is the director of the Center for Social Media at American University and many other

things, and Dr. Robin Madrid who was recently one of NDI's most successful program officers in Yemen.

I will also claim the support of Ambassador Johnny Young, who was a tremendous role model to me throughout my career and is here today also to support me, as well as others.

The 10 islands that compose the Republic of Cape Verde lie just 300 miles from the coast of West Africa. In stark contrast to the countries in its neighborhood, Cape Verde boasts an unbroken tradition of civilian rule since its independence in 1975. It is a wonderful African success story of progress toward lasting political stability and the creation of functional democratic institutions.

Cape Verde's relationship with the United States has been strong since we opened our first consulate there in 1818. Today, with more than 450,000 Americans of Cape Verdean origin, we can truly say that Americans from Cape Verde participate fully in our most treasured traditions and safeguard our most heartfelt values. One of the most salient examples of this is the late George Lima, an American of Cape Verdean descent, who was among the ranks of the celebrated Tuskegee Airmen in the Second World War.

From the platform of the deep affinity between our two countries, the United States engages with Cape Verde on a number of serious challenges. Among them, maritime security and transnational crime are key. The country's vast territorial waters and its strategic position to north-south sea routes made it a natural to host NATO's first live military exercise in Africa in 2006. The Government of Cape Verde has strongly supported counternarcotics maneuvers and is a willing host to U.S. ship visits. In this regard, Cape Verde is a model in the region for strategic partnership. If confirmed, it is my goal to maintain and enhance this multilateral and interagency collaboration.

U.S. engagement in support of Cape Verde's economic and commercial development has yielded encouraging results. Cape Verde's first Millennium Challenge Compact was successfully completed in 2010, producing significant gains in all three of its projects, namely, improvements in transportation networks facilitating integration of internal markets; improvements in water management and soil conservation which promoted increases in farms' profits and incomes; and support to Cape Verdean microfinance institutions. Cape Verde's continued strong governance has resulted in its selection as the first country to qualify for a second Millennium Challenge Compact. It is my hope, if confirmed, to engage Cape Verde in consolidating these gains.

Peace Corps activities have contributed to strengthening Cape Verde's civil society since 1988. The 50-plus volunteers currently serving across seven islands work with the Cape Verdean Government to enhance the teaching of English as a second language, train English language instructors, and develop small enterprise and entrepreneurship. If confirmed, I intend to build upon Peace Corps successes to encourage higher education opportunities and stimulate small business development with U.S. partners.

Mr. Chairman, prior assignments to United States missions in Lusophone nations, Brazil, Portugal, and Mozambique, have equipped me with a cultural knowledge and language skills to connect smoothly with the Cape Verdean Government and with the

Cape Verdean people. Similarly, if confirmed, I will draw upon expertise gained in positions of leadership I have held throughout my 28-year tenure in the Foreign Service to address the peculiar challenges entailed in managing the U.S. mission in Cape Verde. These include a small and crowded workplace and the mentoring of entry-level officers who staff the majority of the Embassy's positions. In addition, if confirmed, I intend to uphold and execute the primary responsibility of every United States Embassy which is to promote the safety and welfare of American citizens abroad.

I would be pleased to take your questions now.

[The prepared statement of Ms. O'Neal follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADRIENNE S. O'NEAL

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the committee, I am here today as President Obama's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde. I am honored and grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for this tremendous vote of confidence and for this opportunity to appear before you.

The 10 islands that compose the Republic of Cape Verde lie just 300 miles from the West Coast of Africa. In stark contrast to the countries in its neighborhood, Cape Verde boasts an unbroken tradition of civilian rule since its independence in 1975. It is a wonderful African success story of progress toward lasting political stability and the creation of functional democratic institutions.

Cape Verde's relationship with the United States has been strong since we opened our first consulate there in 1818. Today, with more than 450,000 Americans of Cape Verdean origin, we can truly say that Americans from Cape Verde participate fully in our most treasured traditions and safeguard our most heartfelt values. One of the most salient examples of this is the late George Lima, an American of Cape Verdean descent who was among the ranks of the celebrated Tuskegee Airmen in the Second World War.

From the platform of the deep affinity between our two countries, the United States engages with Cape Verde on a number of serious challenges. Among them, maritime security and transnational crime are key. The country's vast territorial waters and its strategic position to north-south sea routes made it a natural to host NATO's first live military exercise in Africa in 2006. The Government of Cape Verde has strongly supported counternarcotics maneuvers and is a willing host to U.S. ship visits. In this regard, Cape Verde is a model in the region for strategic partnership. If confirmed, it is my goal to maintain and enhance this multilateral and inter-agency collaboration.

U.S. engagement in support of Cape Verde's economic and commercial development has yielded encouraging results. Cape Verde's first Millennium Challenge Compact was successfully completed in 2010, producing significant gains in all three of its projects, namely: (1) improvements in transportation networks facilitating integration of internal markets; (2) improvements in water management and soil conservation, which promoted increases in farms profits and incomes; and, (3) support to Cape Verdean microfinance institutions. Cape Verde's continued strong governance performance resulted in its selection as the first country to qualify for a second Millennium Challenge Compact. It is my hope, if confirmed, to engage Cape Verde in consolidating these gains.

Peace Corps activities have contributed to strengthening Cape Verde's civil society since 1988. The 50-plus Volunteers currently serving across seven islands work with the Cape Verdean Government to enhance the teaching of English as a second language, train English language instructors, and develop small enterprise and entrepreneurship. If confirmed, I intend to build upon Peace Corps successes to encourage higher education opportunities and stimulate small business development with U.S. partners.

Mr. Chairman, prior assignments to U.S. missions in Lusophone nations, Portugal, Brazil, and Mozambique, have equipped me with the cultural knowledge and language skills to connect smoothly with the Cape Verdean Government and people. Similarly, if confirmed, I will draw upon expertise gained in positions of leadership I have held throughout my 28-year tenure in the Foreign Service to address the peculiar challenges entailed in managing the U.S. mission in Cape Verde. These include a small and crowded workspace and the mentoring of entry-level officers who staff the majority of the Embassy's positions. In addition, if confirmed, I intend to

uphold and execute the primary responsibility of every United States Embassy, which is to promote the safety and welfare of Americans citizens abroad.

I would now be pleased to answer any of your questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. O'Neal.

Ms. Leonard.

**STATEMENT OF MARY BETH LEONARD, OF MASSACHUSETTS,
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALI**

Ms. LEONARD. Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Johnnie Carson.

First, Mr. Chairman, let me acknowledge family and friends and colleagues who are like family who are here today. I am accompanied by my sister Ann Marie Stroika and her husband David; and behind them, by a cousin, Matthew Kerry. I am also delighted to welcome Ambassador Johnny and Mrs. Angelina Young, as well as valiant Mali Desk Officer, Manuela Borges, and other colleagues from African Affairs.

I would also like to acknowledge and signal my gratitude for the presence of Ambassador Toure who is Mali's Ambassador to the United States.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy Bamako and advancing U.S. interests in Mali, a constitutional democracy rooted in principles of free expression and tolerance that offers an example for West Africa and beyond. These qualities make Mali a valued partner for the United States.

Our main interests in Mali lie in consolidating that democracy, furthering economic development, and countering the incursion of terrorism that threatens Mali's physical security as well as its most cherished ideals.

Mali is poised to enter a new era in its democratic journey. President Amadou Toumani Toure has made clear his intention to leave office at the end of his second term next June as prescribed by the constitution. If confirmed, I would look forward to shaping U.S. activities to encourage constructive popular participation in the 2012 elections and to support ongoing democratic consolidation.

Mr. Chairman, the environment for addressing security challenges in the Sahel, notably the threat posed by al-Qaeda-linked terrorists, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, or AQIM, is also evolving. Events in Libya pose delicate challenges for Mali as it ponders the possible impact of combatants and weaponry leaking into an already uncertain Sahel. This prospect provides a powerful impetus for cooperation among Mali and its neighbors to safeguard the Sahel. This regional counterterrorism cooperation is an important counterpart to United States efforts to build the capacity of Mali's military, and I would be honored to further hone these activities to Mali's needs and plans, if confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, U.S. development efforts bring well focused interventions in health, education, agriculture, and governance to what remains a desperately poor nation. These programs are closely inte-

grated with our democracy and counterterrorism goals in a well-coordinated interagency effort. In decentralizing the provision of health and education services, we also help Mali amplify the message at the heart of the essential contract of democracy, that a government exists to serve its people. In the remote north of Mali, an area that faces terrorist incursions, development reinforces the tolerant Malian people's rejection of extremism and strengthens the ties that bind the state with even its farthest flung citizens.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the protection of Americans and American business interests, including mission personnel, living and traveling in Mali. I would look forward to engaging U.S. businesses and nongovernmental organizations on consular and security matters.

The mission is fortunate to have occupied a new embassy compound nearly 5 years ago. One of the most impressive structures in Bamako, it is an important symbol of our long-term commitment to Mali. If confirmed, I would be closely engaged in ensuring the good stewardship of this significant U.S. Government investment.

Mr. Chairman, I believe my Foreign Service experience to date has prepared me to serve as Ambassador to Mali. Should the Senate's confirmation permit me to return to Bamako where, as you noted, I previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission before becoming West African Affairs Director, I hope that my familiarity with Malian issues and contacts would serve our interests well. Many of Mali's finest citizens make up the locally employed staff at our Embassy, and it would be an honor to work with them again as Ambassador to Mali.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with you and other members of the committee and would hope to welcome you to Bamako during my tenure.

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

[The prepared statement of Ms. Leonard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY BETH LEONARD

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position, and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson.

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Mr. Chairman, the environment for addressing security challenges in the Sahel—including, but not limited to, the threat of al-Qaeda-linked terrorists—is also evolving. Events in Libya pose delicate challenges for this near-neighbor, as it ponders the possible impact of combatants and weaponry leaking into an already uncertain

Sahel. This prospect provides a powerful impetus for cooperation among Mali and its neighbors to safeguard the Sahel. This regional counterterrorism cooperation is an important counterpart to U.S. efforts to build the capacity of Mali's military, which I would be honored to further hone to their needs and plans if confirmed.

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

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Leonard.

Mr. Brzezinski.

**STATEMENT OF MARK FRANCIS BRZEZINSKI, OF VIRGINIA,
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO SWEDEN**

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, Senator Lugar, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for their support and confidence in nominating me to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to devote all my energy to represent the United States to the best of my ability.

Let me add my heartfelt thanks to you, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and Senator Lugar, for the words that you said at the outset of this hearing. It is one of the proudest days of my life.

I want to also acknowledge that Swedish Ambassador Hafstrom is here today.

If you will permit me, I would like to introduce to the committee my wife, Natalia Brzezinski. We are the very proud parents of Aurora Emilie, a rambunctious and wonderful little girl, aged 2 and a quarter. Life is a team sport and our little family is the source of so much pride, love, and support.

My wife and I are both children of immigrants from Eastern Europe. My father and mother, immigrants from prewar Poland and Czechoslovakia respectively, instilled in me the belief that pub-

lic service is the highest calling and that America is a beacon for the world.

As a Fulbright grantee in Eastern Europe just after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, I witnessed how important American leadership is for democratic development and free market growth. This lesson has informed my experiences in international affairs since then, from my service on the National Security Council in the 1990s to my private legal practice where I counsel companies on anticorruption compliance. If confirmed, I will bring these experiences with me to Sweden, which is such an important partner in promoting democracy, human rights, and economic growth around the world.

Sweden has risen to the global security challenges of our time and joined with the United States and other countries as an active contributor in international security missions. For example, Sweden contributes to the NATO missions in Afghanistan and Libya.

Sweden understands, as does America, that military and diplomatic efforts are not the only tools for combating instability. Development plays a very important role. If confirmed, I pledge to advance the United States-Swedish cooperation on democratic development from Belarus to Ukraine to the Middle East and North Africa and beyond.

America and Sweden are committed to combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism. In the last year, the suicide bombing in Stockholm, the horrific attacks in Norway, and the arrests of terrorist cells in the region highlight that counterterrorism is a common focus in our bilateral and regional relationships.

The United States and Sweden share a strong commitment to political participation of women. This is personified by the inclusion of Sweden's former Minister of Enterprise and Energy, Maud Olofsson, on Secretary Clinton's International Council on Women's Business Leadership. If confirmed, I pledge to advance our collaboration with Sweden to promote women in politics and business.

The United States and Sweden share an important trading partnership and a commitment to green energy. If confirmed, I will build on the close cooperation our Embassy has forged with Sweden on alternative energy and environmental sustainability.

This year, Sweden took over the rotating chairmanship of the Arctic Council. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Sweden to advance our common goals of protecting the environment and conserving the Arctic's biological resources while promoting economic cooperation and protecting Arctic communities with other Arctic Council members.

As a former Fulbright recipient, I appreciate the value of international exchange programs. If confirmed, I envision fostering further support for exchange programs, especially those that advance green energy and clean technology.

Let me close with a personal story. My grandfather, Tadeusz Brzezinski, served as Poland's consul general in Leipzig, Germany, from 1931 to 1935. As consul general, he provided Polish passports to Jews, even if they were not Polish citizens, so they could be freed from imprisonment or leave Nazi Germany. His story is part of what informs my belief that public service is the highest calling. In 2012, Sweden will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg, a diplomat whose efforts to save Hungarian

Jews from the Holocaust clearly demonstrate what a difference one person can make. If I am confirmed, it will be my mission to advance the American-Swedish relationship in a way that honors the spirit of Wallenberg's legacy.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brzezinski follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK F. BRZEZINSKI

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for their support and confidence in nominating me to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to devote all my energy to represent the United States to the best of my ability.

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Thank you for your time and I look forward to your questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Brzezinski, and thank you to all four of our witnesses today both for sharing with us your professional background, your familial and professional supporters who are present with us, and your views about the challenges and opportunities you face in the nations to which you will be going, should the Senate confirm you.

We are now going to begin rounds of 7-minute questions. My first question is for Ms. Page, Ambassador-nominee to South Sudan.

Ms. Page, you mentioned in your testimony that South Sudan has unique oil wealth, yet enormous development challenges, and that the United States has carried much of the development assistance burden or opportunity in the last decade with this region of Sudan. How will you accomplish the goal of, as you put it, multilateralizing development investment in South Sudan, and how do you strike a balance on two issues, sanctions that were previously imposed on Sudan but do not apply to South Sudan, but much of South Sudan's oil must go through the north? How do we manage through our own sanctions and then, second, what is going to be the most effective tool for you in dealing with corruption, fighting corruption? Several of you referenced your work in transparency and anticorruption, and I am particularly interested in what you view as the major resource you need to be successful in that.

Ms. Page

Ms. PAGE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

In terms of multilateralizing our assistance, one of the areas that we plan to work on quite soon is an international engagement conference. This will provide the Republic of South Sudan the opportunity to show off what it has in terms of resources, to explore with the international community at large what it would be like to invest in Sudan, what their own priorities are for development, for support to companies and businesses. We are planning to host that conference with both Turkey, as well as with the assistance of our troika partners, our traditional partners that helped with the peace agreement. That is Norway and the United Kingdom. We are hoping to host that before the end of the year. So it would be really not a pledging conference but more like an investment conference, an opportunity for South Sudan to provide its vision for development and assistance, as well as for investors to see what the opportunities are.

In that light, it is important that people understand that while the sanctions do not formally apply to South Sudan, that it does have a clean slate, it is important that they know that we are exploring opportunities with the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control to make it clear to people—they have put out some new explanatory regulations that make it clear what U.S. persons and U.S. businesses have to do. But there is still the likelihood that they would have to apply for a license. And I think what we are hoping to have in the near future would be some companies

apply for licenses so that we have something to actually act upon. So those are some of the ways that we hope to go forward.

With respect to corruption, I believe it is important to note what President Salva Kiir has recently said both before the United Nations General Assembly as well as at independence during the inauguration of the South Sudan Legislative Assembly, and he has pledged to root out corruption. Of course, we need more than just words. But one of the steps that he has taken is to allow the Anti-Corruption Commission to have prosecutorial powers. So as lawyers ourselves, we know how important that is to be able to provide accountability and to bring people to justice when these types of incidents occur. I think good governance is going to be key to that, and the South Sudanese will need to make sure that the legislature, especially with the development of the new constitution, provides for those opportunities to strengthen the legislative regime to be able to have oversight of the bodies that are doing procurement, making sure that there is accountability. So these would be some of the areas that I would be looking to work with them on.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Page.

I also want to specifically thank your husband, Damien, and son, Marius, for their willingness to have you go to this post that will be, I know, quite a challenge.

I am going to jump, if I might, to Mr. Brzezinski around those same questions about anticorruption, something you have worked on professionally. A development partnership is something you mentioned in your testimony. Sweden is renowned for its effective engagement in development assistance, particularly in the energy field, and a number of Scandinavian countries, most principally Norway, have a great record of having been good stewards of their mineral and petroleum resources in a way that they have shared with African nations.

Please, if you would, share with us, Mr. Brzezinski, how you hope to build on our relationship with Sweden as effective development partners in ways that might advance United States interests both in counterterrorism and in stabilizing nations which we hope to see move toward peace and security.

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

You are right. Sweden has a remarkable record of generosity when it comes to development assistance and has a standing policy of devoting 1 percent of its GDP annually to overseas development assistance. So in real numbers in 2011, that means \$5.7 billion from a country of 9 million people being devoted to development assistance outside its borders. And it has done so very constructively.

Within the region of, say, north central Europe, you take a look at the way Sweden is engaged in promoting energy diversification in the Baltic States, human rights in Belarus, rule of law in Ukraine, and through the EU leading the Eastern Partnership to expand Europe.

In Africa, its engagement in the Horn of Africa in Somalia is in the many millions of dollars, and in this age of austerity here in America, there are ample opportunities to explore with the Swedes ways that we can collaborate to advance our shared objectives,

whether it is antipoverty, environmental protection, rule of law, and the like.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Brzezinski. I was pleased to hear Ambassador Hafstrom has joined us today. As I mentioned to you, he was with me in Wilmington, DE, the first site of the landing of Swedes in America, at a celebration of that just 2 weeks ago.

And I am also grateful to your wife, Natalia, and your daughter, Aurora, for her rambunctiousness—

[Laughter.]

Senator COONS [continuing]. And her willingness to serve like you. I know that public service is a team sport.

With that, Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Page, I have read that there is some conversation about some in the South Sudan wanting to move the capital from Juba. Do you have an opinion on that? Is that movement growing?

Ms. PAGE. Yes, thank you, sir.

Actually they have talked about moving the capital to a location where they would have more space, but my understanding is that that would be a move that is more like 20 years away as opposed to something immediately. So that, I hope, will not preclude us from moving forward with a new embassy compound which I think is really going to be very critical as we increase our staffing and our footprint in South Sudan.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you.

You know, the chairman and I traveled to West Africa in May and June, and it occurs to me, based on listening to your testimony, that there are two people you might use as a resource as you deal with the developments in the Government in South Sudan. One is Commissioner Jega in Nigeria, who was the commissioner of elections who really conducted the first democratic elections that the public accepted in the history of Nigeria. The chairman and I had the chance to meet with him. He is probably one of the most competent people I think I have ever had the privilege of meeting with. And the other is President Mills in Ghana. President Mills probably has done a good, if not the best, job in West Africa in terms of rooting out corruption, both in his government, as well as in the business community. And both of them are big on democracy and I am sure would be supportive. So if you get the chance to meet with them, I think they would be of help to you.

One other question regarding South Sudan. The north Sudan is pretty much Muslim. South Sudan is more Christian. Is that not correct?

Ms. PAGE. Correct.

Senator ISAKSON. Other than the oil issue in Abyei, was the proximity of Muslims and Christians to each other in Abyei also a part of the problem?

Ms. PAGE. Thank you, sir.

No, not so much. It is less of a religious issue over Abyei and more—not even so much oil really. It is ancestral territory and people have been using Abyei to transit the north and the south. It has really always acted as a bridge, not so much between Muslims and Christians as much as between the north of the country and the south of the country. So I think the recognition that it is ances-

tral territory for the Ngok Dinka, as well as an important place for the nomadic ethnic groups, notably the Misseriya, but there are many others as well who transit through the area to graze their cattle. So this will be something that will be important as they resolve the boundaries and the border dispute to make sure that people still have access even if they are crossing partly an international border so that they can continue to have feed livestock that is fed and watered.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, Abyei probably is the single biggest challenge to South Sudan and north Sudan developing a peaceful future. That is going to be a big challenge for you and we wish you the best of luck.

Ms. PAGE. Thank you very much, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Brzezinski, I have never seen anybody who has been published as much as you have been published. It's about eight pages of titles. And as I am looking through the titles, I noticed that you probably ought to be a part-time consultant to these three ambassadors because you have written extensively on corruption and even written on the state sanctions against north Sudan with regard to terrorism, if I am not mistaken. Is that correct?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. That is right.

Senator ISAKSON. So you all ought to use him as a part-time advisor because he has written extensively on both of those subjects.

And on the subject, the article you wrote about North Korea and South Sudan in 2006—I do not know if you recall it, but I think that was about the sanctions we imposed on north Sudan in terms of state sponsorship of terrorism. Is that not correct?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Right.

Senator ISAKSON. I think it is important to note that we leveraged that to get the north Sudanese to actually come to the table, turn around what they were doing, and in fact they will be going off that state sponsorship as a part of the deal to get these elections conducted peacefully. So I am sure you had no idea in 2006 you would be testifying here in 2011, but I think Ambassador Page would recognize that was probably one of the keys to pulling off the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. And your knowledge of that might also be a good consulting knowledge as far as they are concerned as well.

Last, when you go to Sweden, I want you to go to Ostersund, and when you go to Ostersund, you go to my grandfather's farm. His heirs are still there. It is the geographic center of Sweden. It is the last stop before the Arctic. So be sure and go by and visit them and give them my regards, if you will.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Senator, my wife and I will commit to going to Ostersund. We cannot wait to get there.

Senator ISAKSON. You will love it when you get there.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. On sanctions, if I could just build on your highly accurate words, one of the things that we have seen Sweden join us in is on sanctioning countries that we have sanctioned like Iran and Syria. Sweden has joined the U.N. sanctions on Iran, the EU sanctions on Iran, and I think it sends an important and global message to the Iranians through that tool.

On Syria, particularly given recent developments in Syria, the Swedes have refused to purchase and have stopped the purchase

of Syrian petroleum, and they have sanctioned high-level Syrian officials, including President Assad, which also sends a key message at a key time.

So thank you, Senator, for your point on sanctions.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, and thank you for referring to the Swedes in the U.N. and with their aid in Afghanistan. I think they are No. 1 in terms of accepting refugees from Iraq in that conflict. It is a great country and they have been a great partner with the United States in trying to seek out peace in the Middle East and will be a key to that as it is ongoing in Sweden, and your help will be tremendously valuable as well. So thank you for mentioning that.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator. And as you know, Sweden is not a member of NATO, but they have joined NATO missions and operations in Kosovo, in Afghanistan, 500 troops in Afghanistan. They lead a PRT in Mazar-i-Sharif and in Libya where they contribute reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft. So even though they are not a formal member of NATO, they have joined us in deed. And I think that that is very important.

Senator ISAKSON. And they have recently made additional commitments of financial investment in Afghanistan in terms of women's education and other areas as well, which is greatly appreciated.

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

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. O'Neal, you have described the number of Americans in Cape Verde or those who have come from Cape Verde to the United States. Give some background as to why these relationships occur and why so many citizens are coming and going from the two countries.

Ms. O'NEAL. Thank you, sir, for that question.

There has always been a strong relationship between America and Cape Verde, but the consequence of two seasons of drought really inspired a strong exodus of Cape Verdeans to America and to other places. Americans of Cape Verdean descent have always kept close ties with Cape Verdeans on the island, and remittances from Americans of Cape Verdean descent are about 15 percent of the economy. And so it has always been a very strong relationship and it continues to grow.

I understand that there have been a lot of conversations about whether or not a second MCC compact for Cape Verde, and I would just like to interject in that context that Cape Verde is a country whose relative size and population does not adequately reflect the magnitude of its accomplishments and of its potential to be a role model in the region. Cape Verde, since 1975 when it was liberated from the Portuguese, has demonstrated strong democratic governance. And additional aid from us would allow Cape Verde to hone its already burgeoning institutions to levels of efficiency that are unprecedented in the developing world.

Cape Verde is one of two countries in Africa that has managed to move its economy from a lower income classification to a lower middle-income classification. With a little bit more assistance from

us, it could be that Cape Verde could move its economy toward an economy that is not donor-driven solely but that is based on private sector revenues and enjoy those underpinnings as well.

Finally, the location of Cape Verde makes it a natural partner for us in terms of maritime security and in terms of combating illicit drugs and other products that might be coming through the islands to Africa and to Europe. The United States Coast Guard has acknowledged that Cape Verde is its strongest partner in the region, and I think with added assistance, a bit more assistance from us, this partnership can become much larger and can be a leader in terms of training other West African countries in these types of activities.

So if I am confirmed, I will support Cape Verde in all of these areas, and in the event that there would be a second MCC compact awarded to Cape Verde, as Senator Obama's representative on the ground, I would engage with the Cape Verdean Government and with Cape Verdean institutions to ensure that each of the collateral projects of that compact would be executed with efficiency, with productivity, and with transparency.

Thank you.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much for that information. It was very comprehensive.

Ms. Page, we have had testimony before this committee within the past year, as affairs in Sudan as a whole evolved, that independence for South Sudan was probable. Then it became reality. But at the same time, as you have mentioned in your testimony, the independence is not necessarily threatened but under stress as you go to this new state. At least we have had some testimony that the boundaries, even the independence of some sections of the country may be in some jeopardy. What is your own view of this? And what should the United States position be? How will you react and how will you lead in this situation?

Ms. PAGE. Thank you, Mr. Senator.

I believe it is very critical that we encourage strongly the partners to return to the negotiating table. There are outstanding issues. There has been some progress made, but on oil revenues and at least sharing whatever kind of pipeline arrangement that they make really needs to be solidified and quite quickly. Right now, both sides are allowing the oil to continue to flow and to be exported, but without something solid pretty quickly, both countries will really face some serious economic stresses.

Already the north, Sudan, has lost a significant portion of its oil revenues, but economically prices are increasing, people are starting to feel the pinch of the loss of a third of their territory. Cross-border trade is being hindered. Some of that is partial. Some of that is purposeful I believe. And it is important that they make sure that those links continue.

Special Envoy Lyman has been in negotiations with the parties, with both Khartoum and Juba, or with the Sudan and South Sudan, to try to encourage at least the central bank governors to develop a partnership so that they can work out some of these details and the arrangements because so much of it depends on the kind of relationships. And the longer these crises go on between the SPLM-North in Sudan and the National Congress Party or the

Sudan armed forces, the more the likelihood is that things will not be resolved quickly. So I think negotiations are really critical and I think we need to continue to support the AU High-Level Implementation Panel, Special Envoy Lyman, and the U.N. Special Representative, Haile Menkarios, to try to continue to carry out these negotiations.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

I would like to turn, if I could, in our second round of questions first to Ms. Leonard and to thank your professional supporters for being here as well and encouraging you.

You made reference to the Tuareg, to the sort of remote corners of the far north of Mali and to the real threat opposed to the Malian tradition of tolerance and central government by AQIM. Speak, if you would, just in a little more detail about what is the scope and nature of the threat posed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and how do you think the Government of Mali will be most effectively able to counter armed terrorists in the vast and fairly remote northern part of the country. And then how does the historic dynamic with the Tuareg who have often felt disenfranchised and lacked security and at times engaged in active rebellion against the central government—how can development assistance, how can security assistance from the United States—how can you in your role, should you serve as our Ambassador, help the nation of Mali address these core challenges?

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

I think the Government of Mali is acutely aware of the negatives associated with the presence of AQIM in its uncontrolled territories. It is a threat to their ability to carry out development activities in the north, which is very closely related to the political accommodations that have helped resolve past Tuareg rebellions. So that is a very important linkage there. It has been a big threat and it has really decimated tourism in many areas. And it is also a threat to their international reputation in the sense that people wonder why the problem has not already gone away.

I would characterize the presence of AQIM in Mali very much as an incursion onto their territory. No one in the north of Mali or hardly anyone in the north of Mali—the extremist message of AQIM does not find purchase among Malians, whether they be Tuareg, Barabeesh, or from southern areas in Mali are not attracted by that sort of extremist ideology. So it is rather an incursion onto a territory than a case of actually converting people in Mali to that cause.

I think it is safe to say that AQIM aspires to become something much more threatening than it is now, but that is not a reason to be complacent. That is a reason to prevent them from attaining those aspirations.

In order for Mali to successfully combat and make ineffective the presence of AQIM on their territory, I think that they need three or four things. They need assistance in developing the capacity of their military. They need equipment for the logistics of such operations, and most importantly, they need the cooperation of all of

their neighbors because no one military in that region is, in fact, capable of combating it. It needs to be a joint effort.

In terms of U.S. assistance, we are involved very much not only on those first two areas of military capacity and equipment provision, but also in the development side of it. You are trying to bring development to the north of Mali so that, for example, you do not disappoint the hopes of the Tuareg people who accepted that sort of as the basis of the political accommodation and cause an internal distraction that would make it difficult for Mali to participate in activities against AQIM. You engage in, for example, community radio training and programmings to reinforce the ties between the state and the people to reinforce the inherent tolerance.

I think on the last point of regional cooperation, events in Libya have very much sharpened the focus of attention of the various regional partners in that cooperation.

Over time, the cooperation has sometimes faltered because of domestic diversions for individual partners or trying to come to a common strategy. I think as they view the increasingly scary place that the Sahel can become as combatants and arms come into the area, you are seeing a much more acute awareness of the need to cooperate quickly as evidenced most recently by a meeting of Foreign Ministers in Bamako and also a meeting in September in Algiers which also invited the outside donors and participants.

If I am confirmed, I would look forward to further honing and refining not only with Mali but with my colleagues in the region about how we might best support those efforts to ensure that AQIM does not become the much more dangerous thing that we would all fear and ceases to threaten the security and the development of northern Mali.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Leonard, for that thorough and thoughtful answer about the regional potential solutions to security.

Ms. O'Neal, if I might, I would like to turn back to the conversation that Senator Lugar started about the second MCC opportunity that Cape Verde faces. My father was long active in the fishing industry in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and so the size and scope of the Cape Verdean diaspora population in New England is familiar to me.

One of the things I am trying to urge that we take greater advantage of is the opportunity posed by a large African diaspora community in the United States which often is involved not just in remittances but also in possible entrepreneurial activity, building bridges between the United States, our institutions, and their nations of origin, much as many other nationalities historically in the United States have played that bridging role, whether United States-Sweden or elsewhere.

So if you would, please, comment just two things. Should there be a second Millennium Challenge Compact with Cape Verde, what would be its principal areas of focus? Would they be the same as the first and simply continue them and strengthen them, or would there be different priority areas? And help me understand how we best justify. You have made a good start. But questions have been raised given the relative size of Cape Verde of why a second com-

pact there when there are so many other nations on the continent that have such great development needs.

And then, second, if you had any comment on how we might strengthen trade relations with the United States under AGOA or other ways that we might take advantage of the diaspora community and strengthen the economy of Cape Verde in partnership with the United States. Please.

Ms. O'NEAL. Thank you for that question, Senator.

I think you are absolutely right that the presence of the strong diaspora community here has not been profitably exploited. Secretary Clinton has recently set up a program in which the Department of State can engage diaspora communities and where the Department can actually help to make the ties and to inspire the types of commercial activities between them that would be profitable for the country. So if I am confirmed, I would like to engage in that program and go with the Cape Verde Ambassador up to New England to meet some of the players and sit down and establish a game plan as to how that would proceed going forward.

In terms of the MCC compact, it is definitely not always evident if you look only at Cape Verde's size and population, the strong role that it can play in the region in terms of being a partner to the United States in terms of upholding the goals and values and the foreign policy priorities that we have and in terms of being a model for its neighbors because Cape Verde has become a country that is looked to in terms of practices and techniques and capability for maritime security, for example.

The economy in all of this is key, and the substantial gains that have been made in the economic growth because of the first compact truly need to be bolstered and reinforced. The Millennium Challenge Corporation has upped the ante this time, I understand, with this second compact in requiring Cape Verde to show strong signs and evidence of becoming a private sector-based economy. And so things that have already been in discussion—there is actually a Cape Verdean Government commission to prepare for what would be done in terms of regulation and in terms of economic reform in the second compact.

We would need to strengthen, for example, the capacity of Cape Verdeans to have credit. They have an outline to opening a credit bureau. They have already integrated microcredit into the practice of the central bank, but if they were able to establish this credit bureau, that would be a key component of making available funding for more entrepreneurship and for institutions to be able to get credit.

We also have made strong strides in infrastructure reform so that the way that you navigate the islands—and you know, managing a 10-island archipelago is more than a notion, but making sure that the roads and the ports are more viable and can support more activity would be another activity that would be addressed by the second compact.

So I think the second compact is key in getting over a major hump for Cape Verde to become a country that can manage its own open economic practices rather than depend on other countries and other donors to pick up the slack.

I would also like to assert that when the MCC compact projects begin, there is always some buy-in from other countries who are our allies, and this is something that the MCC corporation has also made as a requirement for Cape Verde for the second compact to include a more multilateral approach to their development.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Ms. O'Neal.

Senator ISAKSON.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman, unfortunately I have an 11:15 commitment that I must make. So rather than ask a question, let me just congratulate each of you on your nomination. I intend to support each one of the nominees for their confirmation.

Let me also add particularly to the three who are going to Africa, a lot of times when you go to places, like where you are going, you become out of sight, out of mind. We want you to know that this subcommittee wants to be a resource of support for each of you, especially in a fledgling country like the Sudan where resources are going to be important. So we hope you will feel free to call on the chairman, myself, and all the members. Obviously, the same to Mr. Brzezinski, but Sweden and Africa are two entirely different places. All of you have important roles, and we congratulate you on your nomination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Senator Isakson.

Senator LUGAR.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Brzezinski, let me just note that some in Sweden have become concerned about the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline that will run from Russia to Germany and will reportedly cross part of Sweden's maritime exclusive economic zone. In particular, some are concerned with disturbances to the Baltic Sea bed where chemical weapons and ammunition have been resting since World War I. How do you see the nature of this problem both in terms of environmental and energy security consequences for Sweden and its neighbors?

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

It is important to note that Sweden in May took over the chairmanship also of the Arctic Council which has an important environmental and biological stewardship role as well. And the country is very motivated and focused on environmental protection, sustainability, climate issues, and the like.

On the energy side of the question that you asked, I am pleased to note that Sweden supports our objectives in promoting European energy security by promoting diversification of sources and transport corridors. And that is seen in their support of the southern corridor to bring Caspian gas through Turkey to Europe, of the electric cable from Sweden to Lithuania.

With regard to the specific concerns that you asked about the subseabed environmental damage and so forth, if it is OK with you, I would like to come back to your office with a more complete and thorough answer to that question.

Senator LUGAR. Very good.

Let me just add this thought that I attended 2 years ago, I think, a meeting of the European Union people boosting the so-called Nabucco pipeline. The idea obviously, just following your reasoning,

was to have an independent source of oil or natural gas or both that were not involved with Russia and offered, therefore, a competitive element. It did not exclude the Russian natural gas or oil coming into other countries, but it would obviate the cutoffs and the disruption of service that has occurred in some European countries.

And so I am curious whether—the Nabucco pipeline is, of course, much more of a southern European phenomenon, although it will come up to Austria and the Czech Republic and what have you. Is Sweden involved at all in those conversations? It is not clear, in fact, whether Nabucco ever will occur, but as with many of these alternatives, they are important at least to European countries.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Senator, you are right. And energy diversification, diversification of sources, and transport corridors is a conversation that we are having with the Swedes and with other European partners. To me it is good that they join with us in terms of these shared common energy security goals.

With regard to their specific involvement in Nabucco, if it is OK with you, I would love to come back to your office with a more complete and thorough answer to that question because I want to be absolutely spot on in terms of my response.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Senator Lugar. I am grateful you were able to join us today in this confirmation hearing. Your questions always add breadth and depth to the questioning we are able to conduct.

Like Senator Isakson, I also have commitments to which I need to turn.

I also serve on other committees and would look to a sustained relationship with each of you. On the Judiciary, we are considering some possible revisions to the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. On the Energy Committee, the possibility of deploying clean energy throughout West Africa in particular but throughout the Continent of Africa, hopefully in partnership with our technology partners in Sweden, is of genuine interest to me.

And of course, on this committee, I just wanted to echo Senator Isakson's invitation to you as you serve as Ambassadors in some particularly remote and challenging places and in some particularly beautiful and welcoming places. We know that each of you face various challenges in terms of your staffing, your security, your physical site at the Embassy, and we hope that you will communicate with us regularly, allow us, hopefully, to be a resource to you. It is our hope to continue to travel together regularly to visit the continent and to contribute what we can to supporting your endeavors. I am grateful for your willingness to appear before the committee and to answer all of our questions today.

Did you have any further questions you wanted to raise today?

I did want to say that we will keep the record open until the close of business Friday, October 7, should any of the committee members who were not able to join us today have questions for you they would like to submit in writing.

That having been said, we now conclude this hearing.

Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 11:16 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF SUSAN D. PAGE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. What are the particular challenges involved with serving as the first Ambassador to South Sudan? Your experience in Sudan and with the CPA will clearly be assets in this new position, if confirmed. How has your background prepared you to take up the management challenges of this post, including the need to begin construction on a new Embassy, high turnover of staff with most serving in 1-year postings, and other potential issues in this challenging environment?

Answer. If confirmed as the first U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan, I believe the challenges will be many; however, this is a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity to work closely with the world's newest nation. As the Government of the Republic of South Sudan works to stand up its ministries, and build internal capacity, I welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively on strengthening a democratic state that promotes inclusiveness and good governance. I will also work to reinforce accountability and transparency while helping the South Sudanese deliver on their promises to end corruption, diversify and develop their economy, and improve access to basic social services.

Facing these challenges is a tall order, and as you noted, I will be drawing upon my prior experience negotiating and drafting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and my time living and working in Khartoum and Juba from 2005 to 2007 while heading up the U.N. Peacekeeping Mission's (UNMIS) Rule of Law and Corrections Advisory Unit. As the first director for the Rule of Law Unit at the then-newly stood up UNMIS, I created the Unit, established all three offices (Khartoum, Juba, and Darfur) and recruited all personnel. I then supervised and directed a multinational, multilingual staff of 35 (mostly senior lawyers and corrections officers) in three locations. Key to staffing the offices was an ability to understand the hardships employees suffered in a nonfamily duty station in difficult conditions. For instance, in Juba, employees lived for the first year in tents, most without fans, and with shared bathroom and other facilities on a compound with staff from numerous backgrounds, customs, and cultures.

As a Deputy Assistant Secretary, I am responsible for overseeing the work of two of the nine offices in the Bureau of African Affairs and managing the work of 23 ambassadors and their missions, ensuring careful coordination as well as the formulation of strategies and implementation of policies. In representing the Bureau at the Kimberley Process diamond certification meetings, I served as a key advisor to the Assistant Secretaries in resolving key disputes between the African block and Western countries, articulating and negotiating solutions. Along with the Chief of Mission, Africa Bureau and other Department senior leadership, I encouraged the leadership of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to hold military and civilian officials accountable for sexual- and gender-based violence, mineral exploitation, and other atrocities, leading to the recent detention and trial of several military officers and the implementation of the beginnings of a process to better ensure clean mineral trading and protection of civilians. Finally, while in Kenya serving as a regional legal adviser, I served as a key member of the task force in the evacuation of U.S. citizens from Rwanda at the beginning of the genocide and conducted the first USG fact-finding mission on behalf of State and USAID to post-genocide Rwanda. I will draw on each of these experiences, and they will inform and contribute to my ability to navigate the unique set of challenges that both the mission and South Sudan will undoubtedly face.

As the mission footprint grows, so will its needs. The former USAID office building is being reconfigured to meet State's needs, including consular services, on an interim basis. A New Embassy Compound (NEC) is planned for FY 2013. We have sufficient housing to meet current needs. If staffing increases, we will address that. We are examining the possibility of designating Juba as an accompanied post and extending its tour of duty to 2 years; it is currently a 1-year, unaccompanied post, separating families and loved ones. As such, it is more important than ever that we identify land so that we can move forward with the planned New Embassy Compound (NEC), which includes a residential area scheduled for FY13 according to OBO's Capital Security Construction Program list. The exciting opportunities, and challenges, of working with the newest nation in the world are attracting highly

professional and dedicated Foreign Service officers and South Sudanese staff, with immense regional and technical expertise, and morale at post is good.

An extension of the length of tour would help increase continuity and add further depth to the already formidable knowledge base of U.S. Government staff. It would also require a thorough review of the current security environment as well as programmatic planning to address the growing need for both office and residential space for USG employees and staff. As I move forward to face these challenges, I will work closely with my colleagues in the State Department, and you, Members of Congress, to address these issues that will strengthen Embassy Juba.

Question. Section 620J of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 imposes restrictions on assistance to any unit of a foreign country's security forces for which there is credible evidence that the unit has committed gross violations of human rights. U.S. embassies are heavily involved in ensuring compliance with this requirement.

- a. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the Embassy effectively implements section 620J?

Answer a. If confirmed, I will personally ensure that this is incorporated into the work requirement statements for all relevant officers and I will further stress to those staff the personal importance I place on the mission's full compliance with 620J. As a lawyer who has spent the past 15-plus years focused on democracy, rule of law, and human rights issues, I will continue to push all sectors of the South Sudanese Government to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. In Washington, the Bureaus of African Affairs and Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor each conduct vetting procedures, and I will direct the staff of Embassy Juba to coordinate with U.N. agencies, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, that are doing human rights monitoring to ensure we have as much information as possible. My personal commitment and integration of 620J implementation into the work requirement statements of relevant officers will create a "fail-safe" that will ensure compliance and effective implementation of 620J.

- b. In particular, what actions will you take to ensure, in a case in which there is credible evidence that a gross violation of human rights has been committed, that assistance will not be provided to units that committed the violation?

Answer b. Consistent with section 620J of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, in situations where there is credible evidence of gross human rights violations, I will send immediate notice to the State Department. The State Department will subsequently notify the Secretary of Defense of the findings, so that assistance can be halted if the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights, unless all necessary corrective steps have been taken.

- c. What steps will you take to ensure that the Embassy has a robust capacity to gather and evaluate evidence regarding possible gross violations of human rights by units of security forces?

Answer c. If confirmed, I will expect relevant staff of Embassy Juba to monitor the performance of those security forces we have trained, investigate incidences as necessary, and make available the relevant embassy resources, and relationships to fully and robustly bring resolution to outstanding allegations of gross violations of human rights by units of security forces. Furthermore, relevant staff of Embassy Juba will be assigned responsibility for recording findings in the International Vetting and Security Tracking (INVEST) system, as well as reporting their findings to the COM without delay.

RESPONSE OF MARY BETH LEONARD TO QUESTION SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. As you noted in your testimony to the committee, one of the U.S. Government's main interests in Mali lies in furthering economic development in that country. What do you see as Mali's key economic policy goals and challenges and why do you think Mali is not expected to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals?

Answer. Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 163 out of 164 countries evaluated on the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index in 2010. Life expectancy is only 48 years; infant mortality remains extremely high at 102.5 per 1,000 live births. The population is undernourished at rates most often seen in war zones and emergencies, with almost 40 percent of children permanently stunted and 85 percent anemic. Mali's literacy rate is only 26.2 percent, and primary school completion rates, especially for girls, are extremely low.

The low base from which Mali starts is one explanation for the country's challenge in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Nevertheless, Mali is making progress toward the goals. The Malian Government's emphasis on health and education demonstrates its commitment to improving human capital, and thus the ability of its people to participate productively.

Agriculture is the main occupation of Malians, therefore it is the basis for the government's emphasis on the agricultural sector in its economic growth strategy. The Millennium Challenge Corporation compact, with its focus on improving agricultural lands and roads as well as upgrading the airport, points to opportunities in value-added agricultural production. Meantime, Mali has steadily improved its business climate. In the 2011 World Bank's *Doing Business* report, the country ranked among the top 10 most improved economies (153 of 183 economies) due to improvements in procedures for procuring constructing permits, reduction of property transfer taxes for firms, and reducing the time for trading across borders.

RESPONSES OF ADRIENNE O'NEAL TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. In your testimony to the committee, you also highlighted the importance of consolidating Mali's constitutional democracy and expressed your hope to shape U.S. activities to encourage constructive popular participation in the 2012 elections. How would you assess the Malian Government's preparations for the 2012 elections and what are your expectations for the constitutional reforms that should precede those elections?

Answer. A constitutional and multiparty democracy since 1991, Mali is one of Africa's most stable and progressive democracies; in 2011, it was one of only a handful of countries in the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation to be ranked by Freedom House as politically free. It is currently preparing for its fifth national election and second peaceful transfer of power. All four previous elections have been judged generally free and fair, and expectations are that the 2012 elections will continue to meet international standards. Major challenges to organizing fair elections remain, including the establishment of a reliable electoral list and disagreements over the distribution of seats to opposition party members on the country's Independent Electoral Committee. Malian society embraces dialogue and compromise, and there is no reason to believe these issues cannot be reconciled. USAID has obligated over \$2 million for election assistance and is developing a plan for technical assistance and voter outreach prior to and during the 2012 elections. Public diplomacy programs provide ample opportunity to engage the Malian public on issues of civic participation and the value of open public debate.

In the runup to the elections, President Amadou Toumani Touré has embarked on a plan to reform key government institutions, with an eye to increasing transparency and strengthening anticorruption efforts. This plan also includes constitutional amendments recently approved by the National Assembly that would streamline the electoral system and add an upper chamber. These measures will be subjected to a national referendum, most likely paired with either the Presidential or legislative elections in 2012. Some observers have expressed concern about the Malian Government's ambitious plans to hold a national referendum just prior to an already ambitious electoral calendar. In order to prepare for this, the government will need to educate Malian voters on the key reforms. Generally, this concerted attention to issues of transparency and accountability is to be congratulated and efforts to bring them to fruition encouraged.

Question. While Cape Verde is eligible for tariff preferences under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), trade under the program remains very limited. What do you see as the main barriers and are there ways that Cape Verde can increase trade under the program?

Answer. A key barrier to Cape Verde's ability to increase trade under AGOA has been its lack of economic diversity. While Cape Verde has experienced recent economic success, much of that success has been driven by Cape Verde's tourism sector, which accounts for approximately 75 percent of GDP.

There are several strengths which Cape Verde can rely on in its efforts to further increase trade under AGOA. For instance, Cape Verde was recognized by the World Bank as sub-Saharan Africa's second-most-improved economy on the overall regulatory ease of doing business. Cape Verde should use its open business environment to attract international investment.

Question. One of Cape Verde's main transnational security challenges is the threat of narcotics trafficking and you stated in your testimony that the Govern-

ment of Cape Verde has strongly supported counternarcotics maneuvers and is a willing host to U.S. ship visits. What is the extent and nature of the reportedly growing problem of cocaine transshipment through Cape Verdean territory and are there ways that you would recommend improving aspects of United States-Cape Verde cooperation on these issues?

Answer. Cape Verde's location off the coast of West Africa makes it vulnerable to narcotics trafficking, especially cocaine, from South America to Africa and on to Europe. Cape Verde's capacity and political willingness to seize and search vessels are strong signals for us to engage with them on maritime security. In June 2011, Cape Verdean vessels seized a shipment of marijuana, demonstrating its willingness to be a strong partner in combating narcotics trafficking.

We will continue to develop the partnership with Cape Verde through a Bilateral Law Enforcement Agreement already under negotiation and I would encourage Cape Verde's participation in joint maritime partnership programs with Portugal, Spain, France, and others.

In 2010, the State Department provided an interagency Fusion Center that equipped Cape Verde's security forces with a system of maritime transponder monitors. Once fully operational, this unit, called "COSMAR" in Portuguese, will enable Cape Verde to track and share information about ships operating off its coasts.

If confirmed, I will continue to support INL, AFRICOM, and the U.S. Coast Guard to enhance programs to upgrade Cape Verde's capacity to patrol its territorial waters.

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

Question. As Ambassador to Sweden, what would you identify as your top priority for Swedish Relations? And why would that issue be more important than others?

Answer. Sweden is a key partner for the United States in addressing global challenges. My top priority, if confirmed, will be to deepen and strengthen the Swedish-United States partnership in order to advance the President's agenda. If confirmed, I will work to deepen our ties and keep our relationship strong including by focusing on: international security, democracy and development, the Arctic, energy and climate.

Question. In the last election, the Swedish Democrats won 20 seats in Parliament. To what do you attribute their relative success? What effect have they had on Swedish policymaking over the past year? Is there any reason to believe that Swedish Democrats will gain more influence in the future?

Answer. The Sweden Democrats gained seats in Parliament for the first time in 2010 and were particularly successful in getting votes from the unemployed, laborers, men, and those between 18 and 30 years old. The Sweden Democrats describe its main priority as protecting Swedish culture and values, mostly by reducing immigration to Sweden. Commentators note they are widely seen as having a minimal, indirect impact on policy since other parties are often unwilling to work with them. Given that the next parliamentary elections are expected in 2014 it is difficult to predict how many seats the party may lose or gain at that time.

RESPONSE OF MARK F. BRZEZINSKI TO QUESTION SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Many countries, including Sweden, have become concerned about the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline that will run from Russia to Germany and reportedly cross part of Sweden's maritime Exclusive Economic Zone. In particular, there have been concerns with potential disturbances to the Baltic seabed where chemical weapons and ammunition have been resting since World War I. How do you see the consequences of this pipeline, both in terms of the environmental effects for Sweden and its neighbors and in terms of regional energy security?

Answer. The United States neither supports nor opposes the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline. In general, U.S. policy is to support transparent and commercially viable pipeline projects that meet environmental safety standards.

With respect to Sweden, Sweden has been supportive of the Nord Stream pipeline and has been an advocate for diversifying Europe's natural gas sources and energy supply routes. The Government of Sweden approved the pipeline's construction in November 2009, following an environmental impact assessment and offered assur-

ances that the Baltic Sea environment is a high government priority. In announcing approval for the pipeline, then-Swedish Environment Minister Carlgren emphasized that Sweden's Government set strict requirements for Nord Stream that addressed both environmental and munitions-related concerns.

Sweden shares our belief that Europe can better serve its energy needs by diversifying its natural gas sources and energy supply routes. Moreover, if confirmed, I will build on the close cooperation our Embassy has forged with Sweden on alternative energy and environmental sustainability issues.