

NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

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BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

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

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2015

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

Hon. Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Political Affairs)
Laura S.H. Holgate, of Virginia, to be U.S. Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency, and to be U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the U.N.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bob Corker (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Corker, Perdue, Cardin, Menendez, Coons, Kaine, and Markey.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

The CHAIRMAN. The Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Today the Committee on Foreign Relations will consider the nomination of Thomas Shannon to serve as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. We welcome Ambassador Shannon and thank him for the more than 30 years of service to our country. As I said to him when he came into our office—and I am sure, Ben, you said the same thing. All of us are gratified when people who committed their life in this way end up ascending to these types of positions. So we are very happy for you.

The Under Secretary for Political Affairs manages regional and bilateral policy issues and oversees the Bureaus for Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe—and Eurasia, the Near East, South and Central Asia, the Western Hemisphere and International Organizations. Just a note to staff, we could say the world. [Laughter.]

It would be a little easier. Thank you.

The nomination we are considering today is for the most senior and influential Under Secretary in the State Department. This is a key nomination for this committee at this time. The person that the Senate confirms for this job will not just serve this administration but will also be an institutional bridge to the next administration.

With that, I will turn to Senator Cardin for any opening comments he may wish to make.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, let me first thank you for the speed in which this confirmation hearing as been set. I really appreciate it, and I know your commitment so that the State Department has a full complement in dealing with the urgent international issues. There is not a shortage of that.

We could not have a better person than Ambassador Shannon, and we thank you very much for your career of public service. We thank you and your family for what you have done for our country.

This position was vacated by Secretary Sherman, who did an outstanding job representing the interests of our country.

As I think Senator Corker has already pointed out, Ambassador Shannon is a career diplomat. He is currently the Counselor at the State Department. He was the Ambassador to Brazil. He was the Assistant Secretary of State and Senior Director of the National Security Council staff for Western Hemisphere Affairs. He has had posts in Venezuela, South Africa, and other critically important positions.

Mr. Chairman, as I think you pointed out, we have conversations with key nominees before we actually have the formal hearings. And it gives us a chance to sort of explore and get a sense as to the commitment to the issues that we are concerned about. And I just want to share with my colleagues that in my conversation with Ambassador Shannon, I was very impressed with his understanding of the importance of this committee, our oversight role, and the importance of transparency and openness between the position of Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. And I think that is going to bode well for the type of relationship that we need in order to speak strongly for our country, and conduct our proper oversight role of the United States Senate.

I do want to mention that there are many issues. We could talk about the implementation of the Iran agreement and the increased U.S. engagement in the Middle East. We could talk about Russia's engagement in Ukraine and whether they will comply and how we will assure that they are held to the standards of the Minsk Agreement and then, of course, Russia's engagement in Crimca, Russia's engagement in Moldova, Russia's engagement in Georgia and now in Syria.

But I just want to mention one point that I know the chairman and I are going to be very much engaged with you, Ambassador Shannon, and that is the advancement of good governance, transparency, human rights, anticorruption. And the focal point this year was on the TIP Report. You hold a critically important position to make sure the TIP Report, which is the gold standard for judging conduct globally on the commitment to fight modern-day slavery and trafficking, is held to the highest standards and the tier ratings are based solely on the facts on the ground. In our conversations, I know you are committed to that, but we want you to know this committee is going to do everything we can to support

that type of analysis on the tier ratings of the countries of the world.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to our exchange.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you for bringing up the TIP issue, and we talked extensively about that in our meeting too. And certainly one of the questions I will ask later will be about that. But I really appreciate you emphasizing that in an appropriate way.

With that, we will turn to our nominee. Our first nominee is Ambassador Thomas Shannon, who has been nominated to serve as Under Secretary for Political Affairs. Ambassador Shannon earned the rank of Career Ambassador, the highest in the Foreign Service. Currently he serves as Counselor of the State Department, a position he has held since 2013. Previously Ambassador Shannon has served as our Ambassador to Brazil, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director at the National Security Council, and assignments abroad, apparently having some difficulty keeping a job. [Laughter.]

He received a bachelor of arts from the College of William and Mary and both a master's and doctorate of philosophy from Oxford University.

We thank you for being here. We know you may have some people to introduce, which we hope you will, and we look forward to your testimony.

**STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS A. SHANNON, JR., NOMINATED
TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS**

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Cardin, members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the next Under Secretary for Political Affairs. I very much appreciate the opening remarks, especially the comments regarding TIP, and I am going to be very happy to answer those questions as we advance in this hearing.

As you can imagine, I am very honored by this nomination. I am also humbled by the nomination. Its pedigree is distinguished. From its first occupant, Robert Murphy, to such great diplomats as Philip Habib, Walter Stoessel, Larry Eagleburger, Tom Pickering, Bill Burns, and Wendy Sherman, the position of Under Secretary has been defined by the extraordinary quality, ability, and the dedication of its occupants.

Throughout my career, I have sought to serve in challenging and complicated places where the power and influence of our great Republic could be brought to bear in pursuit of our interests and promotion of our values.

As you consider my nomination I can offer you the following.

First, I have dedicated my life to public service. My Foreign Service career began in 1984 and it has spanned five administrations, two Democratic and three Republican.

Second, I understand the efficacy of American power and purpose. I have worked in countries and regions in transition and transformation. From Latin America to Africa, I have seen the important and positive influence the United States can bring in help-

ing countries move from authoritarian to democratic governments, from closed to open economies, from autarkic or import substitution models of development to development based on regional integration, and from isolation to globalization. In this process, I have seen and understood the attraction we hold for many and the unique role we play in shaping world events and order.

Third, I believe that diplomacy is an act of advocacy. Our great diplomats from John Jay to John Kerry have had a deep understanding of power politics and its global dimensions. They have used this understanding to protect and advance American interests. However, the vision of order and purpose they brought to American diplomacy was infused with values that reflect our democratic ideals and our conception of individual liberty.

Fourth, I know how to get things done and what needs to be done. As noted, my professional experience has spanned assignments in the White House, the State Department, international organizations, and embassies. And as the chairman noted, I probably do have a problem keeping a job. I am familiar with the machinery of our foreign policy and diplomacy and have experience at every level.

Finally, I understand the importance of consultation with the Congress. I entered the Foreign Service during the Central American wars. This was a time of sharp partisan and institutional divide on our policy in the region. This divide limited our ability to successfully implement our policy. It was only when broad consensus was formed around an agenda based on democracy, human rights, and economic development that we were able to form a bipartisan approach to Central America. This experience shaped how the legislative and executive branches faced foreign policy challenges in Colombia, and the broad bipartisan support enjoyed by Plan Colombia and its successful implementation led to further bipartisan cooperation on hemispheric trade policy, reconstruction and development in Haiti, and the Merida Initiative in Mexico. These experiences taught me that engagement with Congress is an essential part of our foreign policymaking process and its only long-term guarantee of success.

As noted, if confirmed, I will consult with the Congress. I will consult with this committee. I will consult with its staff.

As I reflect on my experience in American diplomacy, I am struck by the tremendous changes I have seen in three decades. But as dramatic as these changes have been, they will not compare to what awaits us. The factors that are driving change, political, economic, social, and technological, are accelerating due to globalization. This, in turn, will increase the velocity of change and challenge our ability to understand and respond to events in the world.

During the past 2 years as Counselor of the Department, I have worked on a variety of issues that have been emblematic of the kinds of changes we face.

First, I worked with our partners in Africa to fight jihadist ideology that has spread from the Middle East into Somalia, Nigeria, and Mali along an historic fault line of conflict that divides northern Africa and the Sahel.

Second, I have worked with our Special Envoy to South Africa on a long, complicated, and ongoing effort to bring peace to South Sudan.

Third, I worked in Southeast Asia on the Lower Mekong Initiative, a sustainable development effort designed to improve coordination and cooperation among the countries of the Lower Mekong River Basin to ensure the long-term viability of the river as a source of food, energy, and water.

Fourth, I worked on maritime security, counterpiracy, and trade issues within the Indo-Pacific region through the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

Finally, I worked to develop a response to the crisis of unaccompanied Central American child migrants who appeared in large numbers across our southwest border in the summer of 2014. The result was the Alliance for Prosperity, a plan and program designed by Guatemala and Honduras and El Salvador, with the help of the Inter-American Development Bank, to address the root causes of migration in the communities of origin of these children.

If confirmed, it will be my assignment to ensure that the Department of State, under the direction and guidance of the President and the Secretary of State, can meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that confront us. It would be my job to ensure that our bureaus and missions and the remarkable individuals who serve there have the policy and programmatic guidance to be successful and the high-level access, assistance, and support to shape and implement our foreign policy. This is a responsibility that I take seriously and again acknowledge the important role of the Congress.

Let me close by thanking the President and Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me. Let me thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Cardin, and the Senators present for this opportunity to appear before you.

Finally, let me thank my family. Today I have present with me my mother, Barbara Shannon. Along with my father, she instilled in me the values that led to my public service. I have with me also my brothers, Paul and Terry, both special agents of the FBI and both veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts.

I would also like to recognize my wife, Gisela, and our sons, Thomas and John. Unfortunately, they are not here today. I would not be here today without them. As our colleagues in the Foreign Service know well, our service to country is a family affair, and the joys and dangers of that service abide in our families.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Shannon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR THOMAS A. SHANNON, JR.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Cardin, and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the next Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

I am honored by this nomination. If confirmed, I would be the 22nd Under Secretary since this position was created in 1959. I would be the 15th Foreign Service officer to hold this position. For someone such as myself, who has had the honor and privilege of serving the American people and its elected leaders for 31 years as an FSO, there could be few higher honors.

I am also humbled by this nomination. Its pedigree is distinguished. From its first occupant, Robert Murphy, to such great diplomats as Philip Habib, Walter Stoessel,

Larry Eagleburger, Tom Pickering, Bill Burns, and Wendy Sherman, the position of Under Secretary has been defined by the extraordinary quality, ability, and dedication of its occupants.

These sentiments, however, are matched by a quickening of the blood as I contemplate the challenges and opportunities facing our foreign policy as the United States navigates through an increasingly complex and dangerous world.

Throughout my career, I have sought to serve in challenging and complicated places where the power and influence of our great Republic could be brought to bear in pursuit of our interests and the promotion of our values. Today that place is the entire globe. Not since the end of the First World War and the collapse of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires has the world seen such effervescence. While many of the dangers and challenges of the world have been thrown into sharp relief, I believe they are outnumbered by the opportunities that lie before us. I hope to be able to pursue these opportunities.

As you consider my nomination, I can offer you the following:

First, I have dedicated my life to public service. My Foreign Service career began in 1984 and has spanned five administrations, two Democratic and three Republican. Everything important that has happened to me as an adult has happened within the Foreign Service. I began my professional life in the Foreign Service, I married in the Foreign Service, my wife and I brought forth and raised two sons in the Foreign Service, and I have matured and come of age in the Foreign Service. In other words, my life and my public service are so entwined that they define each other. My desire is to continue to serve.

Second, I understand the efficacy of American power and purpose. I have worked in countries and regions in transition and transformation. From Latin America to Africa, I have seen the important and positive influence of the United States in helping countries move from authoritarian to democratic governments, from closed to open economies, from autarkic or import substitution models of development to development based on regional integration, and from isolation to globalization. In the process, I have seen and understood the attraction we hold for many, and the unique role we play in shaping world order and events.

Third, I believe that diplomacy is an act of advocacy. Our great diplomats, from John Jay to John Kerry, have had a deep understanding of power politics and its global dimensions. They have used this understanding to protect and advance American interests. However, the vision of order and purpose they brought to American diplomacy was infused with values that reflect our democratic ideals and our conception of individual liberty. In this regard, our diplomacy has always had a human face and purpose. We are not a status quo power, but instead a nation comfortable with change and determined to advocate for the values that define us.

Fourth, I know how to get things done and what needs to be done. My professional experience has spanned assignments at the White House, the State Department, international organizations, and Embassies. I am familiar with the machinery of our foreign policy and diplomacy, and I have experience at every level. Most immediately, this means I can assume quickly the policy management role the Under Secretary plays within the State Department, and I can move with equal dispatch into the interagency process that determines our foreign policy. It also means that I know how to link the work of our embassies and regional bureaus to the work of our functional bureaus, ensuring comprehensive policy development and execution.

Finally, I understand the importance of consultation with the Congress. I entered the Foreign Service during the Central American wars. This was a time of sharp partisan and institutional divide on our policy in that region. This divide limited our ability to successfully implement our policy. It was only when broad consensus was formed around an agenda based on democracy, human rights, and economic development that we were able to form a bipartisan approach to Central America. This experience shaped how both the executive and legislative branches faced foreign policy challenges in Colombia. The broad bipartisan support enjoyed by Plan Colombia, and its successful implementation, led to further bipartisan cooperation on hemispheric trade policy, reconstruction and development in Haiti, and the Merida Initiative in Mexico. These experiences taught me that engagement with Congress is an essential part of our foreign policymaking process, and its only long-term guarantee of success.

As I reflect on my experience in American diplomacy, I am struck by the tremendous changes I have seen in three decades. When I entered the Foreign Service in 1984, our major adversary was the Soviet Union and the cold war was in full swing. Over time, I watched the collapse of the Soviet Union and its East European client states, the decline of communism as a viable economic and political ideology, the emergence of the United States as the world's sole super power, the democratization

of the Western Hemisphere, the fraying of the new world order with the emergence of regional warfare in the Balkans, the rise of global terrorism, the attacks of September 11, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and now the emergence of ISIL and the upheaval it has caused in Syria and Iraq.

As dramatic as these changes have been, however, they will not compare to what awaits us deeper in this century. The factors that are driving change—political, economic, social, and technological—are accelerating due to globalization. This, in turn, will increase the velocity of change and challenge our ability to understand and respond to events in the world.

During the past 2 years, as Counselor of the Department, I have worked at Secretary Kerry's direction on issues that are emblematic of these changes. Some of these were:

First, I worked with our partners in Africa to help fight the jihadist ideology that had spread from the Middle East into Somalia, Nigeria, and Mali along an historic line of conflict that divides northern Africa and the Sahel. Working with the United Nations, the African Union, subregional organizations, and our bilateral partners, we fashioned an approach that combined diplomacy, security, and economic development to enhance the ability of states and civil societies to protect themselves from the violence of such groups as al-Shabab and Boko Haram.

Second, I worked with our Special Envoy to South Sudan on the long, complicated, and ongoing effort to bring peace to South Sudan. I participated in the talks sponsored by the Intergovernmental Development Authority (IGAD) that led to cessation of hostilities agreements and the recent peace accord. Our efforts have been central to addressing the humanitarian consequences of the fighting in South Sudan, and to shaping a diplomatic approach that attempts to harness South Sudan's neighbors, regional organizations, the donor community, and the United Nations to address the complex array of ethnic, geographic, personal, and political rivalries that shattered South Sudan in December 2013.

Third, I worked in Southeast Asia on the Lower Mekong Initiative, a sustainable development effort designed to improve coordination and cooperation among the countries of the Lower Mekong River Basin to ensure the long-term viability of the river as a source of food, energy, and water. This involved building technical capacity among our partners, bringing to bear global resources from other major river basins—such as the Mississippi and the Danube, developing civil society ability to articulate community views within the authoritarian political systems that still exist in many of these countries, and deepening engagement and confidence in the United States.

Fourth, I worked on maritime security, counterpiracy, and trade issues within the Indo-Pacific region through the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Working with Australia, the European Union, and India we enhanced the IORA's profile as an organization and diplomatic space to address issues that profoundly affect global food and energy security, freedom of navigation, commerce, migration, and the well-being of one of the fastest growing regions of the world.

Finally, I worked to develop a response to the crisis of unaccompanied Central American child migrants who appeared in large numbers across our southwest border in the summer of 2014. The result was the Alliance for Prosperity, a plan and program designed by Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador (with the help of the Inter-American Development Bank) to address the root causes of migration in the communities of origin of these children. Combined with law enforcement, anti-smuggling, public messaging, and multilateral cooperation efforts, we were able to significantly reduce the migration of unaccompanied children while we built our larger strategy. Our success in implementing this strategy will have a long-term impact on Central America, Mexico, and the United States, with important consequences and lessons for other parts of the world facing similar migration crises.

If confirmed, it will be my assignment to ensure that the Department of State, under the direction and guidance of the President and the Secretary of State, can meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that confront us. As Under Secretary, I would sit atop the engine room of the Department of State: the six geographic bureaus and the Bureau of International Organizations that oversee our 275 diplomatic missions, the nearly 10,000 Foreign Service and Civil Service employees assigned to these missions, and the 47,000 Locally Employed Staff at these missions.

It would be my job to ensure that our bureaus and missions, and the remarkable individuals who serve there, have the policy and programmatic guidance to be successful, and the high level access, assistance, and support to shape and implement our foreign policy. This responsibility is institutional. While we must be prepared to meet the challenges presented to us each and every day, we also need to understand the long-term needs of the Foreign Service and the Department of State. Cur-

rently, the Department of State is experiencing a quiet but profound generational change. Nearly 60 percent of our Foreign Service officers and our Civil Service have served 10 years or less. These 10 years have been shaped by our war fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many of our officers have served in combat theaters. Not since the Vietnam war have we had so many officers shaped by conflict. The lessons these officers have learned will be carried with them throughout their careers. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that they have the mentors, training, and assistance they need to grasp the nature of the challenges and opportunities they will face in the future, and to advance successfully the interests and values of the United States.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson, surveying the international landscape in the aftermath of World War II, said the task that lay before the United States was as big as Genesis: "to create a world out of chaos." Today, our task is the reverse: to prevent the world from collapsing into chaos. This task, like that facing Acheson, requires us not to be distracted from "the effort to affect the world around us." It also requires us to remember that our diplomacy is about responding to the great changes that modernity has unleashed in the world and finding a means to shape and affect those changes in ways that benefit our interests and are consonant with our values.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much. We typically are much nicer on people coming before us when their kids are here, but when your mother is here, it will probably be the same. [Laughter.]

Obviously, just for the record, we talked in our office about the TIP Report. We were very dissatisfied. Many of us are very dissatisfied with the way it was handled this last year. And I, just for the record, wonder if you would share with us how you plan to handle it differently this year.

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you very much.

I had the opportunity to talk about the TIP Report with a whole range of members of this committee, and I was struck by the consensus of concern about the TIP Report. And this worries me deeply.

As you noted, the TIP Report is a gold standard report, and it is one in which the credibility that the report holds, both in the Congress and publicly, is an essential part of that gold standard. And so it will be my intention, working with my colleagues in the State Department who manage this process both on the functional bureau side in J/TIP, on the regional bureau side, and especially in our embassies, that we have as clear and transparent a process as possible and one that can address the concerns expressed.

Trafficking in persons is an important issue for me. It is an issue that I have dealt with at different moments in my career, especially as a chief of mission. The information that our Office on Trafficking in Persons collects regarding the actions of states, governments, and municipalities regarding trafficking comes from our embassies in many instances. And so how our embassies respond and how they engage with the Office of Trafficking in Persons is an important part of this process. And I have seen this work and I know it can work. And so I can assure you, sir, and I can assure members of this committee that I will do everything in my power to make sure that we restore the credibility in your eyes of this report and that we can address the concerns you have expressed.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we appreciate that. I will say in some cases, I would imagine, that ambassadors want to see good things happen in the countries that they are involved in. I know the ambassadors play a role. In some cases it can be an advocating role

for their country. I hope that you will figure out a way to ensure that that does not cause things to be out of balance.

Ambassador SHANNON. No. We will do that, sir, and I will do that. But I can assure you that the American Foreign Service, as I noted in my remarks, understands our diplomacy as advocacy, and we understand the importance of trafficking in persons to you and this committee, broadly to the Congress, but also to the President. And so I will do everything in my power to make sure that this advocacy is powerful.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, my last comment. You know, certainly I respect tremendously those people who offer themselves for foreign service. I just understand the dynamics that can sometimes take place, human nature dynamics that can happen on the ground.

You have watched and been a part of and worked with so many people who have been in this position. You gave a litany of those who have come before you, many of whom are highly respected. You have watched this and you have seen how people have operated. What is it that you think you might uniquely do that is different from those who have come before you?

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you for that question. It is a very good one.

To begin with, there is a bureaucratic and policy management process to this job that infuses the work of all Under Secretaries. As you noted, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs sits atop a variety of bureaus, the six geographic bureaus and the bureau that manages international organizations, in an effort to manage and focus policy so that it can be as successful as possible.

But I am one of the first nominees really in a long time, really since Tom Pickering, who comes with strong experience in Latin America and Africa, the larger developing world, and really a world of transition and transformation. And although my purview will now be the globe—and I have already over the last 2 years done a variety of work in the Middle East, more deeply in Africa, in Southeast Asia, and in the Indo-Pacific region, I do think that I understand the impact and the importance of helping countries manage transition and transformation, and I understand how the United States has done it in a variety of environments but especially in Africa and Latin America.

I began my career in Central America during a transition from an authoritarian government, a military government to democratic government. I have worked in a variety of countries that were making a similar transition, such as in Brazil, and in South Africa from 1992 to 1996. I was part of a U.S. team that helped manage and promote a transition from an apartheid government to the government of Nelson Mandela.

And so I think I bring an understanding of transition and transformation. I think I bring an understanding of post-conflict societies, and I think I can inject and add a dimension to our foreign policy that could be very important.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much.

And with that, I will turn to Ranking Member Cardin.

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

Again, Mr. Ambassador, thank you for your service, and we very much appreciate the members of your family that are here. We do recognize this is a family commitment, and we thank them also.

You mentioned your experiences with Congress in the Central America conflict, that there was a deep division in Congress, but where we spoke in unity, the United States was stronger in carrying out its mission. There has been a division in Congress over the support for the Iran agreement, but there has been no division in Congress about the importance of the congressional review and the ongoing commitment that Congress has in the implementation of the Iran agreement.

The Iran Review Act that was passed in a very bipartisan vote, almost an unanimous vote in the United States Congress spells out certain continuing commitments by the administration to keep Congress informed. We had a conversation yesterday about Iran's compliance with the agreement. There has already been a violation of the U.N. resolution dealing with ballistic missiles. And how the United States responds to that is, to many of us, is an indication of whether we will demand zero tolerance for violations and strict compliance.

So we need to be kept informed in a very open way as to how the compliance issues are being addressed. They may not elevate to the type of violation that would warrant the United States taking actions to reimpose full sanctions, but they may be of interest as to how we can make sure that there is full compliance with the agreement.

We also have the concerns of recognizing that Iran is not going to change its nefarious activities, particularly as it relates to support of terrorism and its human rights issues. So being able to trace the funds that Iran will be receiving through sanction relief, and how they utilize those funds is going to be of great interest to the members of this committee and to the Members of Congress.

So I just would like to get your assurances about keeping us fully engaged. We know what the law requires, but what I am asking for is, as you pointed out in your relationships with Congress in the past, that we are going to have a very open relationship and full information so that we can carry out our critical responsibilities of oversight.

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you very much, Senator. Again, I appreciate the question and I especially appreciate its intent and purpose.

The implementation of the JCPOA is going to be what makes it a good agreement or a bad agreement. And we are intent on ensuring that implementation is to the letter of the law and the spirit of the law. And in that regard, we intend to consult with the Congress along the way and will consult with Congress along the way at different steps in the implementation process.

I think it is worth noting that Secretary Kerry and President Obama have selected Ambassador Steve Mull to manage the implementation process, both the interagency side but also our engagement with the Iranians. He has a group of experts working with him that have deep experience in this, and he has chosen myself as the nominee for Under Secretary to manage, along with Ambassador Mull, our work in the Joint Commission, which will meet

regularly to assess the implementation process. It is worth noting that in choosing us, he has chosen career Foreign Service officers and he has chosen two people who did not participate in the negotiations of the agreement. And therefore, he is bringing fresh eyes and objective eyes to an implementation process. I think this is smart and I think it is important.

But as Ambassador Mull and I carry out this work, we will be consulting with you, the other members of this committee, and your staff, and I can assure you that we recognize and understand the importance of having the executive branch and the legislative branch having clear understandings of what needs to be done in the implementation process.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Perdue.

Senator PERDUE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, it is an honor to have you here today. I appreciate the courtesy of a private meeting with you recently. And I want to publicly for the record applaud your career. I know you have raised your kids abroad. You probably saw your mother much less than you would have liked through your career. I just applaud your career and thank you for being here and for being willing to take on this new responsibility.

I would like to move to the global security crisis that we talked privately about. I see it on three levels. One, we have got a power vacuum out there that has created a rise again of these power rivalries, China and Russia. We saw another power vacuum in Iraq into which ISIS has stepped and created all sorts of problems in Syria, Iraq, and several other countries in the region and in sub-Saharan Africa. And then, of course, now the Iran nuclear deal, as you well said privately and I think just now, that it is all in the implementation.

I would like to focus on Syria. I know we have got talks coming up tomorrow. What are the prospects of those talks? And are you concerned that in your new role—I mean, are you concerned about Iran being a part of the dialogue this early in the conversation and also Russia as far as I can see? I mean, Bashar al-Assad has been propped up by Putin and by Khamenei. Without their help, he would have been gone in my opinion a long time ago, and he would not have had the wherewithal to continually barrel bomb his people and gas his own people. So are you a little concerned about having the arsonist trying to help put the fire out in these talks this week-end?

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you very much, Senator. And again, I am very grateful for your willingness to see me and to talk about these issues.

As Secretary Kerry I think noted in his testimony here, and I know as Assistant Secretary Patterson and General Allen noted, our objectives in Syria remain degrading and defeating ISIL, fostering a negotiated political transition, and helping Syrians lay the foundation for a free and pluralistic future, a future without ISIL and without Bashar al-Assad.

In this regard, Secretary Kerry—

Senator PERDUE. I am sorry. Is it still the administration's position in your understanding in your role as Counselor—is it still our position that Bashar al-Assad has to go? Is that a prerequisite for this?

Ambassador SHANNON. Correct.

Senator PERDUE. Thank you.

Ambassador SHANNON. And Secretary Kerry, in his effort to fashion a global response to events in Syria, as he said, trying to chart a course out of hell, he has determined that there is a moment in time in which it is important to bring together major players and actors to address events inside of Syria. Part of this process builds off of earlier processes, such as the meetings in London and Geneva.

But the insertion of Russia and Iran in a very aggressive way in Syria has also created a different kind of dynamic. The Russian and Iranian presence or support for Assad is nothing new, but the Russian military presence and air strikes is something new. The presence of Iranian troops and special forces is something new and worrisome.

And for this reason, the Secretary thought it was time to bring everybody together and effectively call their bluff, determine whether or not their public commitment to fighting ISIL and terrorism is a meaningful one and the extent to which they are prepared to work broadly with the international community to convince Mr. Assad that during the political transition process he will have to go.

Senator PERDUE. So as you stated earlier, I think you said you have got great experience in post-conflict societies. So is it possible that Iran would support a secular government after Bashar al-Assad prospectively leaves?

Ambassador SHANNON. I do not know the answer to that question, sir, and I think we are only going to determine whether or not that is possible by engaging. Our engagement is not going to affect our intent or our purpose. We are hopeful that we can establish an environment in Syria where we can address the underlying political problems and allow the Syrians to determine their future and to do it in a way in which they are not responding to Iran or to Russia.

Senator PERDUE. I am almost out of time, but I do want to move on to Venezuela because of your vast experience there. I know that you have led conversations there. Talk to us just a minute about our role in ensuring that they have a true and open and free election in the upcoming election.

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you for that question. It is an important one.

As we have engaged with Venezuela, we focused on a variety of issues that are important to us.

First, when we first began our engagement, it was about insisting that Venezuela establish a date for legislative elections. When we first engaged, they had not established such a date, and there was concern about whether or not they would establish such a date.

Secondly, we focused on political prisoners, not just high-profile prisoners like Leopoldo Lopez and Antonio Ledezma and Daniel

Ceballos, but also a group of students and other political prisoners, between 1977 and 1980 depending on who is doing the counting, who were being held by the Government of Venezuela for what we believe to be political purposes. We wanted to make it very clear that we do not agree with that and we thought it important that these people be released and allowed to participate in public life.

And then finally connected to the broader purpose of elections, trying to convince Venezuela that it was in their interest to ensure international electoral observation of the upcoming elections in order to validate the results of the elections and allow all Venezuelans to understand that their votes were freely cast and counted in a valid fashion.

These remain our principal objectives. We do have an electoral date. We were able to accomplish that. The political prisoners for the most part are still in prison. Some have been released, but we continue to advocate for them, and we have helped create a larger environment in Latin America where advocating for these political prisoners is now more common and more direct. We see it in the OAS. We see it in the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, and we see it in a variety of other fora. And we continue to work with our partners around the issue of electoral observation.

Senator PERDUE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Menendez. Or go ahead, Senator Kaine. We have a very courteous committee.

Senator Kaine. New Jersey civility is always appreciated. [Laughter.]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MENENDEZ. Notwithstanding what Governor Christie said last night. [Laughter.]

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Ambassador Shannon.

A couple of points. Your long career has included service in some very dangerous areas. Talk about the evolving security conditions under which our folks have to operate around the globe and your sensitivity to those issues in this new role.

Ambassador SHANNON. Senator, thank you very much. I am a proud member of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and thank you for your service both as Governor and as Senator. We are very lucky to have you.

I live in Crystal City and I take the bus to work, which means I get off on Constitution and 22nd and I walk up 22nd Street and enter the State Department through the C Street entrance. And aside from seeing the array of flags of all the countries with whom we have diplomatic relations, I also see on both walls, on either side, both the right and the left side of our entranceway, the names of all the Foreign Service officers, locally employed staff and family members who have given their lives in the service of the United States of America. So every day it is impressed upon me the danger of our job, but also the honor of serving and the importance of being able to make that kind of commitment. This is really a wall of honor for us, and it is also a wall of inspiration. But at the same time, we do not want to add any more names.

The first name was Walter Palfrey who died. He was lost at sea in 1780, the first American diplomat lost in service. So from 1780 to today, we realize that we operate in a dangerous world.

But as I noted, we are in an especially dangerous and dynamic moment around the globe. And so how we manage security and the kinds of structures we put in place are going to be key to how well we can protect our people and how well we can manage risk. And whether it is through our kind of high-threat post review process, whether it is through the determinations we make on whether or not we keep embassies open, whether it is how we determine expedited or, I mean, authorized departure or ordered departure in missions, these are all processes that have to be fluid. They have to be dynamic. They have to be agile, and they have to reflect the facts on the ground.

But aside from that, I believe we need to do more in terms of training our officers to be their own security officers, in other words, allowing them to understand better the environment they are going to be in and allowing them the training and the tools necessary to protect themselves.

The reality is we are an expeditionary diplomatic service. We have 275 diplomatic missions around the world. We have about 10,000 American diplomats and civil servants posted around the world, and we have over 47,000 locally employed staff and we are responsible for them all.

Senator Kaine. This is something that Senator Perdue and I have worked on a lot, and I hope that we will reach a point soon where we can give a green light to the State Department's long plan to build an enhanced security training facility for embassy personnel.

A point on Iran, to pick up the comments that both the chair and ranking member made. When we were working on the Review Act, the administration's attitude really was that they did not think Congress should have a role in approving an Iran deal, which I thought was odd given the fact that the congressional sanctions were such an integral part of the negotiation.

And I would just say I hope the administration will have a different attitude going forward in terms of Congress' role and oversight in implementation of the deal. The deal puts Congress right in the middle of it because in year 8, Congress is required under this deal to dismantle the congressional sanction statutes or we are in breach of the agreement, just as in year 8, the Iranian Parliament is required to permanently accept the additional protocol requirements or they are in breach of the agreement.

There is not going to be a scenario where Congress will kind of be kept in the dark and uninvolved, and then suddenly in year 8, we will be asked, okay, repeal the sanctions statute. It is hard to get a Mothers Day resolution passed in two Houses of Congress. The notion that you would get 60 votes in the Senate and a majority vote in the House to repeal the sanction statutes in year 8, if there has not been very significant dialogue and trust building and assurances that Congress feels comfortable about—we will be in breach of the agreement if we do not have this really tight kind of communication, dialogue, and accepted level of congressional over-

sight over the implementation. So I hope that will be your philosophy in the position.

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you for that. It will be my philosophy. And the challenge we are going to face as both an executive branch and the legislative branch is that 8 years is a long time, and we will pass through at least one other administration and maybe more. And so trying to find ways to ensure continuity of purpose and continuity of dialogue is going to be a central part of what we are going to do.

Senator KAINE. One last. Just congratulations. It is premature but it is congratulations on the effort. The State Department's commitment to really aggressive diplomacy—we are aware of the Iran deal. We are aware of taking a new tack with Cuba. But also, the United States has played a really important role in accompanying the Government of Colombia in the negotiations with the FARC. And yesterday, I know there was an announcement by President Santos of, hey, we would hope to get to an internationally monitored ceasefire on New Year's Day.

This is the last war that is going on in the Americas. I mean, there are plenty of problems in the Americas, but the notion of two continents without war, I am not sure that there has been a time in recorded history where the Americas have been without war. And we are close to that. And the United States has played a really important role in accompanying Colombia and being an advocate and an ally in those negotiations. And I just give credit to the State Department for this kind of focus on important multilateral diplomacy and appreciate your efforts there.

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you for raising Colombia. And I want to thank the Congress and this committee in particular for the tremendous work that has been done over the years, along with the House and the Members of the House who have dedicated themselves to Colombia. It has really been a stellar group of people, and they have been a pleasure to work with and I have an opportunity to do it in so many different incarnations from the Director of the Office of Andean Affairs to Deputy Assistant Secretary. I worked on the Andes from my posting at the NSC and then as Assistant Secretary, and also as Counselor I have been involved in this.

And you are right. If the Colombians are able to negotiate this deal, it will be the first time not only in living memory, but probably since the formation of most of the South American republics in the early 19th century that this hemisphere has been at peace, at least in terms of state-on-state wars and internal conflicts.

But the challenge we are going to face—and in this we are going to be engaging with you, sir, and Mr. Chairman, and Senator Cardin, with this committee—is about how to ensure that having been Colombia's best partner in war, we are going to be Colombia's best partner in peace because Colombia is going to be—is a great nation, but it is going to be a greater nation. And with Brazil, it will be one of the defining powers of South America as an Andean power, as a Caribbean power, as an Amazonian power, and as a Pacific power, and as a country that will, if it is successful in the peace process, have consolidated its society and been able to extend the reach of the state into the plains of Colombia. It will be a major

producer of oil and gas. It will be a major producer of minerals. It will be a major agricultural power. But it also has a very dynamic and entrepreneurial people who will be very, very important players throughout the hemisphere. So how we shape that, how we engage with them going forward is going to have a big impact on how successful we are in the hemisphere.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, congratulations on your nomination. And considering your distinguished career, I think having your mom and dad and here and two FBI agents is over the top—

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. In terms of guaranteeing your nomination.

On a serious note, we had a good conversation. And I listened to some of your responses today, and I just want to quickly go over some ground because I think it is incredibly important.

So would you agree with me that consultation with this committee and the Senate is an important factor in us having a united front on U.S. foreign policy?

Ambassador SHANNON. Yes, it is.

Senator MENENDEZ. Because what I have experienced, both as the former chairman of this committee and as a member, is that we get a lot of notification, but not a lot of consultation. And there is a difference. We may not agree at the result of consulting, but at least you will understand some thoughts of those of us who represent the Nation. And maybe there will be ways to achieve a common goal but to do it in a different way. And so what I have experienced is a lot of notification but not a lot of consultation. So I am glad to hear that you are committed to consultation.

Secondly, do you agree with me that the TIP Report needs to be the gold standard?

Ambassador SHANNON. Yes, I do.

Senator MENENDEZ. I think I could probably not find anybody on this committee who believes that the last report did not meet that standard in the questions of Malaysia and Cuba and some other places. The justifications belie the facts, and the reality is that you cannot say that certain things in a reporting period that happened to be good for that country will be included even though they are beyond the reporting period, and certain things that are bad that are also beyond the reporting period do not get included. So either we include everything beyond the reporting period, good and bad, or we stick to the reporting period, but you cannot go beyond the reporting period for what is good but not beyond the reporting period for what is bad.

And I am referring particularly to Malaysia and the mass graves that we found with the Rohingya. So that was not considered, what Malaysia was doing in that context, but some passage of a law that was not even yet in force was considered.

So we need to make that the gold standard, and I hope that we can—understanding the pressures within the Department from regional bureaus and whatnot, but it just does not work the way it

worked the last time and it undermines our credibility in trafficking in persons.

Thirdly, would you agree with me that we must respond to violations by Iran of whether it is its nuclear agreement or Security Council resolutions with significant responses, or else we will be down a slippery slope in terms of what they think they can get away with?

Ambassador SHANNON. Yes, I do.

Senator MENENDEZ. So I say that because regardless—and there are members of this committee that have voted both ways. I oppose the agreement. I think it is aspirational. I hope it works now that that is the law. But by the same token, I do not think any of it can work if Iran thinks it can get away with violating, as it largely has done for the past decade and a half in violating international—United Nations Security Council resolutions, international law, and still largely developed a nuclear program.

If we are going to get anything out of this agreement, it has to be enforced. And with the ballistic missile test that they had, I do not think you are going to end up with a U.N. resolution that is going to sanction them because Russia will probably negate it with its veto. So we have to be thinking about how we are going to respond to that otherwise we are headed down a slippery slope. And I know this will not be the mainstay of your portfolio, but the reality is you are going to have as the third-highest ranking person at the State Department some say in this, and I hope that you will hold the view that you have publicly described here saying it is important within the deliberations of the Department.

Fourth, Venezuela. You and I had a long discussion of this. And I have to be honest with you. I appreciate what you were trying to do when you met with Diosdado Cabello, who is supposedly by some of our agencies described as someone who is involved in narco-trafficking. I also realize he has an elected position inside of Venezuela. But that is a question for the future: as a policy how far do we go with individuals who, while they may hold a position, are involved in this context of narco-trafficking?

But in Venezuela, you have a process in which we do not have yet international observers. You have a sham trial where a prosecutor ultimately flees—one of the prosecutor flees the country and says that he was under pressure to ultimately pursue the case in the manner in which he did. Lopez is convicted in a sham trial, I think 13 years in jail. And you have a series of other human rights activists and political dissidents jailed. And you have the Maduro regime saying publicly in essence, well, we are going to win the elections, which basically means we are going to win it one way or the other. The polls do not indicate that we will at the ballot box, but we are going to win it.

So my concern is—and the thing I think you do bring to this job that others do not have is your combination of Latin America and Africa experience.

But my concern is that we are not willing to challenge regimes, whether it be in Venezuela or in Cuba where we have ceded everything to the regime and have seen nothing—nothing—in terms of human rights and democracy issues.

So talk to me about challenging a regime when the diplomacy has not achieved what we want. You know, we passed this law that came out of this committee on Venezuela and sanctions. The President invoked some it. There is still a lot more that could be invoked, but when is the demarcation in which we say, okay, our diplomacy has not worked at this point. How do we back it up with some strength?

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you very much, Senator. And let me thank you for your tremendous commitment to Latin America and also to the State Department and diversity within the State Department. It has been an important motivator for us, an important driver of how we shape the diplomats of the future.

In regard to the TIP Report, let me reiterate that I am committed to addressing the concerns of this committee and members of the committee have expressed their concerns to me. As I noted previously, it is very worrisome for me that a report that should be a gold standard is seen as not being that. And so I will do everything I can to address those concerns and ensure that we are examining countries under the rubric of the report with all the rigor that is required by law.

And in regard to Iran violations, sir, I can guarantee you that we will be responding to them. We recognize, as important as the JCPOA is, it has a set of sanctions tied to it that are nuclear-related, but there are sanctions related to ballistic missiles, to human rights, and to terrorism. And we will continue to pursue those sanctions and pursue violations whenever we see them. We understand that our relationship with Iran is a complicated one, but again, our success in the JCPOA and its implementation will only happen if we show a clear willingness to pursue violations elsewhere under other sanctions regimes.

And in regard to Venezuela, we did have a good conversation yesterday, and I appreciated the conversation. I appreciated your point of view. I understand it and I appreciate the concerns that others have expressed.

As we look at what is next in Venezuela, so much of our own relationship with Venezuela will depend on what happens around the legislative elections and what happens around the issue of political prisoners. When I met with Diosdado Caballo, as I noted to you earlier, it was with the purpose, first of all, of winning from them an electoral date for legislative assembly elections, which we thought was important and essential, first of all, to create a political process that would allow the Venezuelan people to express themselves but also to begin to create a larger environment for dialogue inside of Venezuela.

Its secondary purpose was to save the life of Leopoldo Lopez, who at the time was in the fourth week of a hunger strike, and we were looking for an action by the Venezuelan Government that would convince Lopez to come off his strike. We believe that Lopez, along with the other political prisoners being held, are an essential part of a broader solution to the kinds of internal challenges that Venezuela faces today, and we will continue to advocate for his release, as we have done over time.

It should be noted that as we have engaged with Venezuela, we have never backed off our criticism of Venezuela regarding some of

its political behavior and activity. And we have expressed our concern about the politicization of the judiciary and the continued holding of political prisoners. And we will continue to do so.

As we look toward the elections, the ability of the elections to be perceived as free elections and the vote count as valid is going to be a very important part of how we manage the next step in the relationship. And in that regard, the legislation that you worked on and that other members of this committee and Senate worked on will be an important tool for us, and we will use it if necessary.

Senator MENENDEZ. I hope you use the tool.

I look forward to supporting your confirmation before the committee and the Senate.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Ambassador, for your service. Thank you to your family for sustaining and supporting Ambassador Shannon's service over so many years in many challenging environments. I concur with my colleague from New Jersey that your long service in Latin America and in Africa brings a particular and needed strength. Your service as a member of the career Foreign Service also brings an important and vital perspective.

So let me just broadly reference three questions, and then you take as much time as you wish and allocate your time accordingly.

I would be interested in hearing on behalf of the 10,000 Foreign Service and Civil Service employees of the Department of State what you think are the most important, most needed steps to continue to attract and retain and motivate the best and brightest to serve in these difficult and demanding and important posts around the world.

I am also interested—you succeed Wendy Sherman. Hopefully you will be confirmed. I will support your confirmation. She placed a real focus on peacekeeping. Peacekeeping is difficult business. It is expensive. It is full of complications. There is an African standby force that is in the early stages of being perhaps ready to actually serve on the continent. They have been doing some recent exercises in South Africa, and I would be interested in how you see the future of peacekeeping and how we make it sustainable from a cost perspective.

And then last, I am concerned about how we support economic growth in Africa while also supporting democracy and governance. There has been a hotly contested election in Tanzania. The results were just announced in the last hour. They were invalidated in Zanzibar earlier today. We have a number of critical other elections this year. How do we balance those two, promoting economic growth and development, while still advocating for our values over the values of some of our competitors in Africa?

Ambassador SHANNON. Well, thank you very much, Senator. I appreciate the questions. And let me thank you for the trip you made to the State Department to meet with some of our mid-level officers. It was a great experience for them. But we really appreciated the respect you showed us and we look forward to inviting you back. So thank you for that.

You know, in regard to your first question, how to attract and keep the best people, that is something we struggle with every day.

Luckily we have a really interesting portfolio, and so we tend to attract people who are smart, motivated, and expeditionary in mindset. They want to go places and they want to do things. And so that is important to us.

But the challenges we face are real. The challenges that dual-career families face in the Foreign Service, the challenges that families with children with special needs face, and then the broader security environment that we spoke about earlier also affects how people understand the Foreign Service and the degree to which they enter the Foreign Service or stay as officers.

We are really at this point in time going through a generational change in the Foreign Service. Sixty percent of the Foreign Service—nearly 60 percent—it is about 57-something percent of the Foreign Service has served for 10 years or less. And this is quite remarkable. It means that we have a whole cadre of younger officers who are going to be our next generation of leaders who have served in the Foreign Service during a period of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan and a larger global struggle against terrorism. And in many instances, some of these classes have gone in large numbers to Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other areas first where they are unaccompanied postings but secondly where the challenges they face are quite significant. And how we help these officers understand the larger world, how we mentor them, how we train them, how we enhance their language capability is going to be a big part of our success in the future.

And so one of the assignments I am going to take on myself is really a mentoring assignment, and it is intent on engaging with our geographic bureaus, with the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, with the Foreign Service Institute, and with the Secretary to ensure that he can leave behind a legacy of enhanced language training, enhanced regional studies, and an ability to do more in the field to help officers become familiar with the areas they are working on and areas they want to continue to work on.

But let me share one quick anecdote with you. As I go around and talk to younger officers, especially in the Middle East, one of their biggest concerns is security but not whether they are going to be okay. Their concern is are they going to be able to do their job. And this is what we talked about earlier. They want the tools to be able to do their job, and that means a security environment that protects them but also their ability to understand and interpret the environment they are in. And in this regard, we have got a lot of work to do because there are some places that are just deadly for us, and we just either cannot go there or we have to go there under very careful conditions.

But again, this is something I am really focused on because this is going to have a big impact on some of our best and brightest as to whether they stay. If they think their career is going to be spent in a container or behind an embassy wall and if they can only go out in force and with interpreters, they are not going to stay. So we have to find a way to deal with this.

And then finally, Africa is a special interest of mine. I have served in Washington on African affairs but also in the field on African affairs, and I have been able to travel to Africa a lot.

The economic growth side is really important for this continent. This is the continent of the 21st century, and President Obama, through his Africa Leaders Summit, highlighted the importance of commercial engagement and presented a different vision of Africa to the American people, one of opportunity and growth. And as we look into the future, we need to understand that the Chinese have figured this out and the Chinese are present in Africa in a big way. And so we have to be present in a big way. And that means looking for ways to push American businesses, American investment and create the connectivity around economic growth that is necessary for Africa to continue to grow at the rate that it is growing. I think it is the fastest growing continent in the world in terms of commerce and investment.

But that said, the governance issues are really striking in different parts of Africa. And the issues we are facing, whether it be in Tanzania, whether it be in the DRC, whether it be in Burundi, whether it be in Rwanda or beyond, how leaders understand their role as elected leaders, how they understand their ability to perpetuate themselves in power, and the degree to which they use state structures to further themselves in power and do not address the transparency, accountability, and anticorruption issues that are really going to be the basis for long-term economic growth and development is going to be key. And it has to be a central part of our engagement in Africa. And I believe it is.

And I think with our Assistant Secretary, Linda Thomas Greenfield, we have been really dynamic, really pushing hard on these issues, not always successfully because of the nature of some of the countries that we have been working in, but we have not given up. And I can assure you that governance is going to be a big part of how we engage in Africa because absent the right kind of governance economic growth is not going to have the social impact it needs to have.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

As you know, there will be some followup questions, and we will keep the record open until Monday for both of the nominees.

But at this point, again, thank you for your willingness to serve, for having your family here, for their service to our country, and we look forward to your confirmation.

Ambassador SHANNON. Thank you very much. I am very grateful.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir.

Next we will consider the nomination of Laura Holgate, nominee to be U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the United Nations and U.S. Representative to the International Atomic Energy, commonly called the IAEA.

This role requires an agile ambassador capable of representing U.S. positions with a diverse array of U.N. organizations, from the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime to the U.N. Division of Management, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization, of which we are not a party, the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the U.N. Commission on International Trade Law, among others.

Perhaps the most visible to this committee given the ongoing engagement on the JCPOA with Iran will be the nominee's representation of the United States at the International Atomic Energy

Agency. I recognize that you, Ms. Holgate, have dedicated your career, as we have discussed privately, to promoting nuclear security and establishing an environment that staunches the spread of nuclear materials.

But the challenges of the position may be daunting. You will be called upon to hold a strong line in the face of pressure from our partners who, in order to open economic relations with Iran, may seek to close the door on old allegations and turn a blind eye to previous military dimensions of the program that may provide indicators necessary for the IAEA to monitor the program going forward.

You may be called upon to defend key U.S. positions in the face of opposition from the nonaligned movement. You may have to stand alone to adequately defend U.S. national security interests.

I hope you will explain how you intend to fulfill these obligations in this role and the expectations you have for your ability to successfully represent the United States.

While we have the opportunity, I would also like for you to discuss our Government's current efforts to counter nuclear smuggling and how you may use this position, if confirmed, to further ensure the security of nuclear material globally.

I appreciate your attendance before the committee today and look forward to growing our relationship, should you be confirmed.

With that, I would like to recognize our distinguished ranking member, Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Well, let me also welcome Laura Holgate. Thank you very much for your long-standing public service. As was pointed out with the previous witness, this is a family commitment. We thank you and your family for your willingness to serve our country in this critically important position.

You bring a host of qualifications to this nomination, a senior position at the Department of Energy and Department of Defense, a career that prevents states and terrorists from acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction. You are currently the Senior Director of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism and Threat Reduction at the National Security Council. You come well prepared for the challenges in Vienna. And I say that because, yes, there are the direct responsibilities that you have in the organizations in Vienna under the United Nations and the IAEA and others, but also working with two other very important missions that we have. The host mission for Austria, as well as the OSCE mission that you and I had a chance to talk about, all are housed in Vienna. So you are part of a diplomatic team that we have in a critically important place where major decisions are being made.

Obviously, the focus today is very much on the responsibilities and the implementation of the Iran agreement by the IAEA. And as we talked privately, what I will repeat now and as I also pointed out to Ambassador Shannon, your openness with us is critically important, and I appreciate the commitments that you have made in that regard.

Mr. Chairman, I am also pleased to note that Sam Nunn, a former member of this body, who worked closely with Laura Holgate during the 8 years she spent at the Nuclear Threat Initiative, has written a letter on her behalf touting Mrs. Holgate. And

I quote, "super knowledge, diplomatic skills, and strong passion for reducing global dangers." And I would request that that letter be made part of our record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information was not available at the print deadline.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

We will now turn to the nominee. Our second nominee, as we have mentioned, is Laura Holgate who has been nominated to serve as Ambassador and U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Currently Ms. Holgate has advised the President for over 6 years in the position of Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction, Terrorism, and Threat Reduction at the National Security Council.

She received her bachelor of arts from Princeton University and a master's in science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

We welcome you. If you could summarize your thoughts in about 5 minutes, we will look forward to questions. And again, congratulations on your nomination.

STATEMENT OF LAURA S.H. HOLGATE, NOMINATED TO BE THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AND TO BE THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE U.N.

Ms. HOLGATE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the Vienna offices of the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and other international organizations in Vienna. I am grateful to President Obama and to Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me.

This is a critical moment for the United States interests in the IAEA and the other U.N. offices in Vienna. Full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, successful transition of the Nuclear Security Summit's work to secure and reduce global stockpiles of nuclear materials to the relevant, enduring international institutions, safe and secure expansion of nuclear energy and other peaceful nuclear technologies, and innovative peaceful applications of space science demand active, focused leadership and engagement by the United States to promote our national interests and to advance our contributions towards shared global priorities.

My experience inside and outside the U.S. Government has prepared me to play this vital role in Vienna. I have worked on reducing nuclear, biological, and chemical threats since 1989. I have served a combined 14 years in the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and at the National Security Council where I led programs and developed policies to keep nuclear materials out of terrorist hands, to destroy chemical weapons in Russia, Libya, and Syria, and to prevent bioterrorism. For 8 years, I headed the nongovernment Nuclear Threat Initiative's programs in the former

Soviet Union and pioneered projects such as the IAEA's low enriched uranium fuel bank. Most relevant to the position for which I am being considered, I have led the preparation of four nuclear security summits, working closely with counterparts from 52 diverse countries and four international organizations, including the United Nations and the IAEA. Each of these positions has contributed to my ability to represent the United States and the President with authority and respect.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce to you and the committee three very special people who have joined me here today. My husband, Rick Holgate, has for 27 years steadfastly supported my career even as he has built his own impressive accomplishments in Government service and in the private sector. I am proud and grateful for his encouragement and partnership as we consider this new opportunity to serve.

My parents, Susan and Bert Hayes, are here from Richmond as well. My father, as a TWA pilot, opened my eyes, ears, and mind to the wide world beyond Overland Park, Kansas. And my mother set the example of opening our doors and our hearts to people who are different from us. These early influences launched me on the path to today's hearing, and I hope to honor their faith in me by my service.

And I deeply appreciate the support of friends and colleagues who are watching these proceedings today.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed in this position, I pledge to strengthen and broaden the partnerships with other member states and with the U.N. agencies in Vienna and further develop the coalitions that we need to achieve U.S. priorities. Key among these goals is that the IAEA has the tools it needs to monitor implementation of the P5+1/Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Going forward, the IAEA, with its proven record of technical expertise, offers us an agency well placed to ensure robust implementation. I pledge to play my role in keeping Congress informed and engaged as this implementation process proceeds.

Another opportunity I see is to leverage the U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime's technical assistance to counter and prevent terrorism and trafficking through training and other support for judges and prosecutors especially those in high-threat regions and countries. UNODC's efforts complement our own counterterrorism objectives and reach countries we may not be able to engage directly.

Finally, if confirmed, I will press international organizations in Vienna to continue to make progress on management reforms, transparency, and fairness. I will encourage intensified efforts towards achieving greater diversity, including at the senior and policymaking levels. I will continue the efforts of my predecessors to strongly support the hiring of qualified American citizens to these organizations.

Mr. Chairman, the specialized and technical agencies in Vienna foster activities and technologies that affect the lives of every citizen every day from combating the spread of nuclear weapons and human and arms trafficking, to harnessing the power of the atom to promote human health and reduce and eliminate hunger, to utilizing space for communication, disaster early warning, and exploration and research.

If confirmed, I would work in close consultation with this committee and the Congress to ensure that U.S. values and priorities are fully reflected in our positions and that U.S. contributions and resources are expended with care. We owe the American people and the people all over the world no less.

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Holgate follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAURA S.H. HOLGATE

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (U.N.), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other International Organizations in Vienna. I am grateful to President Obama and to Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me.

This is a critical moment for the United States interests in the IAEA and the other U.N. offices in Vienna. Full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, successful transition of the Nuclear Security Summit's legacy of achievement to the relevant enduring international institutions, safe and secure expansion of nuclear energy and other peaceful nuclear technologies, effective efforts to combat transnational crime and corruption, and innovative peaceful applications of space science demand active, focused leadership and engagement by the United States to promote our national interests and to advance our contributions toward shared global priorities.

My experience inside and outside the United States Government has prepared me to play this vital role in Vienna at this critical time. I have worked on reducing nuclear, biological, and chemical threats since 1989, when I wrote my MIT masters thesis on chemical weapons destruction. I was part of the team led by Ash Carter and Bill Perry in 1991 that conceived what became the landmark Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. I have served a combined 14 years in the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and at the National Security Council, where I led programs and developed policies to keep nuclear materials out of terrorist hands, to destroy chemical weapons in Russia, Libya, and Syria, and to prevent bioterrorism. I was a founding member of the nongovernment Nuclear Threat Initiative, where for 8 years I headed the programs focused on Russia and New Independent States and pioneered projects that gave rise to major international outcomes such as the Department of Energy's Global Threat Reduction Initiative and the IAEA's low enriched uranium fuel bank. In my current position on the National Security Council staff, I oversee and coordinate the development of national policies and programs to reduce global threats from nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons; detect, identify, secure, and eliminate nuclear materials; prevent malicious use of biotechnology; and secure the civilian nuclear fuel cycle. Most relevant to the position for which I am being considered, I have led the preparation for four Nuclear Security summits, working closely with counterparts from 52 diverse countries and four international organizations, including the IAEA. Each of these positions has contributed to my knowledge, experience, relationships across parties and around the world, and enhanced my ability to represent the United States and the President with authority and respect.

Many of the U.N. agencies and organizations headquartered in Vienna have emerged as key partners for the United States as our country seeks to resolve some of the most difficult challenges and threats to our own national interests. The IAEA and the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, for example, have proven track records in providing the kind of expertise, technical knowledge, and credibility that the United States needs in its tool box as we lead the world in forging international responses to the most urgent and critical threats to international peace and security.

If confirmed, I fully recognize that I will be leading American engagement with these agencies at a critical time. I see an array of challenges that will require strong U.S. leadership so that the work of the Vienna agencies continues to fully reflect U.S. values and priorities. At the same time, I also see numerous opportunities for the United States to promote sound management practices; transparency; accountability; and good stewardship of U.S. and other Member State contributions. Ultimately, I see great potential for the United States to use its presence among the

U.N. agencies in Vienna to promote and advance strong partnerships and coordination with our friends and allies in a complex and often dangerous world.

In this context, I would like to share with you today more details regarding what I see as these challenges and opportunities as well as what my priorities would be if I have the honor to be confirmed for this important post. But before I do that, Mr. Chairman, I would like to pause briefly to introduce to you and the committee a few very special people who have joined me here today. My husband, Rick Holgate, has for 27 years steadfastly supported my career even as he has built his own impressive accomplishments in government service and in the private sector. I am grateful for his encouragement and partnership as we consider this new opportunity to serve. My parents, Susan and Bert Hayes, instilled in me a love of country and a commitment to excellence that continue to motivate me, and they have set inspiring examples of service in their own lives and in how they raised me and my sister, Gregg. And I am honored and humbled by the support of friends and colleagues who are watching these proceedings today.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed in this position, I pledge to strengthen and broaden the partnerships with other member states and with the Vienna U.N. agencies, and further develop the coalitions that we need to achieve U.S. priorities. Key among these goals is to work to make sure the IAEA has the mandate and the capacity to address evolving challenges and the greater demands being placed on it. In particular, the IAEA must have the tools it needs to monitor implementation of the P5+1/Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Going forward, the IAEA, with its proven record of technical expertise, offers us an agency well-placed to ensure appropriate implementation.

Another opportunity I see is to leverage the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to better address today's breaking and long-term crises. I would seek, in concert with other member states, to focus the UNODC's technical skills and expertise efficiently on threats that directly affect our interests, including anticorruption and the rule of law, border security, combating trafficking of persons and migrant smuggling, and counterpiracy. This will involve identifying threats and applying UNODC's resources in the regions in which they may be needed most.

A key challenge is to fend off other countries' attempts to distort the important technical and scientific work of key international organizations such as the IAEA and the U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS). These organizations' work should not be stymied by grandstanding on issues such as the procedure for approving Israel's application for membership.

Finally, if confirmed, I will press international organizations in Vienna to continue to make progress in management reforms, transparency, and fairness. I will encourage intensified efforts toward achieving greater diversity, including at the senior and policymaking levels. I will continue the efforts of my predecessors to strongly support the hiring of qualified American citizens in these organizations.

I would like to briefly highlight just a few examples of the work being done by international organizations in Vienna—work that affects not only our national security but also the everyday lives of not only our citizens but of people around the world.

The International Atomic Energy Agency

Since its inception in 1958, the IAEA has been central to international nuclear nonproliferation regime, encouraging peaceful uses of nuclear technology while preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Today, the IAEA will need our support more than ever as it steps up to meet the huge challenge of monitoring implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The IAEA's central role is to implement monitoring and verification as set forth in the JCPOA. On October 15, the IAEA reported that activities set out in the IAEA/Iran "Roadmap for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear program" were completed. The IAEA indicated that by December 15, 2015, the Director General will provide, for action by the Board of Governors, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues, as set out in the annex of the 2011 Director General's report. I know the JCPOA is an issue of intense interest to the members of this committee, the Congress, and the public, and if confirmed, I commit to keep an open and candid dialogue with the Congress.

In addition to the JCPOA, the IAEA has been nothing short of remarkable in its successful efforts to adapt to the evolving challenges of its safeguards mandate. The IAEA has safeguards agreements with 182 countries, under which it verifies that nuclear material is not diverted and nuclear facilities are not misused for weapons. Over the last two decades, 126 countries have concluded Additional Protocols with the IAEA, designed to enable the IAEA to confirm that there are no undeclared

nuclear materials or activities in the country as a whole. The United States works closely with the IAEA Secretariat and with other IAEA Member States to ensure that the Agency has the financial, technical, and human resources and the political support it needs to fulfill those demanding responsibilities. And Congress plays a critical role in funding these programs.

Equally important is our collaboration with IAEA on nuclear security. The effort to prevent a terrorist from acquiring a nuclear weapon has been a top priority for this administration. The President's Nuclear Security Summit, for which I have had the honor to serve as U.S. Sherpa, has raised the issue of nuclear security to the head of state level which has, in turn, produced major national commitments to minimize and secure nuclear materials, as well as increase efforts to interdict such materials outside of regulatory control. The summit has strengthened the global nuclear security architecture through support for international institutions and initiatives, as well as creating new standards for the security of nuclear materials. As we prepare to host the final Nuclear Security Summit, this spring, it is more evident than ever that the IAEA will play a central role in coordinating international institutions which will continue the work undertaken in the summit process. If confirmed, I would promote the IAEA's role in coordinating nuclear security activities worldwide and maintaining the momentum created by the summit process on this important issue.

Meanwhile, as global demand for nuclear power grows, the demands on the IAEA to help promote strong national nuclear safety standards will accelerate. The Fukushima Daiichi disaster in March 2011 demonstrated once again that no nation—no matter how prepared or technically advanced—is invulnerable to disasters involving nuclear material. In the wake of these kinds of crises—and to prevent future disasters—the IAEA is there to assist member states in managing risk and offering technical guidance to build safety capacity.

More broadly, the IAEA plays a key role in assessing member states' power needs and infrastructure capacity, and in identifying where capacity needs to be improved before nuclear power becomes a viable option. Also, the IAEA is engaged in the establishment of a Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) Fuel Bank in Kazakhstan. This Bank will serve both as an assurance of supply mechanism so that countries can access peaceful power and as a disincentive to the spread of enrichment technology to countries that do not already have it. It underlines the central roles the IAEA plays in both the promotion and nonproliferation aspects of nuclear energy.

Finally, in addition to nuclear safeguards and nuclear safety and security, the IAEA's third core mandate relates to fostering the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, science, and technology for all member states. During the last several years, the IAEA has been engaged in essential work in promoting human health, agriculture and food security, clean water, and the environment through nuclear techniques and its partnership with U.N. and other international organizations.

If confirmed, I would work toward adapting the IAEA's efforts in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear power; continue to address the evolving needs and interests of member states in nuclear power; and to a fully informed decisions by member states embarking on such a course.

The U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime

The UNODC is also a key U.S. partner in countering terrorism; strengthening criminal justice systems and respect for the rule of law; and fighting crime. UNODC has shown leadership in addressing these threats and in building member states' capacity to address them. In East and West Africa; for example, U.S. funding to UNODC has shown tangible results in stemming human trafficking and migrant smuggling. There and elsewhere, UNODC has also led international efforts to address wildlife trafficking, environmental crime, and cybercrime. Finally, UNODC's Terrorism Prevention Branch also plays an important role in providing technical assistance to enhance member states capacities to counter and prevent terrorism. Since 2002, the United States and other partners have worked closely with this program to develop and strengthen its technical assistance programs for criminal justice sector officials, especially those in high threat regions and countries. UNODC's efforts complement our counterterrorism objectives. If confirmed, I would look to expand on this good work, and to increase efforts to address the global phenomena of foreign terrorist fighters and illicit diversion of precursor chemicals that could be used to build improvised explosive devices.

Other organizations

Other Vienna-based organizations also play important roles and touch the lives of our citizens in fundamental ways.

For example, the U.N. Office on Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in Vienna implements the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly and of the UNCOPUOS). These are traditionally consensus-based organizations that focus on ensuring that satellite capabilities and space technology operate peacefully, safely, and for the broad benefit of all. A challenge we face within these types of agencies is occasional attempts by certain member states to politicize their work or decision-making. If confirmed, I would strive for these cooperative, technical organizations to continue to work smoothly in the performance of their mandates, free from politicization that could undermine their consensus-based procedures.

Finally, if confirmed, I would also serve as the Permanent Representative of the United States to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. The United States continues to engage with member states of the Preparatory Commission and with its Provisional Technical Secretariat to complete the verification regime that would be required to implement the CTBT should it enter into force. The International Monitoring System (IMS), the heart of that regime, is nearly complete. It is a technically advanced, global network of sensors that can detect even relatively low-yield nuclear explosions. The IMS has enjoyed the financial and diplomatic support of every administration since the United States signed the Treaty in 1996. Although data from the IMS is not used to monitor compliance with the treaty, as it has not yet entered into force, it is noteworthy that a still incomplete IMS successfully detected all three North Korean nuclear explosive tests in 2006, 2009, and 2013.

Conclusion

The specialized and technical agencies in Vienna foster activities and technologies that affect the lives of every citizen every day—from combating proliferation and human and arms trafficking, to harnessing the power of the atom to promote human health and reduce and eliminate hunger, to addressing climate change, to utilizing space for communication, disaster early warning, and exploration and research.

I believe that strong U.S. engagement, partnership, and leadership in these organizations is vitally important not only to our national security but also to the individual well-being of each of our citizens, and the prospect of a better life for all.

If confirmed, I would work in close consultation with Congress to ensure that U.S. values and priorities are fully reflected in our positions, and that U.S. contributions and resources are expended with care.

I recognize that there may be many areas of disagreement and contention within these organizations and among their memberships, but I believe that it is only through strong U.S. engagement and leadership in these multilateral technical forums that can they achieve a positive and lasting impact on the welfare and quality of life of our generation and those to come.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to close with a personal note. Growing up in Overland Park, KS, this kind of opportunity to serve my country was unimaginable: I had no idea what an ambassador did, and I was 27 before I met one. I credit my parents for the upbringing that created this occasion. My airline pilot father opened my eyes, ears, and mind to the wide world beyond the American Midwest, and my mother set the example of opening our doors and our hearts to people who were different from us. Most importantly, they offered support, encouragement and pride as I slowly formed the notion that I might do good in the world by figuring out ways to prevent nuclear war, which, when I was a Princeton undergraduate during the cold war, seemed like it might break forth at any moment. The end of the cold war coincided with my first jobs as a national security professional, and many new WMD threats began to crowd to the forefront—the collapse of a nuclear superpower, the advances in biology that made pathogens both more dangerous and more accessible, and, as we turned the corner into a new millennium, the stark reality of terrorists with apocalyptic ambitions and the skills and resources to achieve them. In the years since the cold war, we have created new tools—programs, technology, organizations, partnerships—to deal with these new and pressing threats. It has been my privilege to have helped invent some of these tools, and to have used them to reduce these threats and keep America safe. Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I would make the most of the opportunity to continue this commitment by vigorously promoting U.S. interests at the IAEA, and at the U.N. and other international organizations in Vienna.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much.

If you would, explain—I know we have a gentleman, former Ambassador Stephen Mull, who will be overseeing the implementation. How will your role and his role interact?

Ms. HOLGATE. Thank you, sir.

If confirmed, I would be part of Ambassador Mull's team of inter-agency partners. The current Chargé in the UNV mission participates in those conversations, those interagency meetings remotely and is in regular contact with Ambassador Mull. I would expect to continue and intensify that level of engagement in the interagency policy process. And the role in Vienna is to be the eyes and ears on the ground of what is going on, not just the formal presentation of information from the Secretariat but understanding the trends, the issues, the mood, how the conversations are going, and being sure that those are reported back into the U.S. policy process, also being alert to opportunities to improve activities or steps that may need to be taken and to be sure that those are incorporated into our Government-wide implementation efforts.

The CHAIRMAN. If confirmed, who will you actually receive direction from here in Washington relative to positions that you take?

Ms. HOLGATE. The letter of commission for ambassadors typically says that directions come from the President and from the Secretary of State, sir. My reporting chain goes through Assistant Secretary Crocker and then up through the position that we just had the nominee for. But these issues are addressed in an interagency process and a whole-of-government effort, and I will, if confirmed, play the role that I am assigned in that context.

The CHAIRMAN. I know you are going to get some questions from someone whether QFR and personal—in a personal way relative to whether you are involved in the negotiation of the JCPOA. And so I would like to give you the opportunity publicly to state what your involvement was.

Ms. HOLGATE. I appreciate that question, Senator.

As we discussed in our conversation, which I appreciated, I was not part of the negotiating team, nor was I privy to the judgments made in the process of that negotiation. I am, however, familiar with its contents and I am fully prepared to vigorously support its implementation at the IAEA.

The CHAIRMAN. And will you have the opportunity in this position, if confirmed, to be able to read the side agreements that were negotiated?

Ms. HOLGATE. Mr. Senator, the side agreements that are referred to are actually safeguards agreements that are bilateral agreements between the IAEA and the member state. Those are safeguards confidential, and those are not shared with any member states.

The CHAIRMAN. I had not planned to go down this route, but I am just curious then. What kind of oversight role do you have in this position? In other words, so you have the director. So the director is just able to negotiate whatever the director wishes and the folks who do what you do have no oversight role, no board of directors-type role relative to the entity.

Ms. HOLGATE. Senator, it is my understanding that safeguards agreements are bilateral agreements between the Secretariat and the member state. That is true for every country that is a member of the IAEA. The United States has a similar safeguards agreements that is not public, is not available to other member states.

This is part of how the IAEA maintains the confidentiality of information that is supplied in connection with that.

The IAEA is, however, required to report on its findings on confirmation and verification of the commitments made in these safeguards agreements, and those are the reports that are provided to member states and that we will be providing to the Congress as they come from the secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN. And again, I know you have nothing to do with how this has been set up. This is not directed to you. Again, I had not planned to go down this route.

So that is odd, it would seem to me, that the safeguards agreement is the agreement as to how the work is going to be carried out. So you are not really conveying any confidential information. You are just talking about how you are going to deal with that entity to find out or that country to find out how they are progressing in the agreements that are made. Why would that be kept away from the folks, if you will, that are overseeing this particular organization? I am just curious as to why you think that would be the case.

Ms. HOLGATE. Mr. Senator, the safeguards agreements include a range of technical details, including design of nuclear facilities, including proprietary information about how those facilities operate, an extreme amount of technical detail that helps the agency understand where it needs to apply safeguards, how it has to do with the process that is executed in that facility. That is not information that countries are eager to share with other countries, and frankly, from a nonproliferation point of view, that is not information that we are eager to have made public.

The CHAIRMAN. One of the things that concerned people, no matter how they ended up voting relative to the agreement—I think there was a universal concern about the issue of possible military dimensions. And the fact that all Iran had to do was go through the process, and whether the IAEA came up with a report that was an A plus report or a D minus report, it did not matter as long as the process was gone through, if you will. That was very concerning I think to a lot of people and somewhat shocking.

And I guess I would ask you let us say you are confirmed and the report comes back as a D minus, in other words, we really did not learn much because they did not provide much information, which again concerned a lot of people. What is it in this particular role that you would be able to do about that, if anything?

Ms. HOLGATE. Senator, as I understand it, the IAEA will be delivering its report in mid-December. If I am fortunate enough to achieve your confidence by then in order to be there at that time—that report will be provided to the Board of Governors of the IAEA, and the board will have a chance to act and engage on the basis of that information.

The JCPOA is focused on the future rather than the past, and so its mission is to make sure that those activities do not occur again, that if, in fact, there are steps taken toward possible military activities of Iran, that those are alerted to, that those are identified by the IAEA, and alerted to member states and in a timely fashion that allows us to take steps to prevent them from happening again.

The CHAIRMAN. But you do agree, with all the technical background that you have, that having knowledge as to how far they have gone in the past towards weaponization is an important element in discerning how quickly in the future they will be able to move toward that same goal. Is it not?

Ms. HOLGATE. Yes, sir. Knowledge is absolutely an important component of approaches to a military program, but all the knowledge in the world does not get you to a weapon if they do not have material, if they do not have the wherewithal to make material that could be used as a weapon. And that is the mission of the IAEA to monitor in an unprecedentedly intrusive way from the mines all the way through to the reactor and after every piece of nuclear material that is used in Iran. And that is where we gain the confidence that that knowledge will not be misapplied.

The CHAIRMAN. I will move on to Senator Cardin. My time is up. I probably will have some more questions.

Senator CARDIN. I am going to follow up on your question first. The Director General of the IAEA reports to the Board of Governors. You are our representative on the Board of Governors. We expect that you will have access to all information you need to properly manage the Director General, the IAEA, and represent the United States.

And I do not disagree with your analysis that the agreements we are referring to are confidential agreements negotiated by the IAEA and the member states and that confidentiality is maintained.

Iran is somewhat different. During the negotiations of the JCPOA, a representative of the United States was allowed to review those documents, and I do not know whether that was done directly by the IAEA or by Iran, but it was done. And I mention that because I think, as Senator Corker has pointed out, we are going to need a clear understanding as to how Iran is proceeding, particularly as it relates to its military dimensions, but there is more to it than that. Developing a working understanding of the arrangements between the IAEA and Iran is going to be essential for you to be fully read into that, and I think you will. And then we need your candid assessments as to how much information we receive and whether it is in compliance with the JCPOA.

So I just really wanted to underscore that point. I understand confidentiality, but I also understand responsibilities to the Board of Governors and you are the key player in that regard. So you have responsibility there.

Let me just ask you an open question on this, which is where do you see the greatest challenges within the IAEA in assuring compliance by Iran of its commitments under the JCPOA, that part that comes under the responsibilities of the IAEA?

Ms. HOLGATE. Senator, thank you for that question.

I think the most challenging components of this agreement are going to be these novel aspects of the safeguards activities that the IAEA is being asked to undertake under the JCPOA. The work that they are doing at the mine, in the milling, and the conversion process of how uranium is handled within the country is unprecedented.

Now, the United States has continued its long tradition of providing training, information, technical support, equipment to the IAEA safeguards community, and that continues to be the case, and it will be even more important as these safeguards inspectors are trained for these new roles. So the United States stands fully ready to play its traditional role of strong support to make sure the agency has the people, the resources, and the technology it needs to carry out these new roles.

Senator CARDIN. And even though they will not be inspectors carrying U.S. passports, the United States plays a critical role here as far as training and information, et cetera. I assume that is what you were referring to?

Ms. HOLGATE. That is precisely what I am referring to, Senator. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Now, outside of Iran, there are other issues that you are going to be engaged with, the implementation and the safe handling of nuclear materials, particularly by those states that are involved in the use of nuclear materials, and the NPT commitments. With such a focus on Iran and the resources being used there, where do you see the challenges and a strong commitment toward the NPT safeguards?

Ms. HOLGATE. The safeguards requirements of the IAEA are going to be critical to be applied globally under their role under the treaty. The United States and other member states have committed to make sure that this is not a zero sum game from a resource point of view with the resources that are going to be required in support of JCPOA implementation. And there is a formula being worked out as we speak on the balance between regular assessments and voluntary contributions to be sure that the agency's work in the JCPOA implementation does not interfere with or take away from the work it needs to do all over the world to assure that material is not diverted to weapons programs.

Senator CARDIN. And then lastly, if I might, how do you see your role working with other representatives from other countries, some who were directly involved in the JCPOA but others that were not, in getting firm international support for U.S. policies?

Ms. HOLGATE. Senator, that is the essential role of the diplomat, and it is one that I am eager to have the opportunity to play, if confirmed. Many of these permanent representatives and ambassadors in Vienna are individuals that I have worked with because they represent their countries in the Nuclear Security Summit process. So I begin with some familiarity with some of the key members of the Vienna diplomatic community.

Certainly the work to do to assemble coalitions around supporting particular decisionmaking processes to represent a common face in discussions in the Board of Governors in the general conference is something that I look forward to and will commit to doing effectively as I am able.

Senator CARDIN. Well, once again, we appreciate your willingness to continue to serve.

Ms. HOLGATE. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks, Ms. Holgate. As somebody who grew up in Overland Park and has lived in Richmond for the last 31 years, I am particularly happy to see you and your family here.

The IAEA has an interesting track record. I think it is an organization that generally has a positive track record, not unmarred by challenges certainly. After Iraq and North Korea developed nuclear weapons programs and the covert means, that was I think an admitted weakness of the IAEA and others that allowed that to happen. But then the IAEA said we need a fix, and so they went back to the table to develop the additional protocol that nations now must follow to try to route out that possibility. So that was a bad incident in the IAEA's history, but then they reacted to fix it in a good way.

The IAEA was, I mean, to our kind of remaining sadness, right in March 2003 when they said that Iraq did not have a program of weapons of mass destruction, or at least they could find no credible evidence that it did. That conclusion of the IAEA was heavily trashed by a lot of people here, and it turned out the IAEA was right and we were wrong. That was a momentous moment.

But I am impressed with the organization, but boy, the tasks on the shoulders of this organization are pretty monumental.

First, does the IAEA have the budgetary resources that it needs to do the work that is on its shoulders, especially in the JCPOA, the commitment? There would be, I guess, 130-plus IAEA inspectors in Iran to monitor the JCPOA. Talk to us about the resources the organization has.

Ms. HOLGATE. Well, sir, I appreciate the question, and may I say "Go Royals"?

Senator KAINE. Yes, indeed. 2-zip. We are thrilled. [Laughter.]

Ms. HOLGATE. The agency's resources to support the JCPOA have been estimated at around 10 million euro. They believe that about half of that can be accommodated within the existing safeguards budget without detriment to the other missions that it has inside that budget, and that about 5 million euro will need to be raised from voluntary contributions from other countries. The United States is the largest contributor of voluntary contributions for a range of projects and activities within the IAEA. I fully expect that we will play our appropriate role. But that is clearly an area where other countries can contribute to the success of the JCPOA, including many of those who may have been on the sidelines but supporting the diplomatic solution that we pursued. And so we do not expect that this will be a large challenge for the agency to identify the resources.

Senator KAINE. Well, next to Iranian intent, the single most important element that will determine whether this JCPOA works or not is the verification. So Iranian intent—you know, we are going to keep our focus on their actions. Their intent is still the most important factor. But the verification mechanisms are what give us the ability to determine that intent. And so the IAEA doing a good job and having the resources to do a good job is absolutely critical. And I know you share that view.

One of my hopes is this. The deal certainly talks about traditional IAEA protocols, the additional protocol which Iran accedes to for the first 8 years, and then I guess legislatively has to decide

whether they permanently accept. But in addition, this extra inspection of the supply chain, as you point out, you know, kind of from mine to mill to reactor, the whole supply chain of fissile material is incredibly important. And what I would love to see—I would hope at the end of that 25-year agreement that this might have been incorporated as a best practice into the additional protocol so that it would not just be a 25-year commitment that Iran would make, but if Iran agrees to the additional protocol, over time this supply chain monitoring could be added to the additional protocol for Iran and for all nations. I think this is a new best practice in the agreement in terms of verification. Right now it is only applicable to Iran and only for the 25-year period.

And I would like to ask, since I do not know about this, kind of has the additional protocol been modified over time. Does it get modified to include new best practice elements, and would that be a realistic hope that I would have that maybe by the end of 25 years, this would become the norm?

Ms. HOLGATE. Thank you, sir. And it is always important that the safeguards processes of the IAEA improve over time, and in fact they have done so.

The JCPOA is explicit, however, that these specific innovations are unique to this agreement and do not form a precedent. That was important to gain agreement to this document, and that is the intent of those who associated with it.

That having been said, as you said, there are best practices that are developed in the implementation of these activities. There are lessons learned. There are new technologies that are identified. There are ways to accomplish the same goal with fewer people or fewer resources. And so the IAEA and, indeed, the whole international community will be learning a lot during this 25-year period, and in our constant effort to improve and enhance IAEA safeguards, we may find that some of those techniques can be applicable to the broader safeguards activities of the agency.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you so much for your testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for your willingness to serve. As you heard with the last witness, there will be questions that will be coming in until the close of business Monday. Obviously, you understand the importance of responding to those fairly quickly.

We thank your family for being here and their willingness to participate in this.

With that, the meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF THOMAS SHANNON, NOMINATED TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

THOMAS SHANNON'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CARDIN

Question. Corruption.—Corruption is a global scourge. It damages confidence in governments and institutions, undermines our rule of law and accountability efforts, and places a huge cost on consumers and businesses. As we have seen, corruption is inherently difficult and complex to measure. But by fostering greater public scru-

tiny of corrupt practices and behavior, I believe our government can achieve greater accountability.

- ◆ a. What are the key indicators that you believe are most effective in measuring corruption in a particular country?

Answer. The best indicators of measuring corruption are the existence or lack of strong legal frameworks (on both preventing corruption and its criminalization), effective and impartial institutions, sound public administration, and enforcement and application in practice. Other factors, such as political accountability, media freedom, and space for civil society are also important indicators. We have strongly supported international initiatives that enshrine these measures (in the form of binding treaties or political commitments) and that establish processes to evaluate them impartially and promote compliance.

- ◆ b. Shouldn't we publicly name corrupt countries and individuals to encourage greater accountability?

Answer. Thank you for raising the corruption issue. We share your concerns about corruption, which is why we have emphasized the importance of fighting corruption in countries where there is clearly a confluence between graft and poor governance. Corruption is often the reason why authoritarian leaders seize and cling to power, but it is also often one of their greatest vulnerabilities—the abuse of power that generates the greatest domestic opposition and that they are least able to justify on the world stage. The United States has led the creation of global standards and binding legal frameworks to prevent and combat graft, and to foster the international legal cooperation that is increasingly necessary. We have forged a consensus in the G20 to strengthen safeguards against the flow of illicit funds, including by cracking down on the use of anonymous shell companies.

Congress originally mandated the submission to Congress of an annual “Country Report on Human Rights Practices” to help ensure that human rights and democracy concerns are factored into foreign policy funding considerations. Congress also wisely includes in appropriations legislation prohibitions against direct funding for countries considered the worst of the worst, as well as country notification requirements for specific countries under congressional scrutiny.

The administration already enforces a global visa policy to deny entry to certain human rights violators and individuals involved in public corruption. Presidential Proclamation 8697 (human rights) and 7750 (corruption) and Section 7031(c) of the FY 2015 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act allow the Department to deny visas to gross human rights violators and individuals involved in corruption that would not already be denied under existing ineligibilities. Also, the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) already includes ineligibilities that can be applied to human rights abusers and who have engaged in torture, extrajudicial killings, genocide, use or recruitment of child soldiers, among others.

We also rely on objective and multilateral approaches, such as the expert compliance reviews we have developed for each anticorruption treaty—which have the benefit of relying on shared international standards and the voice of the international community, rather than the voice of any one country.

- ◆ c. What actions are you going to take to identify illicit financial flows, particularly in the natural resource and real property sectors?

Answer. We are actively taking action to identify illicit financial flows. The State Department continues to work with the Departments of Treasury and Justice to support strong antimoney laundering standards globally and build foreign countries' capacity to implement them. The Department is also promoting ownership transparency, including through the G7 and G20 to reduce illicit flows through shell businesses. We also promote transparency in the extractives sector through our participation in, and support of, the Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), and strongly support the objectives of Section 1504 of the Dodd-Frank Act, which set a new standard for transparency in the extractive industries. Section 1504 requires oil, gas, and mining companies listed on a U.S. stock exchange to publish their payments to U.S. and foreign governments for the commercial development of these natural resources. In addition, the Department promotes efforts to stem foreign bribery connected with business transactions in any subsector. These efforts bolster international cooperation and ultimately facilitate asset recovery.

Question. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is currently rewriting the rule for Section 1504 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. As you may know, Section 1504 requires oil, gas, and mining companies listed on a U.S. stock exchange to publish their payments to U.S. and foreign gov-

ernments for the commercial development of these natural resources. Information about payments made to governments by extractives companies promotes a number of U.S. goals. For example, greater transparency in the oil, gas, and mining sector will deter corrupt behavior and ensure that foreign aid dollars are being used in conjunction with natural resource revenues to promote development.

- ◆ Given the foreign policy objectives of the Section 1504 rule please discuss how, if confirmed, you intend to engage with the SEC to ensure that they issue a strong rule that serves U.S. foreign policy goals?

Answer. We strongly support the objectives of Section 1504, as it directly advances the United States foreign policy interests in increasing transparency and reducing corruption in the oil, gas, and minerals sectors. We recognize the importance of the SEC's rule both domestically and for the United States foreign policy interests and we hope to see a strong rule issued. Corruption and mismanagement of these resources can impede economic growth, reduce opportunities for U.S. trade and investment, divert critically needed funding from social services and other government activities, and contribute to instability and conflict. Transparency has long been widely identified as a key component of the fight against corruption in this sector. Efforts to increase transparency have been a high priority for this administration as part of the U.S. Government's good governance promotion, anticorruption, and energy security strategies.

As section 1504 sets a new standard for transparency in the extractive industries, we have encouraged other governments and regional organizations to adopt similar strong transparency measures. Additionally, we are encouraging the SEC to produce a strong Section 1504 rule that improves transparency by ensuring that a sufficiently detailed level of information concerning payments from the extractive industry to foreign governments for the development of oil, natural gas, and minerals will be made public and accessible to civil society and investors. In the absence of this level of transparency, citizens have fewer means to hold their governments accountable, and accountability is a key component of reducing the risk of corruption. Finally, we will continue to work with our colleagues at the SEC, USAID, Department of Treasury, and Department of the Interior—the lead for U.S. implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (USEITI)—to ensure robust implementation to this important initiative. We look forward to reviewing the SEC's draft rule once it has been released for public comment.

Question. Based upon the first meeting of the Joint Commission, do you believe it will be an effective forum for ensuring Iranian compliance with the JCPOA? How did the other P5+1 states, particularly the Russians and Chinese, approach the work of the Joint Commission? Did the Iranians provide any indications about when they will complete the nuclear related steps necessary to reach Implementation Day?

Answer. We believe the Joint Commission (JC) will play an important role in promoting the successful implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We are committed to ensuring the JC functions effectively and serves as a useful forum for monitoring Iran's fulfillment of its nuclear-related commitments and facilitating the resolution of issues in a timely fashion. All of the JCPOA participants—the P5+1, the European Union and Iran—attended the first meeting of the JC, and remain committed to the implementation of the JCPOA. Participants focused on establishing the JC's modalities and operations. Iran briefed on its plans for getting to Implementation Day, which they are eager to reach in order to receive sanctions relief as soon as possible. The timeline for reaching Implementation Day will be dependent on Iran and when it can complete the required nuclear steps. Our focus is not on reaching Implementation Day as quickly as possible, but rather on ensuring that Iran completes these steps in a verifiable fashion.

Question. I remain concerned about our ability to hold Iran accountable for its support to terrorism, its human rights abuses, and its ballistic missile program while implementing the JCPOA.

- ◆ Can you assure me that we have the flexibility and will to respond to Iranian actions in region in light of our obligations under the JCPOA?

Answer. We have been clear, both publicly and privately with Iran that we will continue to take action to counter Iran's destabilizing activities, to block its support for terrorism, and to call attention to its human rights record. This includes the use of sanctions.

We are working with our regional partners to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region in a number of ways. First, we are undermining Iran's capacity to execute attacks directly or through its partners and proxies by expanding our cooperation with and strengthening the capacity of regional partners. Second, we are

working to restrict Iran's ability to move money and material for illicit purposes through sanctions and direct action when necessary. Third, we remain committed to Israel's security and that of our other regional allies and we continue to build up our partners' capacity to defend themselves against Iranian aggression. Fourth, we are working unilaterally and with allies to weaken Hezbollah's financial networks. Finally, we are working to disrupt Iran's relationships with its proxies by publicizing Iran's meddling wherever we can, and we are strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law in countries facing threats from Iranian proxy activities.

U.S. policy regarding Iran's human rights abuses has not changed as a result of the JCPOA. We will continue to publicly express our concerns regarding Iran's human rights abuses, and to work with the international community to press Iran to meet its international human rights commitments. Our unilateral sanctions focused on human rights abuses will not be affected by the JCPOA, and we will continue to enforce them.

Iran's October 10 missile launch violates UNSCR 1929, which requires Iran not to "undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic missile technology." We have strongly condemned the launch and U.N. Ambassador Power raised Iran's violation in the U.N. Security Council in mid-October. We also submitted a joint report on the launch, together with France, Germany, and the U.K., to the Iran Sanctions Committee, calling upon the committee to review the matter and recommend appropriate action.

Beyond the U.N. Security Council, we continue to use a variety of tools to counter Iran's missile-related activities. These include continuing to work with the more than 100 countries around the world that have endorsed the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) to help limit Iranian missile-related imports; urging all countries to implement and enforce missile-related export controls, such as those established by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), to limit the proliferation of missile technology and equipment to Iran; and employing our unilateral tools such as domestic authorities that provide us ways to impose sanctions on entities or individuals supporting Iran's missile program. We are reviewing the facts from the recent launch to determine whether additional unilateral action is warranted in this case.

Question. In a letter that President Obama sent to Senator Wyden, he stated that there are a wide range of unilateral and multilateral responses that the United States could take with its partners if Iran fails to meet its JCPOA commitments. This letter also referenced incremental options to "apply calibrated pressure in the event of noncompliance issues by Iran."

♦ In your view, what are those incremental options and what will your approach be in making recommendations to the President and what and when to apply such options?

Answer. The United States is committed to promoting the effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and ensuring that Iran is fulfilling all of its nuclear-related commitments in a verifiable and complete fashion. Should we detect a violation of the agreement by Iran, the State Department will not hesitate to discuss appropriate actions with the President. We retain a wide range of options to deal with any failure by Iran to fulfill its nuclear-related commitments, whether significant nonperformance by Iran or more minor instances of non-compliance. For example, the United States has the ability to reimpose both national and multilateral nuclear-related sanctions in the event of nonperformance by Iran. In the case of United Nations (U.N.) sanctions, under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, we could do so even over the objections of any member of the Security Council, including China or Russia. Additionally, we have a range of other options for addressing minor noncompliance, including reimposing certain domestic sanctions to respond to minor but persistent violations of the JCPOA, and using our leverage in the Joint Commission on procurement requests.

Question. Are you confident that the IAEA has the capacity to meticulously verify Iranian compliance?

Answer. Yes. The IAEA has an established record of implementing safeguards agreements worldwide, and in verifying the compliance of states with their nuclear obligations. In addition, the IAEA has a proven track record of performing additional verification responsibilities based on its experience in verifying the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) among the P5+1 and Iran since November 2013.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) puts in place vigorous, intrusive, and unprecedented transparency measures to enable the IAEA to verify whether Iran is fulfilling its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. The

sanctions-related steps in the JCPOA will not be implemented until the IAEA is able to verify that Iran has completed key nuclear-related measures.

The JCPOA ensures continuous monitoring of Iran's key declared nuclear facilities. Not only will the IAEA have the right to a constant physical or technical presence in Iran's primary nuclear sites, Natanz and Fordow, but it will be able to conduct regular monitoring of Iran's uranium mines and mills and its centrifuge production, assembly, and storage facilities. This means that the IAEA will have information, access, and/or instrumental observation concerning the entire nuclear fuel cycle in Iran, as well as its nuclear-related procurement. This kind of monitoring makes it exceedingly difficult for Iran to divert materials for clandestine sites without being rapidly detected. Moreover, the establishment of a dedicated procurement channel for Iran's nuclear program will further enable the close monitoring and approval of all nuclear-related imports so as to minimize the chances of any diversion to a secret nuclear weapons program.

Under the Additional Protocol, which Iran will implement under the JCPOA, IAEA inspectors can request access to any location they have reason to suspect relates to undeclared nuclear activities. This is separate and in addition to the continuous access described above at declared nuclear facilities. The IAEA may use environmental sampling, visual observation, and radiation detection and measurement devices to detect clandestine nuclear activity at these locations. Moreover, if Iran were to deny an IAEA request for access to a suspicious undeclared location, a special provision in the JCPOA would trigger an access dispute resolution mechanism.

Question. The United States has been a leader in providing humanitarian assistance to the Syrian conflict, but how do we address the hard fact that humanitarian needs are far outstripping the available resources?

In the tradition of being a beacon of hope for refugees across the globe fleeing violence and persecution, shouldn't we in the United States be willing to resettle significantly more Syrian refugees—who undergo the toughest security vetting available—to our country? The German Government will be accepting 1.5 million asylees this year alone. Should the United States be capable of identifying, conducting security screening and then resettling more than just 10,000 Syrian refugees announced for next year?

Answer. We agree the needs stemming from the Syria humanitarian crisis are outpacing the international community's response. We have provided more than \$4.5 billion in humanitarian assistance since the start of the conflict; however, despite these efforts the U.N. appeal for the response is only 45 percent funded. To address this crisis, we are executing a five-pronged approach by: (1) engaging in robust international humanitarian diplomacy to encourage countries to contribute to the U.N. appeals for the Syrian crisis; (2) working to significantly increase the number of countries resettling Syrian refugees; (3) working with countries of first asylum to identify opportunities for refugees to pursue employment and become more self-sufficient in ways that do not exacerbate existing unemployment issues in host countries; (4) expanding methods to coordinate humanitarian and development assistance to support nations hosting large numbers of refugees; and (5) helping Europe focus on saving lives, improving reception, registration, and immediate assistance while it grapples with huge migration policy issues.

The United States aims to admit up to 85,000 refugees in FY 2016, including 10,000 from Syria. This is a 21-percent projected increase in total arrivals over FY 2015, and a more than 500-percent increase in the number of Syrians admitted over the number admitted in FY 2015. The Department of State believes that 10,000 Syrian admissions is achievable given the number of referrals we have received from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees as well as U.S. Government capacity to interview and security and medical screen Syrian applicants in the coming year. We will continue to evaluate the U.S. response to this humanitarian crisis, and if we can do more, we will.

Question. The U.N. estimates that some 422,000 people inside Syria are "besieged"—meaning completely cut off from receiving aid. Another 4.8 million are estimated as "hard-to-reach."

◆ What can the international community do differently to ensure that humanitarian access expands and that aid reaches those in Syria who need it the most?

Answer. We remain very concerned about the people in Syria living in what the United Nations (U.N.) designates as "hard to reach" or "besieged areas." These are vulnerable populations in great need of our support, and receive minimal to no assistance. "Besieged" areas are the most challenging in terms of access because those areas are cut off from humanitarian aid—in most cases because of the actions of the Assad regime. We continue to call on the regime and its allies to allow aid

throughout the country. The U.N. now estimates 4.5 million people are residing in designated "hard to reach" areas, more than half are in areas under the control of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Despite the urgent need to reach civilians in need trapped under ISIL rule, our partners have found it increasingly challenging to operate in areas they control, given their violent and unpredictable nature. However, we continue to work to reach people in critical need of life-saving assistance in these areas, in cases where we are able to do so without ISIL stealing or benefiting from the assistance.

The United States has worked through the U.N. Security Council and has supported Resolutions 2139, 2165, and 2191 calling for unhindered access to people in need. We continue to call on all parties to the conflict to act consistently with the calls in those resolutions. However, the single greatest factor limiting access for humanitarian aid remains the ongoing, intensifying conflict. Humanitarian assistance will not end the bloodshed in Syria.

In addition, to maximize the reach and effectiveness of our support, we are working through various channels to ensure our assistance reaches throughout the entire country. These channels include the U.N., international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and local Syrian organizations and networks. It includes assistance that originates in Syria, assistance delivered across conflict lines, and cross border assistance.

United States Government humanitarian assistance is provided based on humanitarian need and the ability of our partners to access the populations in need of assistance. We work closely with the U.N., NGOs, and our Disaster Response teams on the ground to ensure we have the most current and detailed information on what the most pressing needs are and how we can reach those populations. We are in constant communication with our partners to discuss our programs and to ensure we are reaching the intended beneficiaries. Our programs also remain flexible should we need to modify methods or activities to minimize safety and security concerns or risk of diversion.

The United States has provided more than \$4.5 billion in humanitarian assistance since the start of the Syrian crisis—more than any other single donor—to help address dire humanitarian needs faced by millions of Syrians. For 5 years, our partners have fearlessly crossed conflict lines—at great personal risk—to help approximately 5 million people inside Syria every month who are in need of assistance and caught in the cross-fire. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue these efforts to reach all those in need in Syria.

Question. During the annual tier ranking negotiations with the J/TIP office, the regional bureaus often have an outsized role in determining the tier rankings of a country. If confirmed as the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, you will represent the regional bureaus in these negotiations.

- ◆ If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that credibility of the TIP Report—which was the gold standard—is restored?
- ◆ In tier ranking discussions, how will you approach the large footprint of the regional bureaus with the much less resourced and weaker J/TIP office to ensure that the TIP office's recommendations are given serious consideration, not dismissed out of hand, and taken on board if reasonable?

Answer. Over the past 15 years, the TIP Report has consistently drawn public attention to the problem of modern slavery and foreign government efforts to address it. The report is widely regarded as the gold standard for antitrafficking information about government efforts around the world to address this crime.

The Department strives to make the report as objective and accurate as possible, documenting the successes and shortcomings of government antitrafficking efforts measured against the minimum standards established under U.S. law. However, the perception that unrelated political concerns played a role in the 2015 tier ranking process is a significant threat to the report's credibility.

The Department continuously reviews how we can use the report even more effectively as a lever to motivate tangible progress around the world. Specifically, the Department is working to improve internal communication and institutionalizing a process that ensures high-level engagement in a timely way throughout the course of the reporting period to urge governments to take needed action to fulfill the TIP Report recommendations. In addition, we are reviewing the individual country recommendations in the report, which inform the Action Plans we prepare annually for each country. We are considering ways we can strengthen the recommendations in the report and use them more effectively to push progress in individual priority countries through engagement year round.

Producing the TIP Report is a year-round and whole-of-Department effort. It has and will continue to reflect the Department's assessment of foreign government

efforts in 188 countries and territories during the reporting period to combat trafficking. Dedicated staff from the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) and officers in the regional bureaus and at posts around the world work together, including with senior Department officials, to gather information year round from foreign governments, media, and civil society to inform each of the narratives.

The final narratives and rankings, which the Secretary approves, reflect the Department's best assessment of government efforts to combat human trafficking. If confirmed, I commit to you that I will continue this work with the utmost integrity—understanding both J/TIP's essential role and voice in this process, as well as the importance of our missions on the ground in working with host governments to implement the recommendations in the TIP Report.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the J/TIP Office, our regional bureaus, and our missions around the globe to ensure TIP issues are integrated into our broader foreign policy efforts. If confirmed, I also look forward to a robust and ongoing engagement and consultation with Congress to ensure that the TIP Report remains the gold standard for antitrafficking efforts for years to come.

Question. In an effort to respond to the humanitarian crisis of unaccompanied Central American minors arriving at the United States Southwestern border, the United States has deepened its engagement with Central American nations and their governments in an effort to respond to challenges to citizen security, bolster democratic governance, promote economic growth, and facilitate regional integration. However, U.S. relations with Nicaragua remain minimal.

◆ As part of its efforts to promote political and economic integration in Central America, is there an opportunity for the United States to pursue greater engagement with the Nicaraguan Government? Please identify areas where the United States and Nicaragua could increase bilateral cooperation.

Answer. Currently, our engagement with Nicaragua has produced positive collaboration on trade, counternarcotics, search and rescue, disaster preparedness and response, the return of fugitive U.S. citizens, and protection of cultural patrimony. We believe we can continue to deepen our cooperation in these areas. The Nicaraguan Government also resolved all U.S. citizen property compensation claims subject to foreign assistance restrictions under Section 527. Our engagement on issues of democratic governance has been less productive. However, we will continue to use our engagement to promote democracy and greater defense of human rights.

In keeping with our larger engagement in Central America, we will work with Nicaragua to increase regional prosperity and security, particularly given Nicaragua's relatively strong economic growth, renewable energy production, and counternarcotics efforts. We will also seek to work with Nicaragua and its neighbors to promote regional integration and peaceful and enduring resolution of border and maritime boundary disputes.

Question. How do you think this decision will impact the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan? Upon confirmation, do you anticipate playing a role in the reconciliation process?

Answer. The United States continues to support an Afghan-led reconciliation process by which all Afghan opposition groups, including the Taliban, enter a political dialogue so that Afghans can talk to other Afghans about the future of their country and eventually resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. As part of the Department of State team, I will support U.S. efforts to work with the Afghan Government in its efforts to establish an Afghan-led reconciliation process.

The Taliban have an opportunity to make genuine peace with the Afghan Government and rebuild their lives. The Government of Afghanistan has invited the Taliban to join the Afghan political process. The Taliban have a choice. They can accept the Government of Afghanistan's invitation to engage in a peace process and ultimately become part of the legitimate political system of a sovereign, united Afghanistan, supported by the international community. Or, they can choose to continue fighting fellow Afghans and destabilizing their own country.

The President's decision will help the United States to continue playing an important role in setting the conditions for peace and reconciliation.

Question. In the past 2 fiscal years, combined funding from the Departments of State and Defense for security assistance to Africa has grown from \$542 million to \$1 billion, while democracy building assistance has fallen from \$230 million to \$160 million during the same time period. Though I understand myriad security challenges in the region, this imbalance in funding comes at a time of serious governance challenges and sends the wrong message to our partners.

- ◆ Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that there is an appropriate balance between engagement on security assistance and in the area of democracy and governance?

Answer. Democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) programs remain a significant priority for this administration. This commitment is strongly reflected in the President's Budget for FY 2016, which requests \$312 million for critical DRG programs in Africa to foster good governance and fight corruption, strengthen the rule of law, and promote civil society. In the past, annual appropriations bills have reduced funding for the key foreign assistance accounts that support DRG, which can make it difficult to fully fund these important activities. Our goal is to increase support for these important democracy-building programs, particularly in Africa.

The Department of State also views the enhancement and improvement of security sector capabilities in Africa—both military and civilian—as an integral part of improving the human rights situation. Past events have shown us that security forces that lack robust civilian oversight and have not been appropriately educated on the importance of civilian security and respect for human rights norms can quickly descend into becoming perpetrators of human rights violations. For this reason, all of our military and police training includes a strong human rights component. In addition to traditional security assistance programs, the Security Governance Initiative (SGI) is an example of an important State Department-led effort specifically targeted to strengthen the institutions that govern the security sector. Our security sector reform efforts seek to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the security forces of African partner countries by improving the management, oversight and accountability of security sector institutions. Our engagement focuses at the strategic level to enhance military, law enforcement, and justice sector governance and capacity of African partners. We plan to continue those efforts, working toward the common goals of adherence to human rights norms and the protection of the citizenry, that militaries and police forces are established to protect.

Question. What specific steps has the administration taken to improve human rights and political freedoms in Angola over the past several years through both diplomatic efforts and programmatic activities?

Answer. We regularly meet with civil society, including human rights activists, attorneys, and independent journalists and discuss these issues in depth with government counterparts, including Vice President Vicente and Foreign Minister Chikoti. The Embassy has an ongoing relationship with the Minister of Justice and Human Rights that will continue at the first ever Human Rights Dialogue, tentatively scheduled for this November. On human rights cases, the Embassy attends court trials engaging with the defendants and their legal team. DRL Deputy Assistant Secretary Feldstein raised these points with the government during his August 2015 visit to Luanda. We will continue to press the Government of Angola to combat corruption and improve human rights such as freedom of press, assembly, and speech, including through the AGOA eligibility annual review process in early 2016.

Question. What is your assessment of the actual—as opposed to stated—reasons for the arrest of the so called “Angola 15,” and what specific actions has the State Department taken in the context of their arrest and detention to make clear that the government should respect freedom of assembly, association, and speech, and follow due process related to this case and others?

Answer. We note the Government of Angola's claims that they arrested the 15 activists due to fears of an attempted unconstitutional change of government. They have indicated they have additional evidence in this case and we will monitor further developments as the trial progresses. We continue to engage the government on this case and all other human rights cases urging an open and transparent due process be observed. U.S. Embassy Luanda has discussed detention conditions with the detainees' lawyers. During DRL Deputy Assistant Secretary Feldstein's visit to Luanda in August 2015, he met with human rights defenders, the activists' lawyers, and the government. As a followup to his visit, a Human Rights Dialogue with the government is tentatively scheduled for this November in Washington, DC.

Question. If confirmed, how will you make sure that the Asia-Pacific region remains a priority in our foreign policy and balance it with other competing regional priorities?

Answer. The Asia-Pacific is a critical region for the United States because we are, and will remain, a Pacific power. The former Under Secretary for Political Affairs worked to increase U.S. presence in the region and establish a “new normal” of engagement. If confirmed, I will work to sustain and increase this “new normal” of intensified engagement, while exploring fresh efforts to expand our influence. I will

also work to strengthen our partnerships and alliances, and develop maritime domain awareness (MDA) and law enforcement capacity in Southeast Asia. In the future, I look forward to seeking new opportunities to empower our partners in the region to more capably tackle global challenges such as climate change, global public health, human rights, counterterrorism, nonproliferation, transnational crime, and other traditional and nontraditional security challenges.

THOMAS SHANNON'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR RUBIO

Question. Unfortunately, Venezuela's December 6 parliamentary election will not include democratic figures like Leopoldo Lopez, who remains in jail, on the ballot. During your confirmation hearing, you stated that those political prisoners are essential to the democratic process in Venezuela, and that you will continue to press for their release.

◆ Can the elections be truly considered fair and free while prominent opposition figures remain imprisoned and barred from participating?

Answer. We remain deeply concerned by the Venezuelan Government's continuing efforts to prevent opponents from participating in the political process. Arresting and imprisoning leading political figures, declaring others ineligible to hold public office, and restricting the ability of candidates to campaign and communicate with voters are significant violations of democratic principles and practices. In such an environment, it is hard to see how an election could be fair. However, the upcoming legislative elections could still be free, if Venezuelans are allowed to go to the polls and there is sufficient guarantee that their votes will count.

While we join the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the European Union in calling on Venezuela to release political prisoners and respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, we also call on the government to invite credible international election observers to participate in the December 6 elections. We believe that such observers will guarantee the votes of all Venezuelans, and help Venezuelans exercise a fundamental right no matter how challenging the political environment.

Question. Last year, Moises Naim of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace noted in *The Financial Times* that "the enormous influence that Cuba has gained in Venezuela is one of the most underreported geopolitical developments of recent times."

◆ Do you believe that Cuba has contributed to the weakening of democratic institutions in Venezuela?

◆ How much influence do you believe Cuba has with Venezuela's military and security services?

◆ Should Cuba's regime be held accountable for the deterioration of democracy and supporting repression in Venezuela?

◆ Has the Obama administration's new Cuba policy, which unconditionally recognized and promotes business with the Western Hemisphere's sole totalitarian dictatorship, sent a message to the Maduro government that there are no consequences for similarly radicalizing his regime?

Answer. Cuba's interests in Venezuela are threefold: securing a reliable source of cheap energy, obtaining cash transfers to meet fiscal needs, and gaining an ally in South America and the greater Caribbean. Cuba has pursued these interests assiduously, and in return has provided the Venezuelan Government with much-needed security and intelligence assistance, doctors, teachers, and other personnel to run Venezuela's social programs. While Cuba is interested in the stability of Venezuela, it has no interest or investment in Venezuela's democratic institutions.

That said, the challenges facing Venezuelan democracy are the responsibility of the Government of Venezuela. However important Cuban influence might be, we should not deflect that responsibility. It is the Venezuelan Government that is holding political prisoners, declaring political candidates ineligible for public office, weakening the separation of powers, politicizing the judiciary, and limiting freedom of the press.

The United States consistently makes clear to the Government of Venezuela that their acts of repression and oppression will continue to impact the bilateral relationship negatively. Each iteration of dialogue with the Venezuelans is anchored by direct and candid engagement on human rights, rule-of-law, and public trust.

In our engagement with countries throughout the region we press governments to live up to the hemisphere's shared commitment to democracy as articulated in

the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and other fundamental instruments related to democracy and human rights. In the process, we will continue to call on the Venezuelan Government to respect the human rights of all Venezuelans, regardless of their political affiliations and views, and afford them the ability to exercise their rights and freedoms of expression and assembly and due process.

Question. Please explain why each of the individuals in the attached list have not been sanctioned under the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014.

Answer. While I was not involved in the implementation of the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act of 2014, I believe this law, and Executive Order 13692, are important foreign policy tools that we should use as appropriate and necessary. Each determination on whether and when to impose targeted measures, including visa restrictions or asset blocking, takes into account the specific factual information we have on the individuals at issue in light of the requirements under U.S. law for imposing sanctions. Our implementation of sanctions is also carried out in the context of U.S. foreign policy interests, in consultation with all relevant agencies, including respect for human rights, democratic governance and pluralism, and regional security and stability.

Separately, since July 2014 the Department has restricted visa eligibility for certain Venezuelans believed to be responsible for, or complicit, in human rights abuses and undermining democratic governance, including public corruption. The Secretary of State took these steps pursuant to Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

We will continue to monitor the situation in Venezuela, and stand ready to take action against other individuals as additional information becomes available and is assessed to meet the criteria for sanctions.

Question. Did you or any U.S. official, including persons in the White House, indicate to representatives of the Venezuelan Government that the United States will refrain from applying additional sanctions on human rights violators or other corrupt persons?

Answer. No. We have been clear that all diplomatic options remain on the table and, should the situation warrant it, we would deploy these tools.

Question. During your time as Counselor of the State Department, please provide a list of specific times and circumstances in which you have met Diosdado Cabello, Speaker of Venezuela's National Assembly?

Answer. I traveled to Port-au-Prince on June 13, 2015, at the invitation of Haitian President Michel Martelly, who hosted U.S. and Venezuelan officials for a trilateral meeting to discuss Haitian elections and support for its reconstruction and development. National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello was a member of the Venezuelan delegation. Following the trilateral meeting, I met with Mr. Cabello and Foreign Minister Rodriguez in a bilateral meeting. These were the only times I have met with Mr. Cabello during my tenure as Counselor.

Question. In June 2015, you were photographed meeting with Mr. Cabello in Haiti. Were you aware in advance that he would be attending this meeting? If so, when did you find out?

Answer. The Venezuelan Government chose the members of its delegation for the June 13, 2015, trilateral meeting in Port-au-Prince. We did not know of Mr. Cabello's inclusion in that group until we arrived in Haiti on June 13.

Question. Is it the Obama administration's policy to send high-ranking State Department officials to meet with senior foreign officials that are the targets of U.S. federal investigations?

Answer. No. In pursuit of U.S. national interests, we regularly meet with a broad spectrum of political, private sector, and civil society leaders. We are mindful of those instances when such leaders are accused of wrong doing or are under investigation. There are moments when such engagement is necessary, either to communicate clearly U.S. positions or achieve U.S. policy goals.

Question. Have you been briefed about the ongoing investigation of Diosdado Cabello by anyone in the U.S. law enforcement community? If so, when and whom were you briefed by?

Answer. In the course of my duties as Counselor, I have been briefed by federal law enforcement agencies regarding the situation in Venezuela, specifically in April

and June 2015. The exact subject and nature of these briefings is sensitive law enforcement information.

Question. Have you ever discussed the status of any ongoing law enforcement investigations with any Venezuelan officials, including Diosdado Cabello?

Answer. No. I have not discussed the status of any ongoing law enforcement investigations with Venezuelan officials.

Question. Has the Drug Enforcement Administration or Department of Justice provided a list to the Department of State of individuals cooperating with U.S. law enforcement investigations in Venezuela? If so, when?

Answer. No. I am unaware of any such list.

Question. Has the State Department revoked visas for any Venezuelan officials that the U.S. law enforcement community has indicated are cooperating with the U.S. Government? If so, what was your role in that decision?

Answer. I am not aware of any visa revocations of Venezuelan officials that are cooperating with U.S. law enforcement officials.

Question. Please explain the length and nature of your relationship with Pedro Mario Burelli, a Venezuelan citizen.

Answer. I first met Pedro Burelli when I served at our Embassy in Caracas from 1996–99. At the time, he was a member of the PDVSA Board of Directors and his father, Miguel Angel Burelli Rivas, was the Foreign Minister in the government of President Rafael Caldera. Mr. Burelli is a friend of mine.

Question. During your nomination hearing, you stated that if confirmed, you will make sure that you will work to restore the credibility of the TIP process. If confirmed, what are your specific recommendations for making the TIP process more transparent?

Answer. Over the past 15 years, the TIP Report has consistently drawn public attention to the problem of modern slavery and foreign government efforts to address it. The report is widely regarded as the gold standard for antitrafficking information about government efforts around the world to address this crime.

The Department strives to make the report as objective and accurate as possible, documenting the successes and shortcomings of government antitrafficking efforts measured against the minimum standards established under U.S. law. However, the perception that unrelated political concerns played a role in the 2015 tier ranking process is a significant threat to the report's credibility.

The Department continuously reviews how we can use the report even more effectively as a lever to motivate tangible progress around the world. Specifically, the Department is working to improve internal communication and institutionalizing a process that ensures high-level engagement in a timely way throughout the course of the reporting period to urge governments to take needed action to fulfill the TIP Report recommendations. In addition, we are reviewing the individual country recommendations in the report, which inform the Action Plans we prepare annually for each country. We are considering ways we can strengthen the recommendations in the report and use them more effectively to push progress in individual priority countries through engagement year round.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the J/TIP Office, our regional bureaus, and our missions around the globe to ensure TIP issues are integrated into our broader foreign policy efforts. If confirmed, I also look forward to a robust and ongoing engagement and consultation with Congress to ensure that the TIP Report remains the gold standard for antitrafficking efforts for years to come.

Question. Please provide the Cuban's Government's National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking that the Department cited as one of the reasons Cuba was upgraded in the most recent TIP report.

Answer. The Cuban Government informed the Department in March 2015 that they were developing a national action plan, which would include trafficking in persons. This information was provided at the end of the 2015 reporting period and was not considered in decisions regarding Cuba's tier placement in the 2015 report. In fact, the 2015 TIP Report recommends that the Cuban Government "develop an action plan to address sex trafficking and forced labor for males and females."

To date, the Government of Cuba has not shared with us a national action plan, although in 2013 and 2014 they provided reports of their efforts to combat trafficking in persons, which were considered as part of our evaluation process.

Cuba was upgraded in the 2015 TIP Report because of significant efforts to comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, including the

prosecution and conviction of 13 sex traffickers in 2013 and the provision of services to victims in those cases.

The Cuban Government's antitrafficking efforts, including efforts to develop a national action plan to address sex trafficking and forced labor, will be one of the many factors taken into consideration when determining Cuba's tier ranking in the 2016 TIP Report.

Question. What actions has the U.S. Government taken since the conclusion of the JCPOA to sanction Iran for its ongoing human rights abuses and sponsorship of terrorism?

Answer. The administration's policy regarding Iran's human rights abuses and sponsorship of terrorism has not changed as a result of the JCPOA. Our unilateral sanctions focused on human rights abuses and terrorism will not be affected by the JCPOA, and we will continue to enforce them.

On human rights, we continue to publicly express our concerns regarding these abuses, and to work with the international community to press Iran to meet its international human rights commitments. We have consistently and publicly expressed our concerns about Iran's human rights abuses through a range of channels and call on Iran to grant all prisoners and detainees full due process rights, in accordance with its international commitments.

The administration will continue to highlight our concerns and document human rights violations in our annual Human Rights, Trafficking in Persons, and International Religious Freedom reports. Additionally, we have partnered with other countries to support and adopt resolutions in the U.N. General Assembly and the U.N. Human Rights Council highlighting human rights concerns in Iran, and in supporting the mandate of the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran.

Iran's support for terrorism also remains a serious concern for the administration, and we are committed to working with our partners in the region and around the world to take the necessary steps to counter Iranian aggression. The United States has designated Iran as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, and that designation and the sanctions consequences that flow from it will remain in place under the deal. Iranian individuals and entities designated for terrorism will remain subject to sanctions, including IRGC-QF Qasem Soleimani and the IRGC-QF itself.

Question. Recent press reports indicate that Russia has facilitated Iran's efforts to ship weapons to the Assad regime in Syria. Is Russia in violation of existing UNSCRs regarding Iranian arms sales?

Answer. Full and robust enforcement of all relevant U.N. measures is, and will, remain critical. We continue to deter and respond to arms sales violations, including through interdiction, sanctions and law enforcement measures, and will continue to press the Security Council to address and respond to any violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions. Where legal and appropriate, we have shared information with Russia when transactions might violate U.N. Security Council resolutions on Iran.

The United States takes seriously all credible allegations of states facilitating violations of a U.N. arms embargo, and we are prepared to pursue action in the Security Council, its sanctions committees, other multilateral fora, bilaterally and unilaterally. The Department would be happy to brief you on further details in a classified setting.

Question. What specifically is the administration doing to punish Iran for its recent ballistic missile test, which, according to the United States, was a violation of UNSCR 1929?

Answer. We believe that Iran's October 10 launch of the "Emad," which is a new variant of the Shahab-3 medium range ballistic missile inherently capable of delivering a nuclear weapon, was a clear violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929 (2010).

In a meeting of the U.N. Security Council on October 21, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, highlighted this violation and condemned the launch as destabilizing. Other Security Council members joined the United States in condemning the launch as a violation, highlighting the widespread international concern with this act. These actions alone have demonstrated to Iran that there is a political cost for such provocation.

Additionally, on October 21 the United States, together with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, submitted a joint report on the launch to the U.N. Security Council's Iran Sanctions Committee. We anticipate that the committee will discuss our report in a meeting this month. We have called on the committee, with the support of the independent U.N. Panel of Experts, to review this matter quickly

and recommend appropriate action. We also intend to press the committee to engage Iran directly, including to express concern and to ask Iran to explain its behavior.

Further, beyond the U.N. Security Council, we have a range of unilateral and multilateral tools available to counter Iran's missile-related activities. We have imposed on multiple past occasions penalties under domestic authorities on foreign persons and entities engaged in proliferation-related activities. We are reviewing the facts from the recent launch to determine whether such action is warranted in this case.

In the meantime, we are continuing to combat the proliferation of missile technology and equipment by working with the more than 100 countries around the world that have endorsed the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and by urging all countries to implement and enforce missile-related export controls, such as those established by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

Moving forward, full and robust enforcement of all relevant U.N. measures will remain critical. We will continue to press the Security Council to address and respond to any violations by Iran. While all of the provisions of the previous U.N. Security Council resolutions on Iran's nuclear program remain in effect, we will continue to insist that these resolutions be enforced and that the committee and the Panel continue to carry out their respective mandates. We have repeatedly underscored this point to all relevant international actors.

Question. Has Iran violated the arms embargo that it is subject to under several UNSCRs since the conclusion of the JCPOA? Please provide a list of specific violations as part of a classified response if necessary.

Answer. We believe it is likely that Iran has continued in recent months to provide support to the Assad regime in Syria and to the Houthis in Yemen in violation of UNSCRs. We would be happy to provide additional details in a classified setting.

We are certainly concerned that Iran continues to violate the U.N. sanctions imposed against it, including through illicit procurement and arms smuggling. Iran's trafficking of weapons, including to some of the most extreme and irresponsible actors in the region, remains a serious threat to peace. We continue to deter and respond to such violations, including through interdiction, sanctions and law enforcement measures, as appropriate.

To support these efforts, we will continue to invoke the U.N. arms restrictions on Iran that exist now in Security Council Resolution 1929 (2010) and those in Security Council Resolution 2231(2015), which will come into effect once we reach Implementation Day. We will also continue to invoke other existing U.N. arms embargoes as appropriate, including those in Security Council resolutions that target arms transfers to the Houthis in Yemen, Shia militants in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Libya, and North Korea. Full and robust enforcement of all relevant U.N. measures is and will remain critical.

In addition, we still have a number of ways, including through our unilateral sanctions authorities, to impose penalties on foreign persons and entities involved in Iranian conventional arms transfers. The size of the U.S. economy, the power of our financial system, and the reach of U.S. unilateral measures give us enormous leverage to pressure other countries to abide by restrictions on Iranian arms activity.

Question. Do you agree with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif's statement that Iran does not "jail people for their opinions?"

Answer. No. As we noted in our most recent Country Report on Human Rights for Iran, during 2014 "the government arrested students, journalists, lawyers, political activists, women's activists, artists, and members of religious minorities, charged many with crimes, such as 'propaganda against the system' and 'insulting the Supreme Leader' and treated such cases as national security trials."

We also noted in the report that "Iranian law limits freedom of speech, including by members of the press. Individuals were not permitted to criticize publicly the country's system of government, Supreme Leader, or official religion. Security forces and the country's judiciary punished those who violated these restrictions and often punished as well persons who publicly criticized the President, the Cabinet, and the Islamic Consultative Assembly. The government monitored meetings, movements, and communications of opposition members, reformists, activists, and human rights defenders. It often charged persons with crimes against national security and insulting the regime based on letters, e-mails, and other public and private communications."

Question. What specifically do you intend to do to bring home American citizens currently detained in Iran and to obtain information about the whereabouts of Floridian Robert Levinson?

Answer. The President and the Secretary of State have repeatedly and publicly called for the immediate release of Saeed Abedini, Jason Rezaian, and Amir Hekmati, and for the Government of Iran to work cooperatively with us to locate Robert Levinson. We will not rest until these Americans are reunited with their families in the United States.

The Secretary consistently raises the cases of detained and missing U.S. citizens with his Iranian counterpart when they meet. I also raised this issue with the Iranian Government at the first meeting of the Joint Commission in Vienna in October. If confirmed, I will continue to raise the detained and missing U.S. citizens with Iranian officials at all levels at every opportunity.

THOMAS SHANNON'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR PERDUE

Question. What would you say are the most significant implications of the JCPOA for U.S. foreign policy broadly? What would be the consequences for the region, and our Nation, should this deal unravel, or fail to be implemented? To what extent, if any, does the Iran deal represent a turning point in United States-Iran relations? Do you view this as a limited agreement that does not change the trajectory of decades of United States-Iran animosity? What type of future engagement do you hope to have with Iran? What do you think is realistic?

Answer. The goal of the JCPOA is to eliminate the imminent threat that Iran will acquire a nuclear weapon. The deal itself will not erase decades of Iranian anti-American and anti-Israeli rhetoric and actions. We will continue to aggressively counter Iran's support for terrorism and its destabilizing activities in the region, working closely with Israel, the gulf countries, and our other regional partners. We have been clear that we are not suspending or removing sanctions related to non-nuclear issues, such as Iran's support for terrorism, its ballistic missile activities, its abuse of human rights, or its support for the Assad regime, Hezbollah, or the Houthis in Yemen.

Question. You have mentioned before that this deal with Iran will be "made or broken in its implementation." Would you be willing to provide to this committee with a list of potential or foreseen Iranian violations, and what specific actions would be taken to punish Iranian cheating?

Answer. We remain committed to consulting closely with Congress throughout implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and to ensuring that Iran fulfills all of its nuclear-related commitments in a verifiable and complete manner. Should Iran fail to fulfill any of its nuclear-related commitments, we retain a wide range of options to respond, whether in the case of significant nonperformance by Iran or more minor instances of noncompliance. For example, the United States has the ability to reimpose both national and multilateral nuclear-related sanctions in the event of nonperformance by Iran. In the case of United Nations (U.N.) sanctions, under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, we could do so even over the objections of any member of the Security Council, including China or Russia. Additionally, we have a range of other options for addressing minor noncompliance. These include reimposing certain domestic sanctions to respond to minor but persistent violations of the JCPOA, and using our leverage in the Joint Commission on procurement requests.

Question. Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei formally endorsed the JCPOA, but he also included some caveats. He said that this deal commits the West to lift all sanctions and prohibits it from imposing any new ones. Khamenei specifically noted that sanctions for terrorism or human rights abuses would be violations of the JCPOA, and would then oblige the Iranian Government to cease abiding by it.

- ◆ How does this interpretation of the deal from Iran impact our ability to counter their hegemonic moves in Syria? Is our toolkit limited now? Will this administration support further sanctions on Iran for human rights abuses or terrorism?

Answer. We are aware of the October 21 letter from the Supreme Leader to President Rouhani and note that all sides understand what they must do to reach JCPOA Implementation Day, when the IAEA verifies that Iran has taken all of its nuclear related steps under the JCPOA and in turn Iran receives relief from nuclear-related sanctions. The JCPOA clearly lays out this process, and that will remain the focus of the administration. As long as Iran keeps its commitments under the JCPOA, we will not reimpose the nuclear-related sanctions lifted under the JCPOA.

We have been clear with Iran, both publicly and privately, that we will continue to take the actions we feel necessary, including through the use of sanctions, to counter Iran's destabilizing activities, to block their support for terrorism, and to address their human rights abuses.

We have condemned Iranian support to Syria's Assad regime—support that includes providing not only billions of dollars in funds, but also weapons, strategic guidance, training, and mobilization of Shia paramilitary fighters from around the region, thus enabling the regime's continued repression. We have imposed targeted sanctions on Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Ministry of Intelligence and Security for their support to the Assad regime.

Question. As you know, on October 10 Iran launched a medium-range ballistic missile called the "Ebad" missile, which Ambassador Samantha Power concluded was capable of delivering a nuclear weapon.

- ◆ Do you believe this constitutes a violation of the U.N. Security Resolution 2231? How should the U.S. respond to such a violation?

Answer. The administration is deeply concerned that Iran continues to develop a ballistic missile capacity that threatens regional and international security. Iran's October 10 missile launch violates UNSCR 1929, which requires Iran not to "undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic missile technology."

We have strongly condemned the launch and are now working with allies to raise Iran's violation at the U.N. and increase the political costs to Iran of violating its international obligations. As you note, Ambassador Power raised the matter in the U.N. Security Council in mid-October. As followup, together with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, we submitted a joint report on the launch to the Security Council's Iran Sanctions Committee. We called on the committee, with the support of the independent U.N. Panel of Experts, to review this matter quickly and recommend appropriate action.

Beyond the U.N. Security Council, we have a range of unilateral and multilateral tools available to counter Iran's missile-related activities. We have imposed on multiple past occasions penalties under domestic authorities on foreign persons and entities engaged in proliferation-related activities. We are reviewing the facts from the recent launch to determine whether such action is warranted in this case. In the meantime, we are continuing to combat the proliferation of missile technology and equipment by working with the more than 100 countries around the world that have endorsed the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and by urging all countries to implement and enforce missile-related export controls, such as those established by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

Question. Soon the United States, Russia, and a group of European and Middle Eastern countries are preparing international talks to accelerate efforts to end the war in Syria.

- ◆ At this point, are you expecting a negotiated, diplomatic solution? How will President Assad play into this equation? Do you agree with having Assad stay in power for any period of time? What is your opinion of Iran being at the table? Do you think they can play a productive role? Is a negotiated settlement possible with ISIS involved?

Answer. There is no military solution to the crisis in Syria. Attempting to end the civil war by military action will only cause greater violence and create further refugee flows, human casualties, destruction of institutions and public services—exacerbating human suffering. That is why, while we work to degrade and defeat ISIL, we are trying to advance a managed, negotiated political transition through diplomacy; Secretary Kerry initiated last week's meeting in Vienna to do just that.

Assad cannot unite or govern Syria. His brutality against the Syrian people, including chlorine attacks and indiscriminate barrel bombing, has cost hundreds of thousands lives and resulted in the current crisis in which half of the prewar Syrian population is displaced. Last week in Vienna, all participants agreed that any future "elections must be administered under U.N. supervision to the satisfaction of the governance and to the highest international standards of transparency and accountability, free and fair, with all Syrians, including the diaspora, eligible to participate."

The Secretary of State is clear it is important for all key stakeholders to be present, including Iran. However, the invitation for Iran to participate in these discussions does not overlook Iran's ongoing support for the Assad regime, continued support for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah, and its destabilizing regional behavior. As the President has said, there cannot be a return to the prewar status quo.

While it is unclear whether the current round of talks will succeed in bringing about the transition that the Syrian people deserve, the United States is committed to pursuing a negotiated settlement to the crisis. As we pursue this diplomatic track, we are also pursuing a comprehensive effort to degrade and defeat ISIL in Syria—a goal that was affirmed by all participants at last week's Vienna meeting. We have conducted over 2,700 strikes against ISIL targets in Syria, and we have seen marked success in the campaign over the last year. ISIL's access to border crossings has been eliminated from all but 68 miles of the 600-mile long Turkey/Syrian border and we continue to pursue these efforts with over 65 coalition partners.

Question. Russia's increased military actions in Syria are concerning. Particularly when they have said they are targeting ISIS, when in reality some 80 percent of their strikes are targeting areas not controlled by ISIS. Instead, they are helping to further prop up Assad by striking rebel groups.

◆ How willing do you think the Russians are to actually participate in the anti-ISIS coalition?

Answer. Russia's actions in Syria—where its focus has not been on striking ISIL—indicate it is not interested in participating in the U.S.-led 65-member Counter-ISIL Coalition. If the Kremlin changes course and employs its military in a constructive manner that works with the coalition, we would welcome Russia's contribution. We appreciate that Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov has agreed to participate in the upcoming meeting in Vienna, which will bring together 19 international stakeholders to discuss how to end the violence in Syria as soon as possible, but Russia still needs to recognize that there must be a political transition in Syria that includes Assad's departure in order to stop the bloodshed as well as the refugee and humanitarian crises.

Question. What do you see as Russia's motivations for intervening in Syria? What are likely consequences for Syria, Russia, and the region?

Answer. It appears that the Russian Government intervened to prop up the Assad regime when it observed significant setbacks to the regime on the ground. The Kremlin has maintained its actions are driven by a desire to fight terrorism, but is also likely motivated by an interest in portraying itself as a global leader, while redirecting attention away from Ukraine.

Russia has aligned itself against the vast majority of the Syrian people and interjected itself into a sectarian conflict. Moscow asserts that its military action is directed at ISIL, but about 80 percent of Russian strikes target areas like Hama, Homs, and Aleppo where the Assad regime has lost territory to forces led by the moderate opposition.

There is also credible reporting that Russian actions are exacerbating an already dangerous refugee outflow, straining European countries' ability to cope. Just over the last month, the United Nations reports at least 120,000 Syrians have been internally displaced as a result of regime offenses aided by Russian airstrikes. In less than 2 weeks, 52,800 people were displaced in northern Hama and southern Idlib alone.

We have repeatedly conveyed our concerns to Russian officials that its intervention in Syria has aggravated the sectarian divide and the humanitarian crisis. We have urged Russia to use its influence to compel the Assad regime to stop its attacks against innocent civilians and to agree to a political transition.

Question. What are implications of Russian intervention for U.S. military operations against ISIS? What are potential implications of Russian intervention for U.S. policy in the region, and U.S. bilateral relationships with traditional regional partners?

Answer. The implications of Russian intervention for U.S. military operations against ISIL are twofold: (1) Russian pilots' behavior over Syria has been dangerous—indeed, reckless at times—and thus we have made efforts to mitigate the danger to our pilots; (2) Russian airstrikes have targeted moderate opposition fighting ISIL and allowed ISIL to gain territory in some areas, making our counter-ISIL fight more difficult.

On October 20, senior officials from our Department of Defense and the Russian Ministry of Defense signed a memorandum of understanding on measures to ensure our pilots' safety by minimizing the risk of inflight incidents among coalition and Russian aircraft operating over Syria. There is no agreement between our two sides on broader military coordination beyond flight safety. Some countries neighboring Syria, including Israel, Turkey, and Jordan, have also established working level

military communication mechanisms to avoid misunderstandings and unintended confrontations.

About 80 percent of Russian strikes target areas like Hama, Homs, and Aleppo where the Assad regime has lost territory to forces led by the moderate opposition. In northern Syria, reports suggest that since Russian strikes began, ISIL has acquired more territory, not less.

We have encouraged our allies and partners to push Russia to employ its military to target ISIL and compel the Assad regime to stop its attacks against innocent civilians and agree to a political transition.

Question. Do you think Russia's involvement in Syria is in any way good or helpful to U.S. policy interests?

Answer. We and our allies and partners are pushing Russia to play a constructive role in the fight against ISIL and to use its influence with the Assad regime to compel it to end its attacks against the Syrian people and to agree to a political transition to end the crisis. If the Kremlin changes course and employs its military in a constructive manner that works with the coalition, it could have a positive effect on policy goals in the region, and we would, as President Obama has said, welcome Russia's contribution.

Question. We can see from the latest developments in the Middle East that traditional U.S. allies in the region are starting to turn toward Russia more in the absence of a stronger U.S. presence. Just this weekend, Iraq gave Russia the green light to begin airstrikes there, despite U.S. objections. And on October 23, 2015, Russia signed an agreement with Jordan to cooperate militarily against ISIS.

◆ What do you think of these moves toward Russia? Is our lack of commitment to Iraq and Syria leading our regional allies to turn to Russia? Do you view that as a problem?

Answer. The United States remains the most powerful force in the Middle East with a web of alliances and partnerships as well as a physical presence that is unrivaled. Regional actors have reacted to Russia's intervention in various ways, but we are confident that our deep and long-standing partnerships with countries such as Jordan and Iraq will remain strong as we share the same objectives on the core issues of how to best combat ISIL and promote a transition in Syria.

The Government of Iraq has not approved Russian airstrikes in its territory, though some parliamentarians have pressured Prime Minister Abadi to do so. Prime Minister Abadi has assured us that the Government of Iraq will not invite Russia to conduct airstrikes. We have not seen Russia conduct any strikes there, nor take any practical steps in preparation to do so in the near term. Similar to the United States, Jordan has worked with Russia to ensure the safety of its pilots as they conduct operations in regions where Russian aircraft are also present.

Question. In April of 2015, the State Department released its second Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). Please describe what you see as the principal outcomes of the QDDR.

◆ What progress, if any, has been made toward implementing the review's recommendations? What impact, if any, will the review have on the day-to-day conduct of U.S. diplomacy and on the role and functioning of the office of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs?

Answer. The principal outcomes of the 2015 QDDR are its identification and focus on a few big challenges and opportunities, both strategic and operational. The review identified four global strategic policy priorities that are, in many cases, inter-related: preventing conflict and violent extremism, promoting open democratic societies, advancing inclusive economic growth, and mitigating and adapting to climate change. These policy objectives are relevant to our work in nearly all parts of the world and the QDDR provides the State Department and USAID with detailed guidance on how we should focus our efforts. All four of these strategic priorities were included in both the 2015 National Security Strategy and the 2014 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, but the QDDR makes very specific commitments detailing what the Department and USAID will do to advance our objectives in these areas.

Furthermore, the 2015 QDDR includes specific recommendations for the bureaucratic reforms we must undertake in order to adapt our organizations to support our policy priorities. The QDDR outlines the steps we must take to build dynamic organizations including harnessing knowledge, data, and technology; promoting innovation; managing physical risk; advancing strategic planning and performance management; and increasing our engagement with broad sectors of American society, economy, and culture.

Lastly, another principal outcome of the 2015 QDDR is the attention given to building a skilled, diverse, and agile workforce. The review also presents steps to improve work-life wellness for our employees and give support to those who face the greatest risks.

As the nominee to be Under Secretary for Political Affairs, the ongoing implementation of the QDDR recommendations affects a broad variety of what would be my portfolio, either directly or via the regional and functional bureaus that I would oversee. This includes aspects of the strategic policy priorities, organizational reforms, as well as workforce issues.

Since the QDDR's release in late April 2015, progress has been made in implementing a broad range of the review's recommendations related to the four strategic objectives.

- ◆ **Countering Violent Extremism:** Following the February White House summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) the Department supported the organization of eight regional conferences to improve regional coordination. These events have given rise to many ongoing initiatives that are building the capacity of governments, civil society, and local communities to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism. In order to elevate CVE as a priority and improve coordination, the Secretary approved centralizing the Department's expanding CVE activities in the Counterterrorism Bureau.
- ◆ **Promoting Resilient, Open, Democratic Societies:** The Department, in coordination with interagency partners, is working to create and maintain civic space, promote democratic governance, and support regional frameworks, including through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, foreign assistance, and partnerships with civil society and the private sector. The Department does so through such international fora as the Community of Democracies, the Open Government Partnership, the Freedom Online Coalition, and such funding initiatives as the Lifeline Embattled Civil Society Organizations Assistance Fund and LIFT (Leading Internet Freedom Technology), in which the Department and like-minded partners assist civil society actors in both open and restrictive environments to engage governments to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Department actively defends the human rights and the inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups. It also advocates for the strengthening of international human rights frameworks, institutions, and oversight in an effort to amplify the voices of women, youth, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, indigenous persons, survivors of violence and human trafficking, as well as members of other traditionally marginalized groups. Information-sharing mechanisms are being strengthened to ensure that human rights abuses are taken into account when considering visa eligibility.
- ◆ **Advancing Inclusive Economic Growth:** Considerable progress has been made in implementing the QDDR's reform recommendations related to this objective. The six regional bureaus have identified deputy assistant secretaries to lead these bureaus engagement on economic, energy, environmental, oceans, health, and scientific affairs; they meet on a regular basis. Rotational positions are being established for officers to serve in functional bureaus (e.g., economic, energy, oceans/environment/scientific affairs) followed by an assignment in a regional bureau. New detail assignments were created to allow Foreign Service officers to serve temporarily in other government agencies, at the state and local level, and with private companies.
- ◆ **Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change:** The United States takes a leading role in confronting the threat of climate change through action both at home and abroad. In addition to efforts to achieve an ambitious, inclusive, and durable U.N. agreement, Under Secretary Catherine Novelli will chair a Department-wide Climate Capacity Building Working Group to better integrate and elevate climate change across our diplomacy and development work.

Since the QDDR's release the Department has made considerable strides in building a more dynamic organization. These reforms are already improving our ability to promote our objectives and respond to the complex threats and challenges we face. In particular, these efforts are leading to improved use of technology to better access, organize, and make use of data and information and promoting innovation while managing risk.

The QDDR emphasized the importance of harnessing knowledge, data, and technology. The Secretary has launched an initiative to transform the way we process information and manage knowledge at the Department. Recently we have begun to create two technology platforms to transform how our people produce, access, and use information to pursue our foreign policy objectives more effectively and efficiently. First, we are developing a user-friendly portal through which staff will be

able to search for a specific issue, region, or person across a wide variety of sources (e.g., emails, cables, memoranda). Second, we have set about to create a mobile-friendly contact management system to give our diplomats on-the-go access to relevant, up-to-date information about their foreign counterparts, such as topics discussed during last point of contact. Given the personnel transitions that occur every year in the Department with the rotational model of the Foreign Service, this tool will enable diplomats new to their assignments to quickly get up to speed.

In an effort to make the Department an intelligent and efficient consumer of big data, a recommendation also highlighted in the 2015 QDDR, we are establishing an office for advanced data analytics to improve our policy and operational effectiveness in this new era of "Big Data." This unit will equip the State Department's policy-makers and subject matter experts with data-driven empirically based analyses by fusing quantitative and qualitative insight. It will enhance the Department's efforts to integrate data-driven analysis and diplomacy, and it will collaborate with our overseas missions and domestic offices to make data more accessible to employees and senior leaders. This effort will enable the Department to leverage data and information to uncover trends; anticipate political outcomes; estimate the impact of our policy; minimize costs and risks by reducing uncertainty; foster strategic thinking to connect policy to operations; and enhance and integrate big-data analytics into our problem-solving and decisionmaking.

The QDDR obligates the Department to foster a culture of innovation and creative problem-solving while managing and mitigating risk. Earlier this year a new risk management policy was drafted and implemented. A Department-wide survey on risk management practices was distributed this fall and responses are currently being evaluated in order to identify the key components of successful risk mitigation programs as well as gaps.

The implementation of a series of QDDR recommendations to invest in our workforce is underway. These initiatives seek to improve the day-to-day functioning of our workforce by improving skills and work-life balance. These efforts recognize that our single most important asset as a Department is our people and we have launched several efforts to improve training for, and the evaluation of, our workforce. The 2015 QDDR included specific recommendations to invest in our workforce by expanding the core training curriculum, increasing long-term training options as well as excursion tours to other agencies. Although enrollment at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) has increased 56 percent since 2010 while appropriated funding has declined 28 percent, we continue to drive innovation in several critical areas. This includes developing new content, improving methodology, and increasing accessibility of our training programs. The Department is also implementing a core curriculum for our personnel and emphasizing continued training throughout the course of an employee's career. These improvements are enhancing the daily effectiveness of our people in carrying out our foreign policy objectives.

Likewise, we have streamlined and improved the processes we use to evaluate staff performance. For example, we have revamped and shortened the Employee Evaluation Report used for Foreign Service personnel to focus on employee effectiveness in achieving goals, rather than focusing on competencies in performing tasks. We have also updated the mid-year professional development form to promote earlier and better performance related discussions, establish clear expectations and goals, and identify areas of excellence and areas for additional professional growth.

The Department has also taken steps to increase the flexibility, diversity, and overall work-life wellness of our workforce. These efforts, highlighted in the 2015 QDDR, are improving the Department's ability to efficiently and effectively promote our strategic priorities and deliver foreign assistance. We are working to increase the agility of our workforce so that we can get the right people with the right skills, in the right place at the right time. The requirement that we respond quickly and deploy expertise wherever it is needed is driving us to create expanded opportunities for Foreign Service, Civil Service, and local staff abroad to take on temporary rotational assignments to fill staffing gaps, more quickly align skills with positions and speed hiring.

The QDDR emphasized the need to create a diverse workforce—one that more closely reflects the diversity of our Nation. We are therefore making significant efforts to recruit and support women, minorities, LGBTI persons, and persons with disabilities. Our recruitment initiatives include the successful Pickering and Rangel fellowship programs, opportunities for military veterans and persons with disabilities, the 2012 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, as well as outreach activities across the Nation targeting underrepresented student populations.

Retaining the best personnel requires that we both invest in our employees, but also ensure that they can balance their work and personal lives. The Secretary established a Work-Life Wellness Task Force and launched a Voluntary Leave

Bank. The Department's Family Liaison Office continues to support careers for eligible family members both at our overseas posts as well as domestically. A number of flexible work schedule and telework options also exist. As a result of these and other efforts, in 2014 the Partnership for Public Service found the State Department ranked third among large agencies in their annual "Best Place to Work in the Federal Government" survey.

Question. You have spent a lot of your career involved in the Western Hemisphere. Democratic conditions in Venezuela have deteriorated significantly over the past decade. Recent opinion polls show that the ruling Socialist party will be defeated, but observers fear that the government will resort to fraud to maintain control of the legislature.

- ◆ Can you discuss your concerns for the upcoming legislative elections in Venezuela? If confirmed, what steps would you recommend taking to ensure the elections are free and fair? And how would you recommend reacting if they are not free and fair?

Answer. The upcoming legislative elections will be a barometer of the well-being of Venezuelan democracy. As the December 6 vote approaches, we remain deeply concerned by the Venezuelan Government's continuing efforts to prevent opponents from participating in the political process. Arresting and imprisoning leading political figures, declaring others ineligible to hold public office, and restricting the ability of candidates to campaign and communicate with voters are significant violations of democratic principles and practices. In such an environment, it is hard to see how an election could be fair. However, the upcoming elections could still be free, if Venezuelans are allowed to go to the polls and there is sufficient guarantee that their votes will count.

If confirmed, I will continue our efforts to convince the Venezuelan Government to invite and accredit international electoral observers with recognized experience and credibility. I will also continue our engagement with others in the region to support a credible electoral observation mission. We will also continue our support to domestic electoral observation groups.

It is our hope that these elections will accurately reflect the sentiments of Venezuelan voters. In the event that is not the case, we would respond in keeping with the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the other Inter-American mechanisms. We would do so in consultation with partners in the region, and with Congress.

Question. Earlier this year, the administration imposed sanctions against a number of Venezuelan officials found to be involved in human rights abuses, including the repression of freedom of expression. At the same time, the administration has engaged in bilateral talks, led by you, with Venezuelan officials, including President Maduro, reportedly in an effort to ease tensions.

- ◆ What can you tell us about those talks with the Venezuelan Government? What came out of those talks, and are they ongoing? To what extent are we engaging with other Latin American countries regarding the situation in Venezuela?

Answer. The purpose of my engagement was to create a channel of political dialogue through which both countries could express concerns about the bilateral relationship. From our point of view, the focus was several fold: (1) to express the importance of setting a date for legislative elections, to encourage the Government of Venezuela to invite credible international electoral observers to evaluate the vote, and to address the issue of political prisoners; (2) to stabilize our diplomatic relationship and to ensure that our mission in Caracas had the personnel and guarantees from the host government to represent our interests in accordance with international law and practice; and (3) to determine if we shared any common regional interests.

The talks are ongoing, currently being conducted through our diplomatic missions. In some areas, such as setting an electoral date and stabilizing and protecting our diplomatic mission, we achieved our goal. In other areas, such as the well-being of political prisoners, inviting electoral observation missions to participate in the legislative elections, and exploration of possible points of common regional interest, we continue to engage the Government of Venezuela.

Part of our broader strategy has been to create an incentive for partners in Latin America and beyond to engage with the Government of Venezuela, especially on issues related to elections and human rights. This has happened, and we will continue to work with our partners in the hemisphere to establish a common understanding of the democratic and human rights challenges facing Venezuela.

Question. After two trips to the region, I was pleased to see President Obama's announcement regarding the maintenance of U.S. military presence in Afghanistan

past 2016. What will be the civilian component of the U.S. presence in Afghanistan post-2016? What changes, if any, are contemplated in the U.S. civilian mission and the State Department's role in Afghanistan with respect to the President's decision on the military side of the U.S. effort? What do you see being the main challenges to success in Afghanistan? What are your thoughts on developing a coordinated plan to bring about a credible peace process between the Afghan Government and the Taliban, and how is the U.S. playing a role?

Answer. With the assistance and support of the United States and other international allies, Afghanistan has made significant progress over the last decade, including its first democratic transition of power, an extraordinary expansion in access to health and education services, and the strengthening of its armed forces as they have assumed full responsibility for security. The United States remains committed to working with the Afghan Government, the Afghan people, and international partners to promote stability and peace in Afghanistan. Our bilateral partnership continues to serve the national interests of both our nations, including our common interest in ensuring that Afghanistan is never again a safe haven for terrorists who threaten the region, our allies, and our homeland.

The civilian presence

Advancing our national interests in Afghanistan requires a capable civilian team in Kabul. The President's October 15 announcement to sustain our bilateral counterterrorism mission and our participation in the NATO train, advise, and assist mission in Afghanistan does not alter the Department of State's plans to consolidate Embassy operations in Kabul. DOS continues efforts both to streamline operations to ensure the Embassy can be self-sufficient and to coordinate planning with DOD to accommodate a Security Cooperation Office sometime in the future. A significant majority of our personnel are—and will continue to be—security and life support staff due to Afghanistan's unique operating environment.

Challenges

While significant progress has been made in Afghanistan, the country continues to face daunting security, political, and economic challenges. In 2015, Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) for the first time faced the insurgency largely without the direct support of international troops. They took heavy losses and experienced significant setbacks, but in many respects they have recovered and performed with courage and initiative—including in Kunduz. Certain elements, including the U.S.-trained Afghan Special Forces, performed exceptionally well. Maintaining Afghan force levels in the future and ensuring they have the necessary training and equipment will remain a challenge. We are committed to working closely with President Ghani, the Afghan Government, and our international partners to ensure that Afghan forces are trained and equipped to preserve the gains made over the last 13 years.

Addressing Afghanistan's stagnant economy and high unemployment rates will also be a challenge. The declining international presence in Afghanistan has been a significant drag on the economy, underscoring the importance of developing a more sustainable foundation for economic growth and employment generation. We are encouraging the government to take steps to increase GDP growth as Afghanistan's population increases; address chronic fiscal shortfalls while reducing donor dependency; and deliver on its ambitious reform agenda, which includes fighting corruption and improving the business climate.

President Ghani and chief executive officer (CEO) Abdullah have collaboratively appointed the majority of senior government officials, and we are encouraging them to continue working together on implementing the broader reform agenda to ensure political stability.

A credible peace process

The United States supports President Ghani and CEO Abdullah in their call for reconciliation talks with the Taliban. It has long been our position that an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned reconciliation process is the surest way to achieve stability and end the conflict. As part of the outcome of any process, the Taliban and other armed Afghan opposition groups must end violence, break any associations with international terrorism, and accept Afghanistan's constitution, including its protections for women and minorities.

Question. In your testimony you highlighted your work with partners in Africa to fight jihadist ideology. Now, U.S. security assistance to Africa has increased dramatically in recent years, most notably to support counterterrorism efforts. Several of our key counterterrorism partners in Africa, however, are among the world's most

fragile states, and some are led by regimes associated with significant human rights abuses and/or increasing restrictions on political space domestically.

- ◆ How is the State Department seeking to balance the significant investments in these countries' militaries against concerns about their political trajectories? How sustainable are efforts to counter terrorism if African governments do not improve local conditions for development and open democratic space?

Answer. State fragility and the ability of terrorist organizations to operate within a country's territory are inextricably linked. A country that lacks stable military, political, and law enforcement institutions and that is unresponsive to the needs of its citizens cannot effectively counter and combat violent extremism, whether arising from within or without. When citizens feel free to express their opinions and are vested in their domestic political process, they come to share with the government the desire to keep violent extremists at bay so that their nation and their families can safely prosper. For this reason, we employ multipronged approaches to the situation in a given country to address all of these issues.

A large portion of our counterterrorism assistance focuses on building the capacities of partner governments' militaries and law enforcement agencies to combat insurgencies and reduce terrorist threats, as well as to investigate and prosecute suspected terrorists in a rule of law framework. Our support for host nation civil society organizations is a vital and growing part of the mission. To this end, we work with a variety of local nongovernmental organizations to advance peace, reconciliation, post-conflict trauma and psychosocial healing, and to build resilience of disaffected populations, including by providing positive alternatives to youth.

Our counterterrorism cooperation is not provided in a vacuum. Rather, at the same time we are seeking African governments' assistance in combating the spread of violent extremist ideologies, we are also having conversations with those governments about the need to open political space and ensure that their citizens feel invested in their common future. Only then can both the citizens' aspirations and the country's security both be achieved.

Question. Since President Obama announced the shift in U.S. policy last December, the administration has eased U.S. economic sanctions in order to increase travel and trade with Cuba. What additional measures, if any, is the administration considering to ease U.S. sanctions toward Cuba?

- ◆ How would you assess the human rights situation in Cuba in the aftermath of the U.S. policy shift? Have you seen a change for the better? To what extent has this shift in U.S. policy toward Cuba had any effect on U.S. relations with other Latin American countries within the region in general?

Answer. The President's December 17, 2014, announcement of the intent to re-establish diplomatic relations with the Government of Cuba was overwhelmingly welcomed by countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, at the Summit of the Americas in April, the Presidents of Costa Rica and Uruguay joined President Obama in a meeting with leaders of Cuban civil society. The Pope also requested meetings with political dissidents during his September visit to Cuba, but the Cuban Government did not permit the meetings to occur.

The administration has stated it will continue to explore how to more effectively engage and empower the Cuban people. As counselor, I have not been involved in the planning of future regulatory changes, but any such changes would be in furtherance of the administration's policy of engagement with, and support for, the Cuban people. We believe that facilitating travel, the flow of information, and certain types of commerce allows the United States to better advance our interests and improve the lives of ordinary Cubans.

Human rights conditions in Cuba remain deeply concerning. Our new policy is based on the premise that we will be more effective in promoting human rights if we have diplomatic relations and an Embassy in Havana, and that the new policy will shift international attention to the Cuban Government's repressive policies. We have successfully advocated for the participation of independent civil society, including Cuban civil society at international conferences, such as the Summit of the Americas and the recent Community of Democracies ministerial meeting in San Salvador. And we will continue to encourage other countries committed to democratic values to champion them in Cuba.

Question. Do you think Russia will continue to comply with the cease-fire in eastern Ukraine? What are the prospects for the full implementation of the Minsk Agreement, including the return to Ukraine of portions of the country's border now controlled by Russia? Do you think the United Nations should refrain from suspending sanctions on Russia until Russia returns the border to Ukrainian control? Why or why not? How, if at all, should the U.S. respond?

Answer. We are pleased that the ceasefire is largely holding in eastern Ukraine and the withdrawal of heavy weapons is proceeding. However, we are concerned by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Special Monitoring Mission (OSCE SMM) reports of an uptick in small arms fire and shelling, in particular in and around Donetsk Airport. Since September 1, more than a dozen Ukrainian soldiers have been killed in action and more than 50 have been wounded. We have called upon Russia and the separatists to cease these attacks.

Russia is a party to the Minsk agreements, which it signed in February 2015 and in September 2014, but it has not yet lived up to its commitments. Under the Minsk Agreements, combined Russian-separatist forces must allow OSCE monitors full access to the conflict zone, including up to the international border, allow local elections in the Donbas under Ukrainian law and monitored by OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and return control of Ukraine's international border to the Government of Ukraine. Moscow has not fulfilled these commitments.

We have been consistent in our policy, and united with our European allies and partners, that sanctions will remain in place until Russia implements all of its Minsk commitments, including withdrawing its forces and returning the international border to Ukrainian control. As we have also consistently stated, our separate Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place as long as the Kremlin imposes its will on that piece of Ukrainian land.

Question. In her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this month, Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland called for "legal, monitored elections" in areas controlled by separatist forces in eastern Ukraine.

- ◆ Does this formulation signal U.S. support for elections that would not meet the commonly used "free and fair" standard? If so, in what ways? Would the U.S.'s role in "legal, monitored elections" change at all? If so, please elaborate.

Answer. The United States supports local elections in eastern Ukraine, as prescribed in the Minsk Agreements, to be held under Ukrainian law, in accordance with Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) standards and monitored by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The terms "legal" and "monitored" are not alternatives to "free and fair." Rather, they address specific concerns that Russian-backed separatists would again try to run illegitimate elections of their own, ignoring Ukrainian law, OSCE standards, and their Minsk obligations, as they did in 2014. We continue to call on Russia and the separatists it supports to allow Ukrainians living in the Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts to exercise their democratic right to vote in a secure environment that is free from coercion in "free and fair" elections. It is important that citizens living in the conflict zone, IDPs, and refugees have the opportunity to exercise their right to choose their leaders under Ukrainian law, monitored by OSCE ODIHR, as asked for in the Minsk agreements.

Question. Haiti's parliamentary election on August 9, 2015, was plagued with violence. However, Haiti's Presidential election on October 25, 2015, was largely free of violent incidents.

- ◆ In your opinion, what changed between these two elections? What best practices do you feel were identified in the Presidential election that should be manipulated for the third round of elections coming up in December?

Answer. In advance of the October 25 round, we worked closely with the Provisional Electoral Council and its partners to review the recommendations made by the electoral observation missions of the first round. Improvements were observed in voter education, the distribution of the voter registry, and the training of poll workers. In the days leading up to the second round, the United States called on all actors to participate fully and peacefully in the electoral process, to abide by the rule of law, to pledge to maintain a high standard of transparency, and to respond to the election results peacefully.

Also of note is that additional security measures were put into place in advance of the October 25 round. The Haitian National Police (HNP) and the U.N. peacekeeping force MINUSTAH deployed an additional 2,974 security personnel throughout the country, increasing personnel in areas that were particularly problematic on August 9. Funds were also disbursed earlier to the HNP for the October round. This allowed them to purchase the needed vehicles, as well as covered per diem and travel costs for officers traveling to polling stations. Finally, U.N. peacekeeping forces increased their visibility on Election Day, and HNP officers took a more proactive role in dealing with disruptions and arresting individuals suspected of fraud or intimidation.

We continue to engage the Haitian Government and electoral officials on the importance of keeping proactive security measures in place throughout the tabulation period and after the results are announced, and through the third round in December.

Question. In Haiti, election results are counted at one central tabulation center in Port-au-Prince. This means that ballots must be physically transported across the country, often on poor, dilapidated roads and in unreliable vehicles. Some speculate that this transportation and certification of ballots might lead to inaccurate vote counts or worse, open a window for elections tampering.

- ◆ What, if any, role should the U.S. take in helping with elections oversight? Would you encourage Haiti to keep this centralized vote-counting system, or would you encourage them to use multiple tabulation centers placed with geographic strategy?

Answer. The United States Government has supported and will continue to support the work of the Provisional Electoral Council, which manages the logistics and tabulation of elections in Haiti, as guided by Haitian electoral law. Although we can provide recommendations on potential improvements, the process itself is planned and run by the Haitian Government. We contributed more than \$31 million in support of Haiti's three rounds of elections. These funds have been key to providing support for the participation of women candidates; strengthening the Provisional Electoral Council operations and logistics, security, and transport; providing technical and logistical support to field an independent nongovernmental domestic observer group; providing equipment to the Haitian National Police; and contributing funding to the multidonor elections basket fund managed by the United Nations Development Program. Throughout the tabulation, the Organization of American States electoral observer mission, which we continue to support, has observers on hand to monitor the process.

THOMAS SHANNON'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR ISAKSON

Question. In our office meeting you discussed some of your areas of interest, particularly one that we have in common—Africa. Would you share for the committee a little bit more about your thoughts on how the United States can better engage with African countries—politically, economically, etc.?

Answer. The U.S. Government is engaged in Africa across a full spectrum of issues, including democracy and governance, economic development, security cooperation, and humanitarian assistance. As President Obama has made clear through his trips to the continent and the African Leaders' Summit, Africa is a clear priority for the 21st century—a land of opportunity and growth—and we will continue to deepen our engagement in each of these areas.

We are seizing upon Africa's rich economic potential through programs such as Millennium Challenge compacts, Trade Africa, regional Trade and Investment Hubs, the Doing Business in Africa campaign, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program. We are investing in Africa's youth through programs such as the Young African Leaders' Initiative (YALI). YALI participants—the Mandela Washington Fellows—come to study at colleges and universities in the United States and then bring their experience back to their communities across the continent. These are Africa's political, business, and scientific leaders of tomorrow, so our investment in them is critical.

The value of our engagement in promoting free and fair elections was evidenced recently in Cote d'Ivoire, where, with assistance delivered to local election monitors through USAID, the Ivoirian people turned out in large numbers to vote in a free and fair election. We will highlight these successes as we engage with the many African countries with elections in the coming years.

In addition, we continue to partner with African governments to counter violent extremism. We are bolstering local military capacity to counter the threats posed by Boko Haram and al-Shabaab, as well as assist in professionalizing and sensitizing African militaries to the need for civilian control and respect for human rights. We also partner with governments and nongovernmental organizations across the continent to develop sustainable strategies to counter trafficking, address labor issues and improve the rights of marginalized communities.

Question. Recently, we heard from Assistant Secretary Anne Patterson about how the State Department has been engaged in "crisis management" throughout the Middle East. Do you think this will be your greatest challenge if confirmed? How

will you address it? How will you be involved in developing the administration's foreign policy strategy, which I find to be unclear and undefined at this point in time?

Answer. Addressing the region's multiple conflicts will be one of the top challenges I will work to address, if confirmed. We will continue our efforts to reach a political transition in Syria, lead the 65-member counter ISIL coalition, encourage a resolution to conflicts in Libya and Yemen, continue the Secretary's efforts to advance a two-state solution between the Israelis and Palestinians, implement the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, and counter Iran's support for terrorism throughout the region and its threatening behavior toward Israel and our other partners in the region.

The United States will remain deeply engaged in efforts to address the multiple crises and conflicts in the Middle East. Our engagement today is grounded by our deep and enduring commitment to the Middle East and to its people. Our engagement will continue to use all the sources of American power—the might of our military but also the reach of our economy, the determination of our diplomacy, the universality of our values, and the powerful attraction of American education, science, technology, and innovation.

This region is home to some of our oldest and closest friends and allies. As President Obama has made clear repeatedly, defending them against aggression has been, is, and will remain a vital national interest of the United States.

If confirmed, I will provide my best advice and recommendations to the Secretary as we carry forward with our engagement in the region. My recommendations will be based on my regular consultations with our Ambassadors and Assistant Secretaries, as well as my own direct engagement on critical issues.

RESPONSES OF LAURA HOLGATE, NOMINATED TO BE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AND TO BE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE U.N., TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

LAURA HOLGATE'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CORKER

Question. How will the U.S. evaluate the PMD report to be issued by the IAEA in December?

Answer. On July 14, the IAEA and Iran concluded a roadmap for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear program. The roadmap established a time-limited process to address the IAEA's concerns regarding past and present issues, including the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program. The roadmap is a matter of public record, and was posted online on July 14. On October 15, the IAEA reported that Iran's activities set out in the roadmap have been completed on schedule. Under the roadmap, by December 15, the IAEA Director General will provide, for action by the Board of Governors, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues, as set out in the annex to the 2011 IAEA Director General's report GOV/2011/65.

We look forward to receiving the Director General's December report, and to considering, along with our fellow P5+1 partners and other members of the Board of Governors, appropriate next steps. Without prejudging the contents of the Director General's report before it has been finalized, we will evaluate it based on our own long-standing assessments of Iran's past nuclear activities, and taking into account Iran's past and present nuclear commitments and the totality of circumstances to date. U.S. evaluation of the December report will be conducted by U.S. experts throughout the executive branch, including the Departments of State and Energy and the Intelligence Community. We anticipate the report will address those issues regarding Iran's nuclear program outlined in the annex to the 2011 IAEA Director General's report (GOV/2011/65), update those areas where the IAEA has received new information or made any new assessments, and provide the Director General's final assessment on the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.

Question. Is the IAEA presently capable of true safeguarding or merely monitoring and reporting on the nuclear activities of a nation with a safeguards agreement? What do you see as the key capabilities lacking at the IAEA to truly implement safeguarding globally?

Answer. Pursuant to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), each non-nuclear-weapon state party to the NPT undertakes to accept IAEA safeguards on nuclear material in that state. "Safeguards" is a term of art that describes IAEA activities to verify that commitments made by states under safeguards agreements with the IAEA are fulfilled with a view to preventing the diver-

sion of nuclear material from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons. Although the IAEA has the authority under a comprehensive safeguards agreement to verify the peaceful use of all nuclear material in a state (i.e., the correctness and completeness of the state's declarations), there are limitations on the types of information and access the IAEA receives as a routine matter under the safeguards agreement.

An Additional Protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement equips the IAEA with broader access to information on nuclear and nuclear-related activities, and to associated locations. For example, the Additional Protocol requires reporting on nuclear research and development activities not involving nuclear material, uranium mining and milling, waste processing, exports and imports of certain nuclear equipment, and the sites surrounding its nuclear facilities, with associated inspector access. By enabling the IAEA to obtain a fuller picture of nuclear fuel-cycle-related activities in the state, the Additional Protocol positions the IAEA to draw a "broader conclusion" about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in those States.

Question. Should the IAEA have near-real time surveillance authority for as many states as possible (including Iran)? Should the United States push for this authority? How will you work to expand this capability on behalf of the IAEA?

Answer. The IAEA currently has the authority to implement near-real time surveillance in states with comprehensive safeguards agreements in force, subject to the agreement of the state. The United States encourages the IAEA to implement such remote surveillance where it is feasible and appropriate. When such near-real time surveillance is not implemented, the IAEA makes use of other measures to ensure that it can appropriately safeguard nuclear material in a facility.

We work with the IAEA closely to ensure that the Agency's Department of Safeguards has the equipment and technology necessary to fulfill its mandate.

Question. What role can/should the IAEA play in responding to the smuggling of nuclear materials? How should this issue be addressed in the next Nuclear Security Summit? What other roles can/should the IAEA play in addressing nuclear security?

Answer. The IAEA has a number of resources available to assist member states in responding to a nuclear smuggling incident. The IAEA's Division of Nuclear Security manages the Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB) program, which is a voluntary information exchange mechanism that allows participating States to share basic information about a smuggling incident with the international community. In addition, the Division of Nuclear Security, through its Nuclear Security Series publications, provides guidance to member states on topics such as measures for detecting nuclear and other radioactive materials out of regulatory control, nuclear forensics in support of investigations, and radiological crime scene management.

The IAEA does not have the mission or mandate to provide a hands-on response or support an active investigation following a smuggling incident. However, a member state may request the IAEA's Division of Nuclear Security to provide advisory services and/or technical expertise following a nuclear or radioactive materials smuggling incident. The United States encourages all countries to share relevant information on nuclear smuggling attempts while also ensuring information and evidence is properly handled to ensure the successful prosecution of criminals involved.

Countering nuclear smuggling is a multifaceted issue that requires the development of a variety of capabilities to detect and secure illicitly acquired materials, investigate and disrupt smuggling networks, and deny smugglers freedom of movement. This issue has been an important focus of the Nuclear Security Summit process, and has been addressed in Summit Communiqués and in various "Gift Baskets." The 2014 Countering Nuclear Smuggling Gift Basket highlights cooperation with the IAEA on this issue, including cooperation on identifying the nature of threats and how to coordinate a regional response.

As the U.S. Sherpa for the Nuclear Security Summit, I have remained committed to prioritizing an effective approach to countering nuclear smuggling, including through close coordination with the IAEA, and the outcomes of the 2016 summit will reflect our progress on this issue. If confirmed, I will also continue to make counternuclear smuggling a U.S. priority at the IAEA.

Question. What is your interpretation of the U.S. position on the spread of nuclear energy? The spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies?

Answer. The United States is fully committed to promoting access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes throughout the world in accordance with Article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. During his April 2009 Prague speech, President Obama stated that, "We must harness the power of nuclear energy on behalf of our efforts to combat climate change, and to advance

peace and opportunity for all people.” Many states consider nuclear energy to be a viable option in meeting their energy needs and addressing climate change.

The Obama administration has maintained a long-standing U.S. policy opposing the spread of enrichment and reprocessing (ENR) technologies. We make use of the various tools at our disposal, including negotiation of bilateral agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation with responsible partners, to seek to achieve the lowest number of sensitive nuclear fuel cycle facilities and technologies, specifically ENR, and achieve our nonproliferation goals.

LAURA HOLGATE’S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR CARDIN

Question. IAEA officials and outside experts have argued that the agency faces constraints on its ability to implement its nuclear safeguards mission. These include a limited budget; challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified personnel; and monitoring new and different types of nuclear facilities.

◆ Beyond the nuclear deal with Iran, what are the greatest challenges the IAEA faces in its mission to ensure countries comply with their commitments, under the Non-Proliferation Treaty?

Answer. As President Obama stated during his 2009 speech in Prague, more resources and authorities are needed to strengthen international inspections. The United States attaches the highest priority to ensuring that the IAEA can fully perform its unique safeguards mission. This mission has been challenged by a growing workload in the context of worldwide growth in nuclear power as well as by the proliferation challenges posed by potential clandestine nuclear programs.

The IAEA relies on the support of member states for the financial resources, qualified personnel, and modern equipment, facilities, and analytical capabilities needed to carry out its critical work. Should member state support dwindle while the workload continues to increase, the IAEA will not be able to maintain the current level of effectiveness of the safeguards regime.

We must continue to work with other member states so that the IAEA is provided with sufficient financial resources to address these challenges. With respect to human resources, we maintain robust support by providing U.S. expertise at no cost to the IAEA. Additionally, U.S. support is also directed at efforts to ensure that the IAEA has access to up-to-date facilities, analytical techniques, and equipment. Without such support, the IAEA would be unable to fulfill its mandate.

LAURA HOLGATE’S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MENENDEZ

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee are not only notified—but also properly consulted—with respect to significant developments at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and with respect to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to consult closely with Congress as we work toward the successful implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), including the IAEA’s critical role in verifying that Iran is upholding all of its nuclear-related commitments.

If confirmed, I look forward to a robust and ongoing dialogue with the Congress—and in particular, this committee and its staff—throughout the JCPOA implementation process. I believe full engagement with Congress is key to implementing this deal in the long term.

Question. Does the IAEA have the resources, access, and will to judiciously investigate, monitor, and verify compliance of Iran’s activities with respect to its nuclear program and the JCPOA?

Answer. Yes, the IAEA has the access and the will it needs for this task, and we will work to see that it also receives the necessary resources. The IAEA has an established record of implementing safeguards agreements worldwide, and in verifying the compliance of states with their nuclear obligations. In addition, the IAEA has a proven track record of performing additional verification responsibilities based on its experience in verifying the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) among the P5+1 and Iran since November 2013.

We are working with the IAEA and other IAEA Member States to provide the IAEA with the reliable and predictable funding it needs to provide ongoing, long-term effective verification in Iran. As Director General Amano has reported, the

IAEA will require increased resources in order to fulfill its role in verifying Iran's commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We expect other IAEA Member States will join us in providing the IAEA with the resources it needs for this special responsibility.

The JCPOA is based on verification, not trust. IAEA inspectors will have access to the entire nuclear supply chain in Iran—its uranium mines and mills, its conversion facility, its centrifuge manufacturing and storage facilities, and its other declared nuclear sites. Iran will also implement the Additional Protocol, which provides the IAEA with authority to seek access to any undeclared suspicious locations. Put simply, the IAEA has authority for the necessary access when and where it needs it.

We have full confidence in the IAEA's ability to carry out its role in monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments.

Question. What do you see as the major challenges ahead for the IAEA with respect to its obligations under the JCPOA?

Answer. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) puts in place vigorous, intrusive, and unprecedented transparency measures to enable the IAEA to verify whether Iran is fulfilling its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. The sanctions-related steps in the JCPOA will not be implemented until the IAEA is able to verify that Iran has completed key nuclear-related measures.

As Director General Amano has reported, the IAEA will require increased resources in order to fulfill its role in verifying Iran's commitments under the JCPOA. We are working with the IAEA and other IAEA Member States to provide the IAEA with the reliable and predictable funding it needs to provide ongoing, long-term effective verification in Iran.

Question. Based on the first meetings of the Joint Commission, do you believe it will be an effective forum for ensuring Iranian compliance with the JCPOA? Will the IAEA be an aggressive advocate in this setting?

Answer. The Joint Commission (JC) will play an important role in promoting the successful implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). All of the JCPOA participants—the P5+1, the European Union and Iran—attended the first meeting of the JC. Participants focused on establishing the JC's modalities and operations. We are committed to ensuring the JC functions effectively and serves as a useful forum for monitoring Iran's fulfillment of its nuclear-related commitments and facilitating the resolution of issues in a timely fashion.

The IAEA will play an essential role in verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. The U.N. Security Council has requested (in Resolution 2231), and the IAEA Board of Governors has authorized, the IAEA and the Joint Commission to consult and exchange information, where appropriate, as specified in the JCPOA. We are confident in the IAEA and its technical capacity to implement its enhanced verification role under the JCPOA, as well as Iran's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol.

Question. The Iran Sanctions Act expires in 2016. If snapback provisions of these sanctions are to be an effective deterrent for Iran, as the administration has testified before the SFRC, do you support the reauthorization of these sanctions?

Answer. Because the Iran Sanctions Act does not expire until 2016, we believe that discussion of reauthorization at this time is premature. The United States has made it very clear that should Iran violate its commitments under the JCPOA after we have suspended sanctions, that we will be able to promptly snap back both U.S. and U.N. sanctions.

LAURA HOLGATE'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR RUBIO

Question. Since the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, have any officials of any foreign governments indicated to the United States Government that they are reassessing their national policies regarding enrichment and reprocessing?

♦ If so, which countries and what were the circumstances of these conversations? Please provide a classified response if necessary.

Answer. Please see the classified answer to this question provided through separate channels.

Question. Please provide a briefing for the oversight committees of any discussions that have been had with the United Arab Emirates regarding their nuclear cooperation agreement with the United States since the signing of the JCPOA.

Answer. Please see the classified answer to this question provided through separate channels.

Question. What steps has Iran taken as required by October 15 under the JCPOA to complete its obligations under the IAEA-Iranian "Roadmap?" Provide a classified response if necessary.

Answer. Pursuant to the IAEA-Iran "Roadmap for the Clarification of Past and Present Outstanding Issues Regarding Iran's Nuclear Program," concluded on July 14, 2015, Iran has taken several steps to fulfill its commitments.

On August 15, the IAEA Secretariat informed member states that Iran had provided to the Agency its explanations in writing and related documents as agreed in the roadmap. On September 8, the IAEA submitted questions regarding this information.

As committed to in the roadmap, technical-expert meetings, technical measures, and discussions were organized in Tehran to address these questions. In addition, for the first time, the IAEA has obtained access to a location at Parchin, which the IAEA regarded as essential for the clarification of outstanding issues concerning Iran's nuclear program.

On October 15, 2015, the Secretariat informed member states that, in the period to October 15, 2015, activities set out in the roadmap were completed.

By December 15, 2015, the Director General will provide, for action by the Board of Governors, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues.

Question. Which specific scientists did Iran provide the IAEA with access to as part of the "Roadmap?" Please list names, titles, and affiliations. Provide a classified response if necessary.

Answer. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran agreed on a time-limited "Roadmap" for Iran to address the IAEA's concerns, including those specific issues set out in the IAEA Director General's November 2011 report on possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program. Under this roadmap, the IAEA submitted questions to Iran regarding information provided to the IAEA by Iran. Iran committed to technical-expert meetings, technical measures, and discussions to be organized in Tehran by October 15, 2015, to address these questions. The IAEA confirmed on October 15 that all activities required under the roadmap were completed.

The Director General will provide, for action by the Board of Governors, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues. We cannot prejudge the substance and quality of Iran's cooperation with the IAEA before the Director General has issued his report.

Question. Which scientists has Iran continued to refuse access to that the United States believes were involved in Iran's past nuclear weaponization efforts? Provide a classified response if necessary.

Answer. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran agreed on a time-limited "Roadmap" for Iran to address the IAEA's concerns, including those specific issues set out in the IAEA Director General's November 2011 report on possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program. Under this roadmap, the IAEA submitted questions to Iran regarding information provided to the IAEA by Iran. Iran committed to technical-expert meetings, technical measures, and discussions to be organized in Tehran by October 15 to address these questions. The IAEA confirmed on October 15 that all activities required under the roadmap were completed.

The Director General will provide, for action by the Board of Governors, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues. We cannot prejudge the substance and quality of Iran's cooperation with the IAEA before the Director General has issued his report.

Question. Has the IAEA been given access to all of the data generated as part of Iran's weaponization work and do any copies of this data remain under Iranian control? Provide a classified response if necessary.

Answer. The IAEA laid out the large breadth of information in its possession regarding possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program in a 2011 report to the Board of Governors, including information received from more than 10 member states. Under the roadmap concluded with Iran on July 14, 2015, Iran has provided additional explanations in writing and related documents to the IAEA. The

IAEA then submitted to Iran questions regarding this information, and Iran has completed specified steps under the roadmap to address these questions.

The Director General will provide, for action by the Board of Governors, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues. We cannot prejudge the substance and quality of Iran's cooperation with the IAEA before the Director General has issued his report.

I defer to the Intelligence Community on any questions on the disposition of specific Iranian documents or data.

LAURA HOLGATE'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR PERDUE

Question. Does the IAEA have the funds to serve as an adequate verification mechanism for the Iran nuclear agreement?

Answer. We are working with the IAEA and other IAEA Member States to provide the IAEA with the reliable and predictable funding it needs to provide ongoing, long-term effective verification in Iran. As Director General Amano has reported, the IAEA will require increased resources in order to fulfill its role in verifying Iran's commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). He has estimated the total additional cost, post-implementation Day, to be €9.2 million per year for JCPOA-specific costs beyond safeguards implementation, including the provisional application of the Additional Protocol. We expect other IAEA Member States will join us in providing the IAEA with the resources it needs for this special responsibility.

Question. Do you think that other monitoring regimes the IAEA is responsible for conducting will suffer due to the increased budget need for the Iran deal? If so, to what extent?

Answer. We are working with the IAEA and with other IAEA Member States to ensure that the IAEA's role in verifying the JCPOA does not negatively impact the effectiveness of its global safeguards mission. The IAEA applies safeguards worldwide to verify that non-nuclear-weapon states are not diverting nuclear material or pursuing clandestine nuclear programs.

Question. The July 2015 JCPOA states that the IAEA will pursue drawing a "broader conclusion that all nuclear material in Iran remains in peaceful activities." Please explain the process by which the agency draws this conclusion. And if Iran is not willing to share this information, how will the IAEA make a conclusion that says Iran is in compliance?

Answer. The "broader conclusion" means the IAEA has concluded that all nuclear material in a State remains in peaceful activities. The IAEA will only draw such a conclusion for States that are fully and effectively implementing both a comprehensive safeguards agreement (CSA) and the Additional Protocol (AP). A broader conclusion is drawn on the basis of IAEA inspector activities and a comprehensive evaluation of information available to the IAEA to ascertain that there are no indications of diversion of declared nuclear material from peaceful nuclear activities in a State, and no indications of undeclared nuclear material or activities in a State. When the IAEA reaches this point in its evaluation of a State, the Secretariat can draw the broader conclusion that all nuclear material in a State remains in peaceful activities. As of the end of 2014, the IAEA has drawn the broader conclusion for 65 of the 118 States with a CSA and AP in force.

Implementation of the AP provides the IAEA with broader access to information and locations relevant to nuclear activities in a State, which significantly increases the IAEA's ability to determine whether there are any undeclared nuclear materials or activities in a State. As the IAEA implements these measures in Iran, as in other States, it will need to work with Iran to resolve any discrepancies, anomalies, or questions and inconsistencies that may arise concerning Iran's declarations. Cooperation from Iran in addressing these issues will be important for the IAEA to be in a position to draw the broader conclusion that all nuclear material in Iran remains in peaceful activities.

Question. Are Additional Protocols strong enough to detect countries' (particularly Iran's) clandestine nuclear weapons programs?

Answer. Yes. Although the IAEA has the authority under a comprehensive safeguards agreement to verify the peaceful use of all nuclear material in a State (i.e. the correctness and completeness of the State's declarations), there are limitations on the types of information and access the IAEA receives as a routine matter under the safeguards agreement. The Additional Protocol equips the IAEA with broader

access to information on nuclear and nuclear-related activities, and to associated locations. For example, the Additional Protocol requires reporting on nuclear research and development activities not involving nuclear material, uranium mining and milling, waste processing, exports and imports of certain nuclear equipment, and sites surrounding nuclear facilities, with associated inspector access. By enabling the IAEA to obtain a fuller picture of nuclear fuel-cycle-related activities, the Additional Protocol positions the Agency to draw a "broader conclusion" about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in those States.

Under the JCPOA, Iran will provisionally apply the Additional Protocol pending its entry into force, ensuring the IAEA can seek access to any undeclared location. In addition, the JCPOA provides for additional transparency measures, including a special access provision regarding access to undeclared locations. Put simply, the IAEA will have access when and where it needs it, for verification of the JCPOA. We are not relying on trust in monitoring Iran's commitments. Rather, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action puts in place vigorous, intrusive, and unprecedented transparency measures, including the Additional Protocol, to verify that Iran does not pursue a nuclear weapon. Implementation of the Additional Protocol and JCPOA transparency measures are also intended to deter Iran from cheating by creating a high likelihood that such cheating would be caught early.

Question. As the U.S. Representative to the IAEA, how would you handle a country who asks to enter into secret side agreements with the IAEA?

Answer. The IAEA is required to maintain a regime to protect unauthorized disclosure of all confidential information that the IAEA acquires, including such information that comes to the IAEA's knowledge in the implementation of safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol. For example, it is standard practice that IAEA safeguards agreements have "subsidiary arrangements" that provide additional detail on how the safeguards agreement will be implemented. These arrangements between the IAEA and individual states typically include proprietary and other sensitive information, and are therefore treated as confidential documents that the IAEA does not release to other member states. Neither we nor other member states have the authority to demand these documents from the IAEA, and the IAEA does not have the authority to release them.

The United States relies upon the integrity of the IAEA's confidentiality regime to protect information that it shares with the IAEA under its own safeguards agreements. Indeed, the United States Senate recognized the importance of confidentiality in its resolution of ratification for the U.S.-IAEA Additional Protocol.

Question. In your opinion, is the IAEA doing enough to improve nuclear security around the world? If not, what more would you suggest it do? What is your opinion of the expansion of nuclear energy to states where there is little infrastructure, funding or oversight culture, such as nondemocratic countries in Africa and Asia? Should the United States be encouraging those states to import nuclear power plants?

Answer. In a world of challenging and evolving threats, nuclear security requires constant and continuous attention. This is essentially a state responsibility, and the international community must always strive to improve nuclear security. The IAEA plays a critical role in coordinating nuclear security activities and providing support to member states in their efforts to improve nuclear security. We look forward to hosting the Nuclear Security summit next year, and further strengthening the central coordinating role of the IAEA is one of the summit's key goals. Some of the invaluable services the IAEA provides include developing a wide range of nuclear security guidance documents, providing training, performing nuclear security peer review missions around the world, helping states to assess and improve their national nuclear security systems, and convening specialized meetings at which member states can exchange information. The IAEA also serves as the depositary for key international conventions and agreements related to nuclear security, for example, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. It hosted a Minister-level nuclear security conference in 2013, and plans to host a second conference in December 2016 to maintain leader-level attention on this important topic. The IAEA's Division of Nuclear Security has undertaken this broad range of needed activities and continues to provide essential services, and as a newly established division of the IAEA (January 2014), the Division of Nuclear Security has room to grow and expand these activities.

The United States is fully committed to promoting access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes throughout the world in accordance with Article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. During his April 2009 speech in Prague, President Obama stated that, "We must harness the power of nuclear

energy on behalf of our efforts to combat climate change, and to advance peace and opportunity for all people." Many States consider nuclear energy to be a viable option in meeting their energy needs and addressing climate change.

However, for States pursuing nuclear energy, the development and implementation of an appropriate infrastructure to support the successful introduction of nuclear power and its safe, secure, safeguarded, and efficient use is an issue of great importance. The IAEA is uniquely positioned to provide the guidance and support states need to establish that infrastructure. The United States has been a consistent supporter of the IAEA's efforts, in particular through the Peaceful Uses Initiative. It has been an effective way of leveraging U.S. expertise and experience in safety, security and nonproliferation, and reaching a broad range of countries.

If confirmed, I would promote the IAEA's central role in strengthening nuclear security as well as promote further strengthening of the Division of Nuclear Security's many activities and services.

Question. In 2007 you authored an article entitled "Preventing Nuclear Terrorism," and in several speeches since then, you have argued that the path toward a secure nuclear future must involve engaging all relevant voices and aligning the objectives of nuclear commerce and nonproliferation. Is the IAEA involved in any in-country or cultural education regarding nuclear materials and the danger of such materials being used for terrorism? If not, do you think it should be? If so, what organizations do you think would serve as good partners?

Answer. Nuclear terrorism is one of the most challenging threats to international security. The most effective means to address the threat of nuclear terrorism is for countries around the world to establish strong nuclear security measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear or other radioactive materials needed for a nuclear or radiological explosive device. The IAEA plays a central role in the international nuclear security architecture, including by developing and disseminating nuclear security guidance to member states, advancing nuclear security education programs in academia, managing the nuclear and radiological "Incident and Trafficking Database" (ITDB), supporting the development of a collaborative network of nuclear security training and support centers, and providing training courses and workshops on implementing nuclear security culture.

Other international organizations and initiatives with nuclear security-related mandates, such as the International Criminal Police Organization, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the United Nations, and the Nuclear Forensics International Technical Working Group, also play important roles in enhancing global nuclear security and countering the threat posed by nuclear terrorism. The World Institute for Nuclear Security provides a unique and critical ability to engage industry, public health, and commercial actors. The United States recognizes the importance of these complementary efforts and encourages the IAEA to continue its leading role in coordinating activities to enhance cooperation and avoid duplication.

Question. The President, in his budget request for fiscal year 2016, requested \$2 million in funding for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty Organization (CTBTO Preparatory Commission), even though Congress rejected becoming a signatory to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT) in 1999. Do you think the United States should contribute funds to the CTBTO's International Monitoring System when we are not even a party to the treaty? Why or why not?

Answer. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty's (CTBT) International Monitoring System (IMS) has been fully supported by the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations, and the U.S. Congress has provided funds as requested by the administration to support the IMS. The IMS is over 85 percent complete, with 281 installed and certified monitoring facilities. Data from the IMS flows continuously to the U.S. National Data Center (USNDC) at the Air Force Technical Applications Center. The IMS data received are regularly used by the USNDC to supplement U.S. national means and methods used to monitor for nuclear explosions. The open nature of the high-quality monitoring data produced by the IMS and its analysis by the CTBTO Preparatory Commission's International Data Centre provides other nations with a trustworthy and transparent monitoring capability that they can use to make their own informed assessments. It also provides them with confirmation of U.S. verification judgements. Beyond this role, IMS data have made important contributions to monitoring hazardous natural phenomena such as tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and meteorite strikes. Perhaps even more significantly, IMS data also helped to track man-made hazards, such as the radioactive debris from the Fukushima reactor in Japan. The IMS has proven itself

to be a highly valuable resource, even in the absence of the CTBT's entry into force, and continued funding is necessary to both continue its operations and complete the remaining monitoring facilities.

Question. In 2006, 2009, and again in 2013, North Korea announced that it had conducted successful nuclear bomb tests. In September of this year, North Korea not only announced their plans to launch a rocket that could lead to an intercontinental ballistic missile, but also that their main nuclear complex at Yongbyon has been restarted and that they intend to bolster their nuclear arsenal. If North Korea tests another nuclear device, will the CTBTO's International Monitoring System be able to detect it?

Answer. With respect to the three declared North Korean nuclear explosions, the International Monitoring System (IMS) performed well, and the IMS has actually improved dramatically over the intervening years. In 2006, 20 seismic stations and one radionuclide station detected North Korea's test. In 2009, 61 seismic stations detected North Korea's second event and established its location with a certainty of ± 10 kilometers. And in 2013, 94 seismic, two infrasound, and two radionuclide stations detected North Korea's test. The main reason for this greater detection ability is the progress that has been made in building out the IMS. There were 153 certified stations in 2006; today there are 281.

The ability of the IMS to detect a future North Korean nuclear explosion will depend on many factors, such as the explosive yield of the nuclear device, its depth of burial, efforts to decouple the explosive force of the detonation from the surrounding media, and containment of radionuclide particulates and gases.

It is important to note that, in addition to the IMS, once the CTBT enters into force, an onsite inspection can be conducted to resolve ambiguities regarding the nature of a detected event. Such an inspection would employ an impressive array of equipment and experts to determine whether or not a nuclear explosion has been carried out in violation of the treaty. The State Party subjected to such an inspection cannot refuse to allow it to take place. This "challenge inspection" is unique to the CTBT; it does not exist in any other nuclear testing limitation treaty or agreement.

Question. How do you plan, if confirmed, to work to promote U.N. reform efforts, such as reducing U.S. assessment levels, keeping U.N. agency or program budget growth under control, and increasing the efficiency and accountability of the Secretariat staff? What are your main priorities for this role? What challenges do you foresee?

Answer. The Obama administration is committed to achieving a reformed and renewed U.N. that fulfills its mandates while operating effectively and within its means. The administration has pushed aggressively for sound management, budgeting, and accountability at the U.N. and throughout the U.N. system and related affiliated organizations, and has achieved notable successes on behalf of U.S. taxpayers. Many member states look to the United States, as a major contributor and leader on financial and administrative issues, to be at the forefront of pressing for these reforms. If confirmed, I will continue the effort to pursue a comprehensive reform agenda in Vienna, in coordination with the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. and the rest of the U.S. delegation to the U.N.

Since the 1990s, the general policy of the U.S. Government on international organization assessed budgets has been, and continues to be, zero nominal growth (ZNG). As national governments reduce expenditures abroad and domestically, there is a continuing need to restrain growth in international organization budgets. While there have been occasional exceptions under this policy to advance compelling U.S. interests, the Department of State has had good success limiting budget growth at many U.N. organizations, with negotiations during 2015 resulting in no-growth assessed budgets at organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, International Labor Organization, International Maritime Organization, International Telecommunication Union, U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, and the World Health Organization.

The Department of State is working with our allies across the U.N. system to urge the Secretary General to control the growth in staff costs—a major driver of U.N. budget growth over the last decade. Our efforts resulted in a multiyear pay freeze that is expected to bring U.N. compensation back to the desired level by 2016. If confirmed, I will do my part to press the international organizations in Vienna to contain budget growth to the greatest extent possible and to demonstrate a sustained effort to identify offsets and absorb proposed increases without reducing operational effectiveness, while also protecting those programs most important to U.S. interests.

At the same time the U.N. and other international organizations must continue to strengthen their mechanisms for ensuring transparency, effective oversight, and accountability. The Department of State successfully spearheaded an initiative to establish permanent public access to evaluation and audit reports by the U.N.'s Office of Internal Oversight Services and we will continue to be a vocal supporter for operational independence of the OIOS. The Department of State will continue to strengthen ethics offices and independent audit committees in each of the funds and programs and specialized agencies, and related/affiliated organizations. We will advocate for further improvements to whistleblower protection policies that demonstrate best practice in protecting whistleblowers from retaliation.

The United States is a strong proponent of ensuring that the staff of the U.N. and other international organizations are held accountable. If confirmed, I will support continued efforts to advocate for reforms that facilitate recruiting highly skilled staff in a timely manner, while promoting top performers, getting rid of underperformers, encouraging mobility, and providing professional development.

Question. In your view, what are the major areas of the UNODC's work that are of highest interest to the United States? What are the U.S. policy objectives for the upcoming U.N. General Assembly special session on the world drug problem in 2016? Do you expect that these objectives will be met?

Answer. The Department of State supports UNODC assistance programs that focus on strengthening criminal justice institutions, providing legislative assistance, and assisting with the establishment of drug demand reduction and treatment programs. UNODC is the primary international organization that supports implementation of the three international drug control conventions, the U.N. Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the U.N. Convention against Corruption. The United States served as the primary architect of all five of these conventions, which mirror and globalize U.S. counternarcotics and anticrime standards, and supporting UNODC work to promote the implementation of these instruments is among our highest priorities for the organization. The Department of State also strongly supports UNODC capacity building programs to strengthen legislative frameworks and strengthen global enforcement efforts targeting antimoney laundering and counterterrorist financing; illicit wildlife trafficking; migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons; and illegal drug threats, particularly the growing threat posed by new psychoactive substances.

Regarding the 2016 U.N. General Assembly Special Session, the Department of State views this meeting as a valuable opportunity to analyze the achievements, gaps, and challenges in countering the world drug problem. Our priorities for the UNGASS are: (1) to reaffirm the enduring value of the three U.N. drug conventions and the international community's commitment to them, (2) to promote a public-health approach, (3) to encourage justice sector innovations, and (4) to reinforce the need for international cooperation to fight organized crime. We believe that there is broad consensus among governments behind these priorities. Civil society has a crucial role to play in this process. Nongovernmental organizations fill a crucial role in ensuring that governments address the international drug problem justly and transparently, as well as treat people with dignity.

Question. In what ways does the U.S. Government benefit from the donor funds it provides to UNODC to combat crime, drug, and terrorism related issues? What capabilities does UNODC provide that the U.S. Government cannot achieve through other means? Has the United States found that any UNODC programs duplicate other U.N. system programs? Has the United States found inefficiencies in UNODC operations? What efforts have been made to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of UNODC activities?

Answer. UNODC is the primary mechanism through which the international community sets criminal justice and law enforcement standards, pools resources, shares best practices and other expertise, and works together to close off safe havens to crime, drugs, and terrorist groups. U.S. contributions to UNODC support anticrime and counterdrug treaty implementation activities that directly advance U.S. interests and globalize international norms based on U.S. standards, law, and practice. U.S. support for UNODC also effectively leverages political and financial contributions from other states, making U.S. support a critical force multiplier.

We believe UNODC programs provide valuable technical assistance to member states on the full range of issues that UNODC addresses, including counterterrorism, counterpiracy, trafficking in persons, and governance and the rule of law. UNODC endeavors to work with other U.N. agencies in a mutually reinforcing way that avoids unnecessary duplication of effort and costs. Nevertheless, promoting

greater coordination and coherence of U.N. entities on counterterrorism, and in general, is a priority for the United States on which we regularly engage the U.N.

The Department of State works closely with UNODC to ensure monitoring and evaluation are included in program planning supported by U.S. contributions. UNODC also has an Independent Evaluation Unit, which the United States helped create and which plays a vital role in the oversight and evaluation of UNODC programs by an independent source. Finally, the Department actively participates in the governing bodies of these organizations, thereby shaping their programmatic direction and priorities.

LAURA HOLLGATE'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR ISAKSON

Question. What will be the biggest challenges to verifying Iran's compliance with the JCPOA?

Answer. The IAEA has an established record of implementing safeguards agreements worldwide, and in verifying the compliance of states with their nuclear obligations. In addition, the IAEA has a proven track record of performing additional verification responsibilities based on its experience in verifying the Joint Plan of Action among the P5+1 and Iran since November 2013.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) puts in place vigorous, intrusive, and unprecedented transparency measures to enable the IAEA to verify whether Iran is fulfilling its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. The sanctions-related steps in the JCPOA will not be implemented until the IAEA is able to verify that Iran has completed key nuclear-related measures.

As Director General Amano has reported, the IAEA will require increased resources in order to fulfill its role in verifying Iran's commitments under the JCPOA. We are working with the IAEA and other IAEA Member States to provide the IAEA with the reliable and predictable funding, personnel, and technology it needs to provide ongoing, long-term effective verification in Iran.

Question. Do you think the IAEA will be able to handle the additional work required by the JCPOA? If confirmed, how will you use your position to inform Congress of the challenges and opportunities the IAEA faces?

Answer. Yes. The IAEA has the expertise and the capabilities needed to implement the verification regime specified in the JCPOA. The IAEA has an established record of implementing safeguards agreements worldwide, and in verifying the compliance of states with their nuclear obligations. In addition, the IAEA has a proven track record of performing additional verification responsibilities based on its experience in verifying the Joint Plan of Action among the P5+1 and Iran since November 2013. We have full confidence in the IAEA's ability to carry out its role in monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments.

We are working with the IAEA and with other IAEA Member States so that the IAEA's performance of its role in the JCPOA does not negatively impact the effectiveness of its global safeguards mission. The IAEA applies safeguards worldwide to verify that non-nuclear-weapon states are not diverting nuclear material or pursuing clandestine nuclear programs.

If confirmed, I look forward to closely engaging with Congress about the important role of the IAEA—not just in verifying Iran's nuclear commitments under the JCPOA, but in performing its unique safeguards and other missions worldwide. If confirmed, I also look forward to close consultation with Congress as the IAEA works to implement the JCPOA verification regime and to an ongoing dialogue about how the U.S. can continue to support the IAEA's other critical missions.

Question. What is your level of confidence in the current review of Iran's PMD and the dismantling of their nuclear facilities to come into compliance with the JCPOA?

Answer. On July 14, the IAEA and Iran concluded a roadmap for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear program. This roadmap established a time-limited process to address the IAEA's concerns regarding past and present issues, including the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.

The next step is for the IAEA Director General to provide, by December 15, the final assessment on the resolution of all past and present outstanding issues, as set out in the annex of the 2011 IAEA Director General's report GOV/2011/65, for action by the Board of Governors. We look forward to receiving this report and considering,

along with our fellow P5+1 partners and other members of the Board of Governors, appropriate next steps.

We have full confidence in the IAEA's ability to carry out its role in monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments, both within the roadmap and under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), including the steps Iran must take before reaching Implementation Day such as the removal of the calandria at Arak and filling it with concrete, removing two-thirds of its centrifuges, and reducing its stockpile of enriched uranium by 98 percent.

Question. Beyond Iran, what do you believe will be some of the key challenges facing the IAEA in the future?

Answer. As President Obama stated during his 2009 speech in Prague, more resources and authorities are needed to strengthen international inspections. The United States attaches the highest priority to the IAEA's ability to fully perform its unique safeguards mission. This mission has been challenged by an increasing workload in the context of worldwide growth in nuclear power as well as by the proliferation challenges posed by potential clandestine nuclear programs.

The IAEA must rely on the support of Member States for the financial resources, qualified personnel, and modern equipment, facilities, and analytical capabilities needed to carry out its critical work. Should Member State support dwindle while the workload continues to increase, the IAEA will not be able to maintain the current level of the safeguards regime.

We must continue to work with others to provide the IAEA with sufficient financial resources to address these challenges. With respect to human resources, we maintain robust support by providing U.S. expertise at no cost to the IAEA. Additionally, U.S. support is also directed at efforts to provide the IAEA with access to up-to-date facilities, analytical techniques, training, and equipment. Without such support, the IAEA would be unable to fulfill its mandate.
