

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

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—————
MARCH 16 THROUGH DECEMBER 8, 2011
—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
112TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

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

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

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2011

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

Tara D. Sonenshine, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of State
for Public Diplomacy
Earl W. Gast, of California, to be an Assistant Administrator of the
United States Agency for International Development
Anne Claire Richard, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary of
State for Population, Refugees, and Migration
Robert E. Whitehead, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Togolese
Republic

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin, presiding.

Present: Senator Cardin.

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

Senator CARDIN. Well, good morning, everyone. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

I want to thank Senator Kerry for allowing me to chair this particular hearing on the nominees.

I noticed Senator Corker was here a little bit earlier and greeted our nominees.

And I am going to apologize in the beginning because there is a scheduled vote at 10:30 this morning which may require us to take a brief recess. But we will try to get this hearing done as efficiently as possible. There may be additional questions that are asked for the record, and I would just encourage the nominees to respond to those questions submitted for the record as promptly as possible.

So let me welcome you all here. It is nice to have Mr. Earl Gast, who has been nominated to the Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development; Ms. Tara Sonenshine, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs; Ms. Anne Richard, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration; and Mr. Robert Whitehead, to be United States Ambassador to Togo.

We thank all of you for your willingness to serve in these public positions during these extremely challenging times, and we thank

not only you, but we thank your families because we know this is not something that you can do without the support of your families. And we do thank you for this and we appreciate very much your willingness, in many cases, to continue in public service.

Mr. Gast and Mr. Whitehead have over a half a century of public service between the two of you. Both will work on critical issues in Africa, including economic development, human rights, and support of democracy.

Mr. Gast, as USAID's Assistant Administrator for Africa, you will be responsible for nearly 40 percent of the USAID's budget. As you know, this is a continent that suffers from food insecurity and mounting humanitarian crises, staggering gender inequalities, epidemics, extremism, crippling poverty, and climate change, just to mention a few of the challenges that we will be expecting you to deal with in this new position.

Our development assistance works with people and governments of Africa to strengthen democratic institutions, foster broad-based and sustainable economic growth, combat disease, and improve public health, promote the rights of women, prevent, mitigate, and resolve armed conflict, and address transnational threats and challenges.

There are some in the Congress today who question the utility of this aid and often imply that perhaps it is not in America's strategic interest to provide this assistance. I could not disagree more. We must never forget, or let others forget, that our development assistance constitutes less than 1 percent of the Federal budget. Disproportionate cuts in these programs will not solve our budget crisis but will have a catastrophic result in the pursuit of our national security and our economic goals.

Mr. Whitehead, as U.S. Ambassador to Togo, if confirmed, you will represent the President in West Africa among an ally who has a mixed record on democratic rule. I urge you to do your utmost to encourage stability in economic development, improve health care and personal freedoms to the government so that the Togolese themselves can begin to fully enjoy the fruits of democracy.

I also expect that you will make a concerted effort to engage the ministers who will represent Togo at the United Nations Security Council so they are fully informed about the consequences of their votes as it relates to international events and U.S. interests.

And now for our two Marylanders. The two Marylanders will have an easier time today. [Laughter.]

I am very proud of both of our Maryland residents who are here today. Ms. Sonenshine, you bring an impressive qualification to this role of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Certainly your years of experience at ABC, including 10 Emmy Awards, Newsweek, and most recently the U.S. Institute of Peace have exposed you to both the intricacies of the press and a broader peace agenda. I look forward to hearing more about your ideas as to how to adapt our traditional methods of messaging to today's increasingly connected world and how you plan to expand not only the use of new technology, but also good, old-fashioned people-to-people exchanges.

Under your jurisdiction will be many important functions, including the educational and cultural affairs. I have found, from my own

experience, most of the foreign leaders with whom I have had the most rapport often are those who have studied or visited the United States. The programs that come under your role allow for that type of contact to continue. I can tell you that this is money well spent, but we want to make sure that we get the maximum benefits from these types of public investments.

Ms. Richards, I have to tell you that the bureau that you will lead, if confirmed, has a mighty task. You will be deeply involved in the politics of your issue but also have programmatic responsibility to address individual needs. With your extensive background in previous State Department roles and at the International Rescue Committee, you know that this role for which you are nominated will put you as one of the champions of the world's most vulnerable population. The Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau deals with the plight of refugees worldwide, as well as conflict victims, those displaced by natural disasters, and populations of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

In your new role, you will also provide a range of services addressing basic needs, community services, tolerance-building, and dialogue initiatives and take the lead on refugee protection and resettlement in the United States. Your staff members are often among the first Americans to come into contact with refugees who, in time, will also become Americans. The humanitarian nature of your work has got to be among the most fulfilling tasks of the State Department, in an area that is very close to my heart and the priorities that I have proposed as U.S. Senator.

Once again, I thank all four of you for being willing to serve in critically important public positions, but ones which get a lot of attention and are not always well understood. We appreciate that willingness and we look forward to hearing your testimony today.

With that, we will start. Mr. Gast, you can start. I will be glad to hear your comments, and we will follow that up with some questions.

STATEMENT OF EARL W. GAST, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. GAST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to start by saying that I was born in Maryland. [Laughter.]

And I am very thankful that my family is here today and they are all Marylanders as well.

Senator CARDIN. Well, that is very good. Do you want to make any confessions here about your connections? [Laughter.]

Mr. GAST. It is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be USAID's next Assistant Administrator for Africa.

I want to express my appreciation for the trust and confidence that President Obama has placed in me by nominating me for this very important position and for the strong support of Secretary Clinton and Administrator Shah. I would also like to thank Sharon Cromer, a dedicated senior Foreign Service officer and a good colleague of mine, who has ably led the Bureau over the past year. And finally, I would like to recognize my predecessor in the Africa Bureau, Kate Almquist, whose expertise gave me an invaluable initiation to the region.

After more than 20 years in the Foreign Service, I have seen development improve people's lives and help countries grow, but I have also seen it fail to live up to our expectations and our hope. Nowhere does development show more promise, yet pose such challenge than it does in Africa today.

Many Americans see only Africa's seemingly intractable problems, but the remarkable progress on the continent is the often untold side of the story. Ghana and Tanzania are leading their own development plans that we contribute to, not direct. Liberia and Sierra Leone are quietly reaping the dividends of peace after a brutal civil war. Our response to the crisis in the Horn of Africa is providing emergency food, health care, and other lifesaving services to millions, and perhaps most extraordinary, millions of South Sudanese citizens came together to vote against war in favor of a peaceful independence from Sudan.

U.S. support helped to create the environment where the Sudanese people were able to make their voices heard. This is a powerful illustration of what we can achieve in Africa and how continued United States involvement is critical to supporting African progress. There is no denying Africa's importance to the United States, both for our moral imperative to help solve the world's biggest development challenges and for the imperative to protect the United States own national security and economic growth. USAID Forward is improving the impact, the cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of our programs. And if confirmed, Senator, I am eager to advance this new approach to doing business.

I would also look forward to deepening our relationship with Congress whose bipartisan support and commitment to Africa has provided the foundation for our programs and the springboard for our success.

I am honored to be considered for this position, and if confirmed, I look forward to advancing the United States interests to help build a better future for all Africans.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gast follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EARL W. GAST

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next Assistant Administrator for Africa at the United States Agency for International Development.

I want to express my appreciation for the trust and confidence that President Obama has placed in me by nominating me for this important position, and for the strong support of Secretary Clinton and Administrator Shah. I would also like to thank Sharon Cromer, an extremely dedicated senior officer who has ably led the Bureau for Africa across the past year. Her leadership has been invaluable, especially as the Agency began implementing key foreign assistance reforms.

My own professional life has been devoted to improving the lives of others. In the aftermath of the People Power Revolution, I went to the Philippines to support the restoration of democratic values and economic opportunity. I worked in Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia after the collapse of the Soviet Union to help build new nations, and I served in Kosovo and Iraq during conflict and war to help implement our reconstruction efforts. During 2 years as Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator and then Acting Assistant Administrator for USAID's Africa Bureau, I got to know the complex fabric that makes up the continent's 48—now 49—countries. And most recently, I completed a tour in Afghanistan, where I led USAID's efforts during the U.S. Government's civilian surge. All of my assignments have been challenging—

some more than others. But I have always willingly committed myself to serving the U.S. Government's efforts to confront those challenges.

If confirmed, another important challenge awaits me. After more than 20 years in the Foreign Service, I've seen development improve people's lives and help countries grow, but I've also seen it fail to live up to our hopes and expectations. Nowhere does development show more promise yet pose such challenge than it does today in sub-Saharan Africa, and nowhere can we more effectively apply the lessons we've learned from both our successes and our failures. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my talented colleagues at USAID, our partners throughout the U.S. Government, the private sector, multilateral and nongovernmental organizations, and our counterparts in Africa to address critical development and humanitarian needs on the continent. I also look forward to deepening our relationship with Congress, whose long-time bipartisan commitment to the African people has provided the foundation for our programs and the springboard for our success. Whether meeting with you here in Washington or at our missions overseas, we always value the opportunity to discuss our work with you and demonstrate how our investment there is making a difference in people's lives.

Africa's future is bright. Our investments in its future are paying off, and the administration has plotted a path for our long-term support that capitalizes on the region's emerging opportunities.

Many Americans see only Africa's seemingly intractable problems. But the remarkable progress on the continent is the often untold side of the story. Ghana and Tanzania are stable democracies leading their own development plans that we contribute to, not dictate. Kenya, in its recovery from post-election violence, has created a coalition government that is working to reconcile differences that stretch back decades before 2007. Liberia and Sierra Leone are quietly reaping the dividends of peace after their brutal civil wars, building sustainable institutions that provide their people with social services. Our response to the crisis in the Horn of Africa is providing emergency food, health care, and other lifesaving services to millions of people suffering from the region's historic drought. And perhaps most extraordinary, millions of South Sudanese citizens came together to vote against war in favor of a peaceful independence from Sudan.

U.S. support helped to create that environment in which the Sudanese people were able to conduct a free and fair referendum. This is a potent illustration of what diplomacy and assistance can achieve in Africa and how continued U.S. involvement is critical to supporting African progress. There is no denying Africa's importance to the United States, both for our moral imperative to help solve the biggest development challenges on the planet, and for the imperative to protect the United States own national security and economic growth. Through USAID Forward, Administrator Shah's comprehensive reform agenda, the Agency is improving the impact, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of development programs. Our work with local organizations is helping to build home-grown capacity that will continue to thrive long after USAID achieves its goals. USAID is also committed to collaborating with other donors, private sector partners, and faith-based organizations to leverage our relative strengths and amplify the effect of U.S. investments in development. These efforts are already having an effect on our work in Africa, and if confirmed, I am eager to advance this new approach to doing business.

On a personal note, I am honored to be considered for this position and to contribute to the goal of improving democratic systems, security, economic opportunity, health, food security, and education for Africans. I am deeply committed to USAID's goals and the integrated role that it plays with the Department of State and the Department of Defense in advancing U.S. policy and national security objectives, and if confirmed, I will work diligently toward advancing these goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions you might have.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you very much.
Ms. Sonenshine.

**STATEMENT OF TARA D. SONENSHINE, OF MARYLAND, TO BE
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Ms. SONENSHINE. Thank you, Senator. And it is with great respect and humility that I come before you and the committee seeking your support for my nomination as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. I thank my family members—

my husband, Gary Friend, and my sons, Jordan and Yale—for their constant support. I thank President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton for the confidence in me. And I thank this committee for its steadfast support of public diplomacy.

Much of my career has been at the intersection of foreign policy and communications; that intersection of public diplomacy.

Let me stress at the outset that I view public diplomacy as a profession, and I view public diplomacy skills as vital to advancing our national interests. As we sit here today, all around the world Americans and their host country partners are working to support public diplomacy in embassies, in consulates, at missions, at bases. Their work and the work of American citizen diplomats and volunteers are helping to build strong civil societies through engagement. Public diplomacy practitioners wherever they are, virtual or physical, deserve our leadership and support.

Public diplomacy is a shared means to a shared goal of extending America's reach and security by influencing how individuals around the world come to know us and understand us. It is about the advancement of our foreign policy goals through people-to-people connections in a complex, global networked society.

So what does it take to succeed at public diplomacy today? One starts with fundamental notions.

First, public diplomacy today is inextricably linked to national security. It is a critical part of 21st century statecraft because how safe we are at home and abroad is a reflection of a global community's shared interests and values, and it leads to a common understanding of shared burdens and responsibilities.

Two, public diplomacy increases economic security through global engagement because it keeps us competitive in the marketplace of ideas. We live in a world of transactions not just in goods and services, but in ideas and innovation, and we can use public diplomacy exchanges, engagement, and dialogue to advance scientific, health, and development policies, to spark discoveries, to open markets, to unleash the economic power of young people and women, to spur entrepreneurship, to encourage professional and private sector exchanges, and to diffuse conflicts.

Third, public diplomacy today must be agile and adaptive in using state-of-the-art information technologies, for information today is like oxygen; it is part of how a society breathes. We are important players in the global public square where information access is still, in parts of the world, restricted or restrained. There are still barriers to information for some. Control of information abused by others. Restrictive governments will still try to control information, but citizens are proving the power of information in the public square.

So for public diplomacy to succeed in the 21st century, it must be strategic in how it engages stakeholders and tactical in the use of new tools. Public diplomacy must be like America, robust and resilient, consistent, transparent, and resourceful. Especially at a time when global resources are tight, tied to foreign policy goals and priorities, integrated into a strategic whole of foreign affairs, it is critical that public diplomacy show results through monitoring and evaluation.

Technology is powerful, but so is human capacity, and there is no substitute for having that student from another country at your dinner table, in a classroom, or seeing our institutions at work. We need exchanges that make connections with civil society across many fields and to identify the next generation of leaders.

I am fortunate. My predecessors in this job laid a strong foundation, including a strong strategic framework developed by my immediate predecessor, Under Secretary Judith McHale. I am fortunate because, if confirmed, I will be working with Secretary of State Clinton who truly understands smart power and public diplomacy. As the Secretary has said, "we must be out there in as many ways as possible and at every hour of every day."

I look forward, if confirmed, to working with you and the committee, and I look forward to any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Sonenshine follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TARA DIANE SONENSHINE

Thank you, Senator Cardin, Senator Corker, and members of the committee. It is with respect and humility that I come before you seeking your support for my nomination as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. I thank my family members, my husband, Gary Friend, and my sons, Jordan and Yale, for their constant support. I thank President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton for their confidence in me. And I thank this committee for its steadfast support of public diplomacy.

Much of my career has been at the intersection of foreign policy and communications—that intersection of public diplomacy.

Let me stress at the outset that I view public diplomacy as a profession, and I view public diplomacy skills as vital to advancing our national interests. As we sit here today, all around the world Americans and their host country partners are working to support public diplomacy in embassies, in consulates, at missions, at bases. Their work and the work of American citizen diplomats and volunteers are helping to build strong civil societies through engagement. Public diplomacy practitioners wherever they are—virtual or physical—deserve our leadership and support.

Public diplomacy is a shared means to a shared goal of extending America's reach and security by influencing how individuals around the world come to know and understand us. It is about the advancement of our foreign policy goals through people-to-people connections in a complex, global networked society.

To succeed at public diplomacy one starts with fundamental notions:

1. Public Diplomacy today is inextricably linked to national security—it is a critical part of 21st century statecraft because how safe we are at home and abroad is a reflection of a global community's shared interests and values that lead to a common understanding of shared burdens and responsibilities.

2. Public Diplomacy increases economic security through global engagement because it keeps us competitive in the marketplace of ideas. This is a world of transactions—not just in goods and services, but in ideas and innovation. We can use public diplomacy exchanges, engagement, and dialogue to advance our scientific, health, and development policies, to spark discoveries, to open markets, to unleash the economic power of young people and women, to spur entrepreneurship, to encourage professional and private sector exchanges, and to diffuse conflicts.

3. Public diplomacy today must be agile and adaptive in using state of the art information technologies. Information today is like oxygen—it is part of how a society breathes. We are important players in the global public square where information access is still, in parts of the world, restricted or restrained—where there are still barriers to information for some—or where control of information is abused by others. Restrictive governments will still try to control information—but citizens are proving the power of information in the public square.

For public diplomacy to succeed in the 21st century, it must be strategic in how it engages stakeholders and tactical in the use of new tools. Public diplomacy must be like America—robust and resilient—consistent, transparent, and resourceful especially at a time when global resources are tight. Tied to foreign policy goals and priorities, integrated into a strategic whole of foreign affairs—it is critical that public diplomacy show results through monitoring and evaluation. Technology is powerful but so is human capacity. There is no substitute for having a student from

another country at your dinner table, in a classroom, seeing our institutions at work. We need exchanges that make connections with civil society across many fields and help us identify the next generation of leaders.

I am fortunate. My predecessors in this job laid a strong foundation, including a very strong strategic framework developed by Under Secretary Judith McHale. I am fortunate because, if confirmed, I will be working with Secretary of State Clinton, who truly understands smart power and public diplomacy. As the Secretary has said, "We must be out there in as many ways as possible and at every hour of every day."

Twenty-first century statecraft demands that we stay current and that our public diplomacy match our policies, priorities, and values of open access to information including unfettered access to the Internet. The Secretary of State has made it clear how committed she is to Internet Freedom and to working with the private sector on solutions to prevent countries from jamming our broadcasts or blocking Internet access. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Broadcast Board of Governors and others on this vital challenge of advancing the freedom of information and open access to information.

Part of 21st century statecraft is using information tools like social networking to understand what is happening on the ground in societies around the world so that we can better predict trends and analyze events—because often what happens in the public square determines what happens at the highest levels of diplomacy. I will pay close attention to the world's newest democracies and emerging powers as information is critical to building tolerance and understanding with other countries.

If confirmed, I will also be mindful of resources. There is no doubt that public diplomacy, like every facet of American Government and American life, will have to do its work in ways that save costs. The former Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Judith McHale, did groundbreaking work in leading a comprehensive strategic review of Public Diplomacy resources to ensure alignment among resources, planning and current foreign policy objectives. This includes shifting base resources to higher priority countries and issues as well as monitoring and evaluation of public diplomacy to make sure that we can show results. It means working with our embassies and missions, our cultural affairs officers and public affairs experts, and it means working with universities and organizations in the public square. Long-range planning, matching programs with resources tied to our policies and priorities, and tracking results will be critical aspects of my approach to the position.

Public diplomacy is about facilitating direct contact with people. Part of my job will include looking at our various types of American spaces overseas and ensuring they are effective. I plan to build teams to shape how we convey ideas and express ourselves, and create greater mutual understanding through such important means as educational and cultural exchanges and international programs. I would like, if confirmed in this new role, to focus on a few important areas.

First, as I said at the outset, it is important to stress the importance of public diplomacy as a profession and to garner respect for its mission and for those who carry it out. We need a strong, diverse, robust corps of public diplomacy officers to succeed.

Second, I will continue to focus on how public diplomacy can help to counter violent extremism, including outreach to young people as their ideas fully take shape. One of the most important jobs of American Public Diplomacy is to contribute to the security of the people of the United States. By highlighting the inherent flaws in the extremist message, and by telling America's story, we can help to discourage new recruits to organizations committed to violence. Their message of hate and destruction is resonating less and less as millions of people around the world demand full participation in their societies through genuine democratic structures. I look forward to working closely with the interagency Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, a key instrument for realizing this goal. As my predecessor emphasized, public diplomacy must be integrated into the whole of government, through interagency coordination of strategy, messaging, communications—it is about team-building and cooperative ventures to reach across departments, agencies, and to work with all branches of government and civil society on better coordination of global messaging.

Third, I will help to further a youth and democracy Public Diplomacy Initiative—getting more young people positively engaged as the youth bulge around the world continues to challenge us. I hope to build on the great work that State is doing now with programs that engage youth from sports to culture to academic exchanges including the Kennedy-Lugar YES program.

I also remain committed to the issues facing global women. Women are half the world and they need more resources, training, and engagement. Our public diplo-

macy must include messaging to them and engagement with them. They are part of the future of a more secure world. If confirmed, I hope to build on the strong work throughout the government to ensure that women throughout the world continue to get support in the economic, cultural, social, and foreign policy arenas. Indeed, all of the work of public diplomacy can support America's economic statecraft agenda. There is great potential in the nexus between business and public diplomacy—having government use its convening power to open doors so that individuals can invest in one another's ideas and businesses to spur innovation and entrepreneurship and help identify a new generation of leaders.

This is a time of incredible transition and opportunity for the work of public diplomacy, to leverage the power of technology and increase understanding of America's values around the world. As nations and people, we are more dependent on each other than ever before and what happens in one part of the world affects another and ultimately affects our way of life. This is a historic time for public diplomacy. If confirmed, I will seize the moment.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you very much for your testimony.
Ms. Richard.

STATEMENT OF ANNE CLAIRE RICHARD, OF NEW YORK, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION

Ms. RICHARD. I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, or PRM. I thank the President and Secretary of State Clinton for their trust and confidence. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will bring to this position years of practical experience in Government and in a leading relief agency, and an absolute dedication to my country and to the life and death humanitarian issues that are the responsibility of this Assistant Secretary.

I am joined this morning by my husband, Will Davis; my children, Ellie and Max, who are so sad to be missing out on a day in Montgomery County schools. [Laughter.]

And I am also joined by my sister, Christine Palmer, her husband, Tim, and their children, and my cousin, Beth Dugan, in addition to several longtime friends. I have a caring extended family that has taken an interest in and supported my professional career, and I understand my mother, brother, and other relatives are watching this morning over the Web.

The United States provides humanitarian aid to tens of millions of people whose lives hang in the balance due to persecution, oppression, and conflict, thus expressing our highest American values and demonstrating our global leadership.

I have been involved in these issues for much of my professional life. Over the past decade, I have traveled to countries suffering from conflict and its aftermath, including South Sudan, Afghanistan, Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Liberia. I have talked to refugees where they have sought safe haven, meeting Somalis in Kenya, Burmese in Thailand, Iraqis in Jordan and Syria, and Afghans in Pakistan. In trips abroad, I am repeatedly impressed by the courage and resilience of refugees and other uprooted people. Despite all that they have endured, most of them long to regain control of their lives and become self-sufficient again. They ask only for a little bit of help and a small share of our attention. And I have seen how modest investments of our know-how and resources can, indeed, bring about major improvements in their lives.

Secretary Clinton has consistently demonstrated over the past 3 years that meeting the world's humanitarian challenges is a Department priority. The Bureau I have been nominated to lead supports protection measures which seek to maintain safe places of refuge and prevent and respond to gender-based violence. PRM aid also includes clean water, sanitation, immunization and other health care, shelter, and items like bedding, pots and pans, and seeds and tools to grow food. It includes services such as treatment of HIV/AIDS, counseling on voluntary family planning, and other measures to reduce maternal mortality. PRM works through well regarded and highly accountable multilateral and nongovernmental organizations to reach millions and protect them from diverse threats, ranging from armed militias to cholera. It also promotes best practices in humanitarian response and ensures that humanitarian principles are integrated into U.S. foreign and national security policy.

If confirmed, I would place special emphasis on three PRM responsibilities. These are described in my written statement, and I would be happy to expand on them during the question and answer part of this hearing. But they can be summarized as: first, persistent humanitarian diplomacy to yield results in crisis zones such as needed now in the Horn of Africa; second, working with other parts of the U.S. Government to ensure that our country sustains a vibrant refugee admissions program while carrying out effective security screening; and third, continuing to emphasize the need to protect vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls.

In conclusion, the staff of the PRM Bureau brings extraordinary dedication and expertise to assisting people in distress and advocating on their behalf. If confirmed, I will seek to bring to the Bureau all the knowledge and insights gained during my career, including an understanding of the importance of U.S. assistance and diplomatic engagement.

I am thankful to the President for nominating me to lead this Bureau, grateful for the opportunity to serve under Secretary Clinton, and appreciate the Senate's careful consideration of my nomination. Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Richard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANNE C. RICHARD

I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration or "PRM." I thank the President and Secretary of State Clinton for their trust and confidence. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will bring to this position years of practical experience in government and in a leading relief agency, and an absolute dedication to my country and to the life-and-death humanitarian issues that are the responsibility of this Assistant Secretary.

I am joined this morning by my husband, Will Davis, and our two children, Ellie and Max. I am also joined today by my sister, Christine Palmer, her husband, Tim, and their children and my cousin, Beth Dugan, in addition to several long-time friends. I have a caring extended family that has taken an interest in and supported my professional career, for which I am profoundly thankful. Friends and professional colleagues also join us here today and I thank them.

The United States provides humanitarian aid to tens of millions of people whose lives hang in the balance due to persecution, oppression, and conflict. Our Nation's helping hand to refugees, victims of conflict, the uprooted, and the stateless expresses our highest American values and demonstrates our global leadership.

I have been involved in these issues for much of my professional life. Over the past decade, I have traveled to countries suffering from conflict and its aftermath, including South Sudan, Afghanistan, Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Liberia. I have talked to refugees where they have sought safe haven, meeting Somalis in Kenya, Burmese in Thailand, Iraqis in Jordan and Syria, and Afghans in Pakistan. In trips abroad, I am repeatedly impressed by the courage and resilience of refugees and other uprooted people. Despite all that they have endured, most of them long to regain control of their lives and become self-sufficient again. They ask only for a little bit of help, and a small share of our attention. And I have seen how modest investments of our know-how and resources can indeed bring about major improvements in their lives.

Secretary Clinton has consistently demonstrated over the past 3 years that meeting the world's humanitarian challenges is a Department priority. The Bureau I have been nominated to lead is central to that effort as its mission is "to provide protection, ease suffering, and resolve the plight of persecuted and uprooted people around the world on behalf of the American people." PRM supports protection measures which seek to maintain safe places of refuge, address gender-based violence, ensure that refugees have appropriate documentation of their status, and that their newborn children are registered. PRM support includes clean water, sanitation, immunization and other health care, shelter, and items like bedding, pots and pans, sanitary supplies, and seeds and tools to grow food which increases self-sufficiency. It includes services such as treatment of HIV/AIDS, counseling on voluntary family planning, and other measures to reduce maternal mortality. PRM works through well-regarded and highly accountable multilateral and nongovernmental organizations to reach millions and protect them from diverse threats, which range from armed militias to cholera. It also promotes best practices in humanitarian response and ensures that humanitarian principles are integrated into U.S. foreign and national security policy. That is an ambitious agenda and a weighty responsibility that I would embrace without reservation.

If confirmed, I would place special emphasis on three PRM responsibilities. First, I salute the vigorous humanitarian diplomacy practiced by the Bureau's most recent Assistant Secretary, Eric Schwartz. He recognized that PRM has a valuable perspective: it is deeply involved in the delivery of aid through partners while also sending U.S. teams to engage with other governments on crucial issues to resolve crises and to find solutions. Because of this, it has a unique vantage point—at the intersection of humanitarian, human rights, and political issues—from which to inform and help shape U.S. foreign policy and the policies of foreign governments and international bodies. We know that persistent humanitarian diplomacy can eventually yield results. In the Balkans, for example, the State Department's efforts have helped to facilitate a landmark agreement this year which, when fully implemented, will provide housing solutions for as many as 74,000 refugees and internally displaced persons. This is a major step forward to bringing a permanent resolution to the Balkans' protracted refugee and IDP problem. We should continue to engage in humanitarian diplomacy that holds governments accountable for fulfilling their international obligations and emphasizes the hard truth that complex humanitarian emergencies ultimately require political solutions.

Nowhere is this truth more painfully evident in today's world than in Somalia, where tens of thousands have died and hundreds of thousands are at risk of death. Even as Somalis flee, there is no quick humanitarian solution to a famine being fueled by conflict and political instability. If confirmed, I would work with the Bureau of African Affairs, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and others in the U.S. Government to address the crisis in the Horn of Africa.

Second, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program annually welcomes a fraction of the world's refugees into our country for resettlement. This is a great American tradition that not only saves lives and lets families thrive but also enriches the fabric of our Nation. This program, like others PRM oversees or manages, is a public-private partnership with organizations working at the local level. During the past decade it has been my privilege to visit refugees resettled in cities from Baltimore and New York to San Francisco and Salt Lake City. I never fail to be impressed by the hospitality and support new arrivals receive from local communities and by the energy refugees bring to their new lives in the United States. You may know that delays related to new security checks, unrest in Syria, and insecurity in Yemen have resulted in fewer refugees arriving in the United States over the past fiscal year. If confirmed, I will work with other parts of the U.S. Government to ensure that our country sustains a vibrant refugee admissions program while carrying out effective security screening.

Third, if confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the need to protect vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls. Protection of the vulnerable is the core

principle of international refugee law and should always be PRM's primary goal. Refugee women and children are particularly in danger of sexual violence, physical abuse and exploitation, and separation from families—among other threats. Secretary Clinton has long championed women's rights worldwide, and PRM's programs have helped hundreds of survivors of gender-based violence in places like Colombia and Kenya. More followthrough is needed so that our best practices in protecting and empowering women and girls are employed every time they should be.

In conclusion, I have been a fan of the PRM Bureau for many years. Its staff brings extraordinary dedication and expertise to assisting people in distress and advocating on their behalf. If confirmed, I will seek to bring to the Bureau all the knowledge and insights gained during my career, including an understanding of the importance of U.S. assistance and diplomatic engagement, and will be steadfastly committed to fulfilling the responsibilities entrusted to the Assistant Secretary. I am thankful to the President for nominating me to lead this Bureau, grateful for the opportunity to serve under Secretary Clinton, and appreciate the Senate's careful consideration of my nomination.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Whitehead.

**STATEMENT OF ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD, OF FLORIDA, TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC**

Mr. WHITEHEAD. Thank you, Chairman Cardin. It is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Togolese Republic. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown in me through this nomination, as well as for the support of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Johnnie Carson. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my utmost to uphold this trust.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to acknowledge family members who are here today, especially my wife, Agathe, who, along with our children, has over the course of 30 years borne the sacrifices and separations required by this profession. I would also like to thank colleagues and friends present today who have offered both encouragement and counsel that have smoothed the course of both my professional career and my personal life.

Finally, I would like to mention two individuals who could not be here in person: my mother, Lucretia, who was unable to make the trip, and my son, Wesley, who is currently deployed in Afghanistan.

Mr. Chairman, with a population of more than 6 million inhabitants, the Togolese Republic lies north of the Bight of Benin in the middle of a region of Africa that is important to the energy security of the United States and with which the United States has longstanding cultural ties. If confirmed, I would count it a great privilege to lead the Embassy in Lome and its interagency team of Foreign Service, civil service, locally employed staff, and family members as we seek to advance U.S. bilateral and regional interests. I am confident that my previous experience as chargé d'affaires in Khartoum; consul general in Juba, Southern Sudan; and deputy chief of mission in Harare, Lusaka, and Bangui, in all, a total of more than 2 decades on the ground in sub-Saharan Africa, will serve me well.

Mr. Chairman, our principal concerns in Togo are the welfare of Americans located there, the promotion of democracy and good governance, the improvement of basic health services, maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, human rights, and the advancement of

economic prosperity. To achieve these goals, the United States has a range of modest programs supporting democracy, economic development, security sector reform, and peacekeeping. Given budget realities overlaid on global priorities, I realize that we will need to work collaboratively and creatively with other countries and international organizations involved in Togo to leverage progress in all of the areas listed above. If confirmed, I commit to work closely with our international partners to help the Togolese Republic promote empowerment and prosperity for all Togolese regardless of ethnic, religious, regional, or political affiliations.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, Togo passed through a period of internal upheaval from which it began to emerge just a few years back. The country is presently at peace. Democratic legislative and Presidential elections, held respectively in 2007 and 2010, were judged credible by both local and international observers. Legislative elections and perhaps local ones are scheduled to take place in 2012, and should I be confirmed, one of the Embassy's top priorities will be to support a peaceful, transparent, and fair electoral process, thereby consolidating and expanding on the democratic gains of the past 5 years.

A healthy economy provides fertile ground in which democracy and good governance can flourish, and the growth of the Togolese economy over the past decade is a positive portent. If confirmed, I will take advantage of available initiatives to support this trend, including identification of public-private partnerships that include American companies and that enjoy U.S. Government guarantees. The Embassy will look to use regional USAID programs to strengthen the Togolese Republic's role as a regional trade hub and help ensure that the country makes the most of Lome's deepwater port and can better manage land transportation infrastructure. All of these are important to efficient trade and shipping with landlocked Sahelian countries to the north. If confirmed, I will encourage the Togolese Government and Togolese entrepreneurs to take greater advantage of the opportunities the American Growth and Opportunities Act affords.

If confirmed, I will look to employ existing initiatives, including the multilateral partnership of the Global Fund, to assist the Togolese Ministry of Health in improving basic public health programs and treating and eradicating disease. The Embassy in Lome will look to continue to support a robust Peace Corps presence in the country with a programmatic focus on health, especially on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

A stable, prosperous, and healthy Togolese Republic serves American values and interests and expands Togo's ability to contribute to stability on the African Continent. If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with the Togolese authorities through regional initiatives to strengthen their capacity to police and to regulate Togolese waters in the Gulf of Guinea. The U.S. Embassy will look to use existing programs to help protect Togolese maritime resources, to regulate legitimate licensed trade, to combat the scourge of narcotics smuggling into and transshipment through Togo, and to prevent trafficking in persons. If confirmed, we will look to continue to encourage and support expanded Togolese Government's participation in U.N. peacekeeping missions in Africa through the

Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance Program, which has been active in Togo since 2009, and which has assisted with training and deployment of Togolese peacekeeping forces to Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Chad, and the Central African Republic.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Whitehead follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Corker, and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Togolese Republic. I am grateful for the confidence that the President and Secretary of State have shown in me through this nomination, as well as for the support of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my utmost to uphold this trust.

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If confirmed, I will look to employ existing initiatives, including the multilateral partnership of the Global Fund, to assist the Togolese Ministry of Health in improving basic public health programs and treating and eradicating disease. The Embassy in Lome will look to continue to support a robust Peace Corps presence in-country with a programmatic focus on health, especially on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator CARDIN. Well, once again, let me thank all four of you for your being here, your testimony, and for your service, and I want to underscore the importance of the families that are here. We will write the necessary notes to the Montgomery County school system to take care of it. [Laughter.]

We think we can take care of that today.

You are each seeking different positions, but there is a lot of common agenda items in the four positions that are being nominated to be filled here today. I want to **talk about** an area of personal interest to me and part of my responsibilities. I not only serve on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I chair the Subcommittee on International Development Assistance which, Mr. Gast, you and I have had a chance to talk about that. I also am the Senate chair of the U.S. Helsinki Commission which deals with a variety of issues, but it is best known, I think, for its human rights basket.

So I want to ask all four of you a common question, and that is, how do you intend to make the advancement of human rights a top priority of your office?

I might point out that President Obama has made it clear, internationally, that the United States in its international bilateral and regional relations will insist upon basic human rights advancements.

Secretary Clinton has been extremely articulate particularly on gender equality issues but also on broader human rights issues and I noticed in this morning's paper getting the wrath of President Putin because of her support for the legitimate protests of the people of Russia with the fraud that was committed in their most recent elections.

On the refugee issue, human rights is critically important. We know a lot of the trafficking matters come out of the migration issues, and I would be interested in that. And of course, the bilateral with Togo—it has gone through a transition, but its record on human rights is far from clear.

So I would welcome your thoughts how you would use public diplomacy to advance these issues knowing that there have been

efforts made in many of the countries around the world to block international access to how human rights are viewed. So, Ms. Sonenshine, we will start with you this time and just work your way down as to how you would make human rights advancements a priority in the office.

Ms. SONENSHINE. Thank you very much for the question.

I share the concern that we really advance the democracy agenda and human rights as a cornerstone of that.

There are three things, Senator, that if confirmed, I would want to work on. One is strengthening the American narrative and weaving human rights into, as the Secretary has done, the tapestry of all of our messaging overseas. The second is to continue the support for media on the ground. The training of local indigenous media is critical to an open society. The third is, I think, what we are doing in nonpermissive environments such as Iran where we do not have a presence, but we can create a virtual embassy. We can leverage technology today such that the electronic curtain that is often put up around citizens—that we can get around it.

So I think the continuation of these values through our programs, through our assistance, through our messaging, and through our narrative, that this will be an important part of my responsibilities, and I would look forward to working with you and the committee on that.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Gast, we will just work our way down.

Mr. GAST. Senator, I had the pleasure of working with the Helsinki Commission on issues related to Belarus in the past, and I know the good work of the commission quite well.

Supporting human rights is a critical component of our development assistance programs. President Obama has made it clear. Secretary Clinton and Administrator Shah have all made it clear that it is to be a critical component.

With regard to development assistance, we support civil society organizations throughout the continent of Africa, and we will continue to intensify those efforts. But they are also critical components, not stand-alone activities of some of the major initiatives that we have now. So, for example, the Global Health Initiative, is making sure that we are supporting women's rights, rights to health care, persons living with HIV/AIDS, et cetera. So I would see, if confirmed, Senator, that we would intensify those efforts.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Ms. Richard.

Ms. RICHARD. Thank you for your question, Senator.

You will notice that when staff from the Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau speak about the services that are undertaken by PRM, it is not just aid and it is not just the delivery and distribution of things, but it is also protection. And when we talk about protection, we mean physical protection, but we also mean protection of rights. And in terms of rights, we are talking about refugee rights, but also human rights, the most basic and fundamental human rights.

I can commit to you that I will work very hard, if confirmed, to pursue an agenda that fosters and preserves human rights around the world. And one reason I feel so confident in saying that is that I know already the work of colleagues like Michael Posner, who is

the Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and Harold Koh, with whom I met recently, who is the Secretary's legal adviser and who is himself a great human rights leader.

And I also will continue to have, as I do now, good relations with leading experts from human rights nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights First, and Freedom House. And so I would continue the pattern set by the most recent Assistant Secretary, Eric Schwartz, in having a very vigorous dialogue with leading experts in human rights in the United States.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Mr. Whitehead.

Mr. WHITEHEAD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think you hit the nail right on the head when you got to human rights. As you know, Togo from about 1990 to 2005 went through a very difficult period, a lot of internal turmoil, instability; 2005 with the change of the head of state. It began in a rather awkward fashion with a sort of an extra-constitutional promotion of a President. Since then, however, the trend lines have been encouraging. There has been a concerted effort in reform in a number of areas. In terms of human rights, I would probably pick four areas as priorities that I would focus on, were I confirmed.

The first one I mentioned already, which is the democratic selection of a government, that it will be key in 2012 that the legislative elections are perceived to be free and fair. There are a number of issues surrounding them, including the need for redistricting based upon the most recent census, what have you. And I would commit, if confirmed, to work carefully and closely with the government to see that we make progress in these areas.

Another area of importance is the freedom of the press. I think this ties again into our public diplomacy, and it is a basic right. Recently, in fact, the press in Togo has sort of come out of its cata-tonic state. You have over 20 newspapers, probably 50 radio stations, several private television stations. The media has been confident enough to be critical of the various institutions, the President, the judiciary. None has been intimidated physically. No journalists are in prison. However, it is still very weak in terms of training, financing, what have you. The Embassy has provided programming to train and to improve the quality of journalism. If confirmed, I would commit to continue with that.

Another specific area is child labor. Togo has been identified as a country that has a problem with this, a large number of young children involved, about half of them in agricultural pursuits, about a quarter in domestic within the country. The Togolese Government has taken steps to form a national plan to work and try to resolve these issues. The Department of Labor has provided some grants to work with them. And I would commit again to work in this area.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you for that—all four of you for those answers.

We are going to take a brief recess, approximately 15 minutes, so that we will reconvene in 15 minutes. There is a vote on the floor of the Senate dealing with the confirmation of a nominee. So

I think it is important for me to go over and vote, and I will be back in about 15 minutes.

[Recess.]

Senator CARDIN. Once again, I apologize for the inconvenience of the recess, but that is the way the Senate schedule operates. The hearing will come back to order.

I am going to follow up a little bit on the human rights issues. So if I might start again with Ms. Sonenshine. One of the challenges of your position is that for public diplomacy to work, people have to be able to communicate, and modern communications are through the Internet in which many of the countries that we have incredible interest in try to block the access to that type of information. It has had limited success. We have seen during Arab Spring and during now what is happening in Russia that people find a way to get their information out. But under the responsibilities of the agency that you would head, it is critically important to use, as you pointed out in your statement, modern ways of communicating.

So what do you do about those countries who are trying to block access to their citizens of getting information not just from the outside world, but from their own people?

Ms. SONENSHINE. Thank you very much for the question.

I honestly believe that public diplomacy's first mandate is to stay in it for the long haul. It is very easy to recede during difficult information periods from a country. I think Burma is the most recent example of if you stay with something long enough. The extension of our values now include the right to connect, and that is sort of a new human right, the right to be informed, the right to connect, the right to have open access to information. In very closed regimes, Cuba in particular, we have to continue to try SMS texting, sometimes reverting to DVD's and more traditional means of getting information in. And where we are stymied as again in Iran, one has to believe that individuals—and we saw this yesterday with the virtual embassy—find a way around these blockades. The amazing thing about the Arab Spring is that despite all attempts to block information, individuals are very resourceful. And so if we have the staying power, if we have the sustainability, we can actually rely on new technologies to circumvent technology and we can rely on the willpower of individuals to find us if we are out there. If we are not out there with the information, then sadly others will fill the void that we leave behind.

Senator CARDIN. I agree with that. You mentioned Cuba. Of course, there is another Marylander, Alan Gross, who is in prison in Cuba working for our Government. Although all the facts are not exactly understood, we believe that it was an effort so the people of Cuba could get information, making the position that you seek to fill a little bit easier, and yet he is in prison today and it is a major human rights violation. So there are clearly challenges to open up the channels of communication, but I do think that public diplomacy very much depends upon an aggressive, long-term commitment to make sure that it is easier rather than more difficult for people to get access to information.

Mr. Gast, we have talked frequently about the fact that 40 percent of the aid of USAID is in Africa. Most of that funds go toward

humanitarian health-related type programs. We need to get more involved in economic development issues. But Africa has a huge problem on human rights. I have gone over the mineral extractive industry issues and whether those funds are used for finance corruption rather than for the people of the country itself. The gender issues there are huge. Land rights. You can do all the type of agricultural reforms. If you do not have the land reform, it is not going to work.

So how do you leverage what is a significant part of our foreign assistance budget, but a relatively modest amount of money generally? How do you leverage that to advance the basic sustainability of African countries putting in place the basic rights, try to avoid corruption, and make it clear that gender equality is mandatory?

Mr. GAST. Senator, we have shared in Africa's success over the last 15 to 20 years, and as you rightly point out, the gains that we have made working with African institutions and states and civil society organizations in democracy and governance, in health indicators, in education—they can only be sustained through economic growth. And so one of our first priorities, of course, will be to emphasize economic growth throughout the continent, equitable economic growth because in the end, that will lessen their dependence on assistance.

But what is also very critical to our efforts in Africa is supporting good governance. All three of the major initiatives that we have in Africa—and as you rightly point out, most of the resources are going into health. We also have the Feed the Future initiative and also the climate change initiative. They all contain elements of good governance, and that means building institutions, making sure that those institutions are accountable, that they are transparent, and then also building up the capacity of civil society to hold government accountable for the spending of resources and for delivering services to the people. So you have my assurance that as we move forward and if I am confirmed, that good governance will be at the forefront of our development efforts.

Senator CARDIN. And we would also ask you to keep us informed as to the progress we are making on extractive industry transparency. Senator Lugar and I have offered a change in U.S. law that now is the law supported by the administration to put a focus on the mineral companies to make sure that those revenues are held accountable to the country in which these minerals reside. You can play an important role in making this a priority as you develop strategies on the continent, and we would ask that you make this a priority and you keep us informed.

Mr. GAST. You have my assurance.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Ms. Richard, there is an area of great interest to us that we have worked on for a long time, the special immigrant visas. Congress on two occasions has passed laws to provide special visas for those who helped us in Iraq. These are people whose lives are at risk because they helped us. And we are not satisfied with the progress that has been made to date. Let me just make that conclusive statement first. It is taking too long. It appears like restrictions are being imposed so that if there are other potential alternatives, that

they are being used to delay the safe exit of individuals whose lives are at risk. There is a different standard being used for those who helped us through third parties than directly. We do not quite understand that distinction quite frankly. But we do know that come the end of this year, the U.S.'s ability to protect those who helped us in Iraq will become much more marginalized. So time is of the essence. And I said Congress has acted on several occasions making it clear that we want this policy implemented.

How can you help us or what can you do, if confirmed, to move this process forward?

Ms. RICHARD. Thank you, Senator, for raising this question.

I, like you, am very interested in the situation that Iraqi refugees are facing. I have met with Iraqi refugees in the United States in Baltimore and in San Francisco, and elsewhere around the United States, and also in Jordan and in Syria.

As part of my briefings, I asked about the special immigrant visa program which, as you know, was set up to help Iraqis who had worked for U.S. forces or the U.S. Government—and yet were under threat because of that service—and get them a swift entry into the United States. So in looking into the situation, it may be that the SIV program is not being fully used because there is a complicated applications process. I will, if confirmed, work very closely with the Consular Affairs Bureau at the State Department to examine that and consider if that is part of the reason for the holdup.

Another aspect of this is that if one comes to the United States as a refugee, one can bring more family members than under the current SIV program.

So it is not completely clear to me what the problem is, but if confirmed, I would definitely commit to working on this problem.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you. I appreciate that.

The information we have—the concerns are more of the complicated application process and review process not the number and family under the different status of refugee or special program. So I would welcome your assessment of that. Our bottom line is that it is getting more and more difficult to protect those who helped us.

You have visited the refugees and I have too. I have been in Syria and I have been in Jordan, and I have visited Iraqi refugee facilities in those countries and know the numbers that have been dislocated as a result of the war and look at what different countries have done in accepting Iraqi refugees and then look at the numbers in the United States. Since we were the principal player in this campaign, the numbers in America are so small compared to the total numbers. Here we are talking about people who put their lives on the line to help America's mission in Iraq.

And Congress, again, does not always agree on policy rapidly. This is one time we did. So I would just urge you to give this the highest priority because of the timing issue here.

Mr. Whitehead, Togo is going to be on the Security Council of the United Nations. At least that is the information that we have. That changes the composition of the Security Council. And to say the least, there have been a lot of disappointing votes in the United Nations as it relates to U.S. positions. And at times, we think that is mainly because of the populist sentiment of a particular issue.

When you are dealing with the Middle East, it sometimes appears to be more populist to be with the multitude of Arab States rather than the state of Israel, which has caused many countries to feel like this is just a free vote. You might as well vote the populist sentiment.

The Obama administration developed a strategy in the Security Council as it related to the most recent problems of the unilateral efforts for declaration of statehood by the Palestinians and was able to maintain the necessary votes on the Security Council so that could not move forward. And there are many other issues, Iran sanctions. The list goes on and on and on where the Security Council becomes a dominant player in international diplomacy.

It is important that countries understand that the United States has a strong interest in a particular issue. It is not to say that countries will not exercise their independent judgment. They will exercise their independent judgment. But they need to know the U.S. position and know how we feel about certain matters and the consequences of U.N. action as it relates to U.S. policy.

Can you assure this committee that as the United States representative in Togo, should you be confirmed, that that message will be unambiguous and clear to the Togolese Government about the importance of their role on the Security Council?

Mr. WHITEHEAD. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You have my unambiguous commitment that, if confirmed, one of my top priorities, of course, is going to be to identify who the key policymakers are in the various decisions that come before the United Nations Security Council and being certain that they understand clearly our position, why we are taking that position, and the stakes that are involved. I will give my utmost to do this on whichever issue should happen to come up during the 2 years in which Togo has the seat.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that. You are going to be hearing from us on this, and I really do applaud the Obama administration and Secretary Clinton particularly, because the issue of the U.N. votes have been on a lot of bilateral agendas of meetings taking place between the United States and other countries, not just those who are members of the Security Council, but the General Assembly as well. So it is becoming more and more relevant that we think that we can make progress. But it depends upon all of our assets being focused on letting other governments know how important this is. So we appreciate your making the points known, should you be confirmed.

Mr. WHITEHEAD. Thank you, sir.

Senator CARDIN. I want to get back, Ms. Richard, to an issue that is also of great interest to the Helsinki Commission, but the Congress of the United States as well, and that is the trafficking issue and how it affects the migration and the agenda that you deal with. The United States has been the leader internationally in dealing with this form of modern slavery. As you know, we have the TIP reports, the Trafficking in Persons annual report, that is done by the State Department. We have invested a great deal of resources into having zero tolerance. It is not just the countries of origin. It is the transit and the receiving countries.

How do you intend to deal with this issue, should you be confirmed?

Ms. RICHARD. Thank you for shining a light on this important issue, Senator.

I have some familiarity with the issue because the International Rescue Committee is partnered with the U.S. Government in our Miami office and in our Phoenix office trying to help people who have been trafficked and trying to get to them and make sure they know that they can step out of the exploitive situations they are in.

The other thing I am aware of with this issue is that there is a great deal of bipartisan support for doing something about it. I guess it is a scarce word these days. So from my way of thinking, when you have the attention of both sides of the aisle for such an important human rights issue, we need to move with alacrity to build on that and to do a lot about it.

I am glad to tell you that in my courtesy calls on different regional bureau assistant secretaries, almost every one of them has mentioned the problem of trafficking in persons. So, if confirmed, I will work very closely with these colleagues in the State Department, as well as colleagues in other U.S. Government agencies, to tackle this problem. But a big piece of that I think will be staying in touch with Congress about it, given that we are pushing on an open door up here. There is so much interest.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Mr. Gast, would you want to fill us in on what you think we should be doing in the Horn of Africa where opportunities are? The humanitarian crisis there continues. What can we do to be a responsible international player and leader in this area?

Mr. GAST. Senator, as a result of the drought, close to 13 million persons are in dire need of emergency food assistance. It could have been much worse than it is. Fortunately, the U.S. Government, with your support, with the support of Congress, as well as the administration, understood more than a year ago that the region was facing a severe drought and, as a result, took measures. Some of the measures included prepositioning food in various areas located close to the Horn of Africa so that if the emergency were to arise, we would be able to respond very, very quickly. And as a result, we were able to do that.

But one of the priorities, Senator, will be to support resiliency strategies in the Horn of Africa. We know that drought has been a problem for years. It will continue to be a problem. But what we have seen in some of the resiliency strategies that we have implemented in Ethiopia over the past few years is that the Ethiopian Government has led them itself with support of other donors. By their productive safety net program, some 7.5 million persons who previously were receiving emergency assistance no longer require that. And so we are in the process now, I understand, and if confirmed, you have my assurance that I will be very much involved in developing resiliency strategies throughout the Horn of Africa, similar to the success that we have had in Ethiopia.

With regard to Somalia, it is extremely difficult, and the situation is very dire. And one does not know when al-Shabaab will allow emergency food assistance to enter the country, and as a re-

sult, significant numbers of Somalis are suffering and many are trying to flee the country.

Senator CARDIN. Are you up to date as to the current status of border crossings as to whether Somalians are able to get out of Somalia?

Mr. GAST. I do not have the up-to-date information on that, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. That has been one of the areas that we have been able to effectively provide some relief. It is really a challenge. I mean, it is a dilemma we face. You know, I have talked about this. You have got to be able to effectively provide help when you have a humanitarian crisis, and if you do not have the cooperation of the host government, it becomes extremely challenging. We have been able to do some work through NGO's, but at times even that becomes a matter of great risk and uncertainty. So we have a responsibility to make sure there is accountability. So we welcome your honest assessments of these types of challenges. We obviously will not abandon the people in that region. It is a desperate need.

Ms. Sonenshine, we talked a little bit about the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. You talked about it in glowing terms. I strongly support the program.

What can we do to make sure that these programs are more beneficial and safe for the participants? There have been some concerns expressed. Do you have thoughts as to what we should be looking at?

Ms. SONENSHINE. Yes. Thank you for the references to the security and safety of students.

First, in my view anytime an international student is coming to the United States on whatever program—and there are many programs—we have a responsibility to make sure that it is a positive cultural engagement experience and that that student is safe, secure, educated, and that we are responsible for their welfare here.

I have looked into—I know some of the issues around the summer work travel program. I am very heartened to see that the State Department and the Secretary are looking at that particular program with great seriousness and great urgency, and there are reforms underway.

What I would also say is we always have to go back to the spirit and purpose and mission of these programs. We are exposing our students overseas and international students here to our way of life, our values, and our democracy. I also think we have to remind each other that the real values are sometimes not quantitative; they are qualitative. Although there is data, more and more now—700,000 students came here last year from overseas. That international education contributed over \$20 billion to the U.S. economy. So for those who suggest that there are not real numbers attached, there are.

I am also inspired by the fact that of the Nobel laureates in this world, 40 of them came from Fulbright programs. So we have invested many heads of state, many officials, many Nobel Prize winners around the world with those exchanges and we have to tell that story.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Ms. Richard and Mr. Gast, we have talked about this, but I just want to put a spotlight on this for a moment. When there is a humanitarian crisis, women are more vulnerable. We have seen that. We have seen that with refugees. Women are more likely to be abused and could be subject to trafficking. We see that in the health and food crisis around the world. Women are generally more vulnerable.

So how do we take that into consideration in our strategies? What do we do about that? Either one.

Ms. RICHARD. Well, Senator, you will have seen in my testimony that I put down the welfare of women and girls in refugee and displaced situations as one of my top priorities should I be confirmed and undertake the job of Assistant Secretary.

There already is a great deal of thought that has been given to this by leaders at the State Department and leaders among the humanitarian community. And I think the particular challenge we have now is not to realize the problem, because I think it has been very well articulated by Secretary Clinton and others, but I think what we have to do now is to follow through in the field and make sure that our operations live up to the best standards and practices to protect and aid women and girls. So that means working very closely with our partners. As you probably know, the Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau works very closely with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the International Committee of the Red Cross. And through those relationships, I think we have to make sure that our best intentions are followed through with and that the best practices, that we know now what they are, take place on the ground.

Mr. GAST. Senator, in areas where women are abused during humanitarian crises, we need separate strategies to protect women. So, for example, in the early period of Darfur, I traveled there and heard the abuses of many women, and it was very clear that we needed to develop separate programs and separate strategies to protect them, even some things as basic as providing them with more fuel-efficient stoves, for example, because the women frequently traveled outside of the camp to gather wood and that is when they were abused.

It also requires all the tools of government and international organizations. Certainly PRM is a valued partner with USAID. So, for example, in eastern DRC, Congo, where women are being abused to this day, it is making sure that the security forces, the MONUSCO, are trained in how to deal with women's issues, that the government's own security forces are trained, that we assist the government to bring into the police and military trained female officers, and that we provide direct services to women and also try to support prevention. And we try to support prevention through public education and public information.

Senator CARDIN. I was impressed by all four of your resumes and background and references before today's hearing, and I tell you, it has only been reinforced by your statements and your response to questions. So I look forward to supporting your nominations and hopefully to move them as promptly as we can through the Senate. Now, moving promptly through the Senate is always relative. [Laughter.]

Senator CARDIN. So we will do the best we can to bring these up in a timely fashion.

The committee record will remain open until close of business tomorrow. As I indicated earlier, some of our colleagues may have questions for the record, and we would encourage you to respond to them as quickly as possible.

And with that, if there is no further business, the committee will stand adjourned. Thank you all very much.

[Whereupon, at 11:20 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF ANNE RICHARD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration coordinates efforts with USAID to provide assistance to people in emergency conflict situations. What are some actions you would take to improve and increase coordination and a clear delineation of responsibilities?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen coordination between the Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and USAID. I will be in regular, often daily, contact with the USAID Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) Nancy Lindborg, whom I know well and respect immensely, and other members of her team. I will encourage State/PRM's Refugee Coordinators in the field to continue to consult closely with USAID/DCHA's overseas humanitarian and food aid advisors on programmatic and policy issues. I am also eager to explore the possibility of staff exchanges between State/PRM and USAID/DCHA and to build upon existing opportunities for reciprocal staff training.

Global humanitarian needs are far greater than what State and USAID collectively can address. For this reason, State and USAID personnel must work closely together to ensure U.S. Government resources are used effectively to address top priorities, consider neglected aspects of crises, and fill gaps. State/PRM and USAID/DCHA adhere to written "Coordination and Funding Guidelines" that have helped to facilitate an effective division of funding responsibilities to meet critical needs throughout the world. Regional offices within State/PRM confer regularly with regional counterparts within USAID in Washington and in the field.

In recent large-scale crises, I understand that State/PRM has coordinated closely within the Interagency, including through active participation in daily Interagency calls and/or video conferences among field staff, the Department, USAID, the Pentagon and combatant commands, National Security Staff, and other agencies. This has proven to be enormously useful to share the latest information from the field, flag emerging policy issues, and resolve operational challenges using whole-of-government resources.

During the past year, State/PRM, USAID/DCHA, and the State Department's International Organization Affairs Bureau have established a Humanitarian Policy Working Group (HPWG). The HPWG meets monthly at senior levels to address high-priority humanitarian policy issues, such as U.S. Government advocacy on U.N. humanitarian reforms, outreach to emerging donors, and guidelines for improved civil-military coordination in humanitarian response, in a collective and strategic manner. If confirmed, I look forward to participating in this group and ensuring that it moves key humanitarian policy issues forward. I will make strengthened coordination with USAID a top priority.

Question. During your nomination hearing, you mentioned your focus on the protection of women and girls in the refugee context. If confirmed, what steps would you take to address and ensure the protection of women, who are considered most vulnerable in such scenarios? Despite the strong advocacy by operational organizations on the need to plan emergency response with the specific needs of women and girls in mind, we continue to see camps hastily arranged, resulting in a situation where women and girls are at risk. How would you improve this?

Answer. The protection of women and girls in conflict settings is a priority for the Obama administration, and if confirmed, I would ensure that the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration's (PRM) leadership on this front remains strong. Refugee women, children, and youth populations have special protection needs that

we are committed to addressing not only through funding support, but also through advocacy and diplomacy. Since State/PRM began its special initiative for prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV) in 2000, State/PRM has contributed more than \$62 million worldwide in countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Colombia, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Thailand.

If confirmed, I will ensure that PRM continues to strongly encourage international and nongovernmental organizations to develop and implement programs and policies that protect and assist refugee women, children, and youth. For example, State/PRM has urged the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and their implementing partners to involve women and children in the programming and delivery of supplies to refugees, especially food. State/PRM has also encouraged partners to include gender issues in their programs and policies as a matter of course, because involving women in the design of camps and assistance programs can help reduce protection risks.

State/PRM works closely with USAID, NGO, and IO partners to develop best practices, guidelines, and training to strengthen the humanitarian community's capacity to address GBV and other gender issues throughout the humanitarian response. State/PRM actively engages with NGO partners to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, encouraging partners to implement policies and procedures, rather than simply signing a code of conduct. State/PRM also emphasizes the importance of education in emergencies as a critical protection tool. The Bureau works closely with USAID and the Center for Disease Control, as well as UNHCR and UNFPA, to promote access to reproductive health care in emergencies. And PRM will continue to play a critical role in the Department of State in developing and implementing the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

If confirmed, I intend to build on the experiences and lessons learned over the past years to strengthen our efforts to better protect women and girls, working closely with colleagues across the U.S. Government, civil society, and international organizations. I will devote special attention to these matters during visits to the field and will ask PRM colleagues to do the same. I will also engage with other senior policymakers and leaders to ensure that they make protecting women and girls a top priority.

Question. With the U.S. military drawdown from Iraq, what challenges will arise with respect to addressing the needs and concerns of Iraqi refugees? As you know, the number of Iraqis coming to the United States through the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program is very low, as are the numbers of refugees. You mentioned in your confirmation hearing that this would be of utmost importance to you. Please describe the efforts you would take, if confirmed, with other U.S. agencies to improve the resettlement to the United States of eligible Iraqi refugees and SIVs.

Answer. Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons will require continued support from the United States and the international community as solutions to displacement are identified—voluntary return to their former communities, local integration in areas of displacement, and resettlement elsewhere. Countries in the region hosting Iraqi refugees continue to offer asylum to Iraqis, and we do not expect the withdrawal of U.S. troops to affect their continued generosity. If confirmed, I will work to maintain our diplomatic engagement with the Government of Iraq and refugee-hosting countries and to sustain humanitarian support for Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons.

I am also committed to maintaining the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration's refugee resettlement programs that serve Iraqi refugees, those who have assisted the U.S. Government as well as other vulnerable Iraqis in need of resettlement. Since 2007, the United States has resettled more than 62,000 Iraqis as refugees, including over 7,800 from the U.S. facility in Baghdad. A new security check implemented in late 2010 caused a slow-down in refugee arrivals in FY 2011 to the United States, particularly for Iraqi refugees. This security check, a fundamental safeguard for our country, has equally affected the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program managed by the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs. While I understand the Departments of State and Homeland Security, along with numerous intelligence agencies, are already reviewing this new check in order to gain efficiencies, it is one of my top priorities to engage at senior levels to resolve processing impediments caused by this new check while ensuring an effective system of security checks.

Question. I read with some alarm that the Governments of Bangladesh and Burma are in discussions regarding the possible return of Rohingya refugees currently residing in Bangladesh. As you know, this population is of great concern to me. The Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka have both worked hard to champion the rights of the Rohingya. What will

you do, if confirmed, to restart the resettlement of Rohingya from Bangladesh to the United States and to improve their conditions in Bangladesh?

Answer. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is closely following the situation of the Rohingya in Bangladesh and elsewhere in the region. There has been no progress by the Government of Bangladesh on the formation of a coherent national refugee policy since the October 2010 interministerial meeting, which placed all Rohingya-related issues on hold for a policy review. Third-country resettlement of the most vulnerable people from camps is still suspended and international NGOs continue to face difficulty obtaining legal permission to operate and provide life-saving humanitarian assistance. The U.S. Government and UNHCR have engaged in humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy at senior and working levels on numerous occasions since October 2010.

During the recent official visit by Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Burma, she announced that Burma President Thein Sein agreed to the repatriation of Rohingya. Embassy Dhaka has been reassured that only willing refugees will be considered for repatriation and there is no established timeline. UNHCR is engaged with both governments and has a role in determining voluntariness and appropriate conditions in Burma for return. The eventual voluntary repatriation of Burmese refugees in safety and dignity, when conditions allow, is a solution which the U.S. Government and international community support.

If confirmed, I will work with the international community to press both Burma and Bangladesh to improve conditions for the Rohingya and will reiterate U.S. support for long-term solutions, if and when appropriate. I will emphasize our commitment to work with Bangladesh to provide assistance to and identify durable solutions for the Rohingya, including resettlement of the most vulnerable. Our humanitarian assistance is part of the U.S. commitment to seek a comprehensive solution for refugees from Burma in Bangladesh and the Southeast Asian region.

RESPONSES OF TARA D. SONENSHINE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. I commend the State Department for implementing reforms for the Summer Work and Travel J1 visa program, and look forward to working with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs as your monitoring efforts move forward. On secondary school exchanges, both grants-based and private sector, what reforms do you feel are necessary to ensure that international students who come to the United States have a safe, educational, and fun experience?

Answer. ECA's senior leadership has made it a top priority to strengthen and enforce regulatory oversight of all youth exchange programs. I intend to follow through on the current initiatives. The health, safety, and welfare of international students in the United States are top priorities for the State Department, and I will work energetically to ensure that it remains so.

ECA has increased staff in its Youth Programs Division, hired participant monitoring specialists and dramatically increased the number of visits and interviews with exchange students, host families, schools, and local coordinators.

In October 2010, ECA published new and more stringent regulations, including tighter family screening that includes: photographs of the host family home; an annual criminal background check; and a check of the National Sex Offender Registry for all host family adults and local coordinators.

Local Coordinators are now required to pass a training course and test on the program's purpose and regulations. Over 15,000 local coordinators have taken and passed the course.

In fall 2010, ECA/EC staff completed on-site inspections of the 39 largest fee-charging program sponsors and followed these inspections with sanctions of 15 sponsors and termination of 1.

Question. The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy traditionally represents the Secretary of State at meetings of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, liaising between the BBG and the State Department.

- What will be your top priorities regarding your role with the BBG? What efforts will you promote?
- In your assessment, what challenges does the BBG face in the field of public diplomacy as it competes with similar efforts of other countries, including but not limited to China? How would you address these challenges?
- How will you reduce the overlap and redundant programming between BBG and public diplomacy?

Answer. The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is the Secretary's designated representative to the BBG. In that role, as in all others, I would give top priority to working across agencies in a whole-of-government approach that creates synergies, leverages talent and makes the most of limited resources.

The State Department and the BBG share a commitment to promoting freedom of the press and open access to information around the world as a fundamental tenet of our democratic values. I would seek to foster ongoing dialogue between the Department and the BBG to ensure that we are reinforcing those messages while being respectful of the "firewall" that safeguards the independence of U.S. international broadcasting. I also would look forward to drawing upon my 25 years of media experience—including with ABC NEWS, Newsweek, and other outlets—to contribute ideas to the BBG on its reform efforts.

These efforts have been geared in part toward increasing U.S. international broadcasting's audience in an ever-growing global media marketplace. The ascendancy of government-supported international media on multiple platforms in other countries, including China, has created new competition for audiences—a point to which Secretary Clinton spoke earlier this year in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Concerns have been raised in particular over media backed by governments with views that are at odds with those of the United States. If confirmed, I will strongly support the BBG's work to improve its competitive edge.

Additionally, in a number of countries the BBG and its grantee organizations face challenges of government-restricted audience access to broadcast programs and products through signal jamming, as well as barriers to Internet usage and the distribution of content. The State Department has worked with the BBG to help overcome these restrictions, and if confirmed, I will ensure that this interagency coordination receives all the institutional backing that it needs.

The situation involving broadcasting and China is exacerbated by limits that the Chinese Government places on the number of visas granted to journalists working for U.S. international broadcasting entities. The State Department frequently raises this issue with the Chinese Government—via their Embassy in Washington, the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, and at various high-level meetings. As Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, I would lend my full support to finding a solution to this challenge.

With respect to any redundancies in programming, I will look to eliminate needless duplication, particularly given the tight budget environment in which the U.S. Government operates, by reviewing any areas where BBG and State Department activities appear to overlap. But I would also work to create synergies drawing on the strengths of public diplomacy and BBG programming to ensure that we reach the broadest possible audience using a range of tools that complement one another, such as opinion research and audience metrics.

Question. Online exchanges, or "Exchange 2.0"

a. Online exchanges, or "Exchange 2.0," are heralded by some as low-cost and effective means for advancing intercultural and international engagement.

- In a period of fiscal austerity and dwindling resources, what steps would you take to strengthen the efficacy of online exchanges and increase both Americans' and other nationals' use of such programs?

b. Others say "Exchange 2.0" cannot substitute for traveling to other countries and directly experiencing other cultures. The State Department has many programs through which foreign professionals and students come to the United States for immersion and cultural exchange purposes. But it is also very important for Americans of all demographics to explore other countries and serve, however indirectly, whether through volunteer or teaching programs, as citizen ambassadors of the United States.

- If confirmed, keeping in mind the economic climate, what measures might you take to encourage more Americans to travel overseas and learn about other societies? How would you envision your role in this, and how would you work throughout government on this issue?

Answer. Online or virtual exchange offers a cost-effective, meaningful, and scaleable complement to in-person exchanges, especially among youth. However, they are not a substitute for direct people-to-people exchanges. That said I will work on exploring how to support more of these sorts of exchanges around the world.

Impact and sustainability is increased by adding virtual exchange programs to currently funded activities. The projects are able to further educational reform through project-based learning, interdisciplinary education, and student teamwork. Also, virtual exchanges between international students and American students help

share American values through selected activity themes, such as freedom of the press or human rights, as the students research and report on the themes.

I am a strong advocate for the importance of Americans engaging in meaningful experiences abroad, and will work with colleagues across government as well as educators, artists, scientists, business leaders and others in the nongovernmental community to convey this message. In order for the United States to compete and lead, we must ensure that our people are equipped with the skills and understanding necessary to succeed in a global environment. The Department of State's international exchange programs fulfill the nation's priorities and serve as models in their emphasis on increasing participation by underserved populations, fostering language learning, and supporting career-relevant experiences and exchanges that promote leadership development.

Question. Over the last few months, we have witnessed the slow but hopeful liberalization of Burmese politics. Should Burma take further steps to become a more open society, how do you envision increasing cooperation with that country to enhance people-to-people exchanges?

Answer. People-to-people exchange has been and will continue to be an important part of U.S. efforts to bring about political reform in Burma. Initiatives such as English teaching and other programs for Burmese citizens organized by the American Center in Rangoon, visits by journalists and other important figures from Burma to the United States in State Department exchange programs, have all contributed to the gradual development of civil society in Burma. Should Burma take further steps to become a more open society, the State Department will use the full range of public diplomacy tools at our disposal to expand people-to-people ties with Burma, including increasing youth, student, and professional exchanges.

Question. During your nomination hearing you said that public diplomacy is something for which engagement requires being "in it for the long haul." You also mentioned as an example of public diplomacy the recently launched U.S. Virtual Embassy in Iran. There are reports that already the Iranian Government has blocked Iranian citizens from accessing the Virtual Embassy Web site.

- What are all the tools available to the U.S. Government committed to public diplomacy in the long haul, to address challenges, such as blocked Internet access and hampered communication, as it pursues several mediums by which to engage people around the world and explain or demonstrate to them what America is about? How would you prioritize those tools?

Answer. Virtual Embassy Tehran has not been shut down. In fact, it has gone viral, rapidly approaching 1 million page-hits within the first week. After the site was "blocked" inside Iran, many of the Persian-language page-views originated from countries where the Persian-speaking community is negligible or nonexistent—a strong indicator that Iranians are using proxy software and/or Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) that mask IP addresses.

While we cannot exactly quantify the number of hits from inside Iran, Iranians have long found creative ways to get around the regime's attempts to stop them from controlling the information they see. "Blocking a site" does not equate to "making that site inaccessible."

While Facebook has never officially confirmed the number of Iranian users, the Iranian Government itself has estimated that more than 17 million Iranians have Facebook accounts—despite the fact that Facebook is one of those blocked Web sites.

Secretary Clinton has made clear that Virtual Embassy Tehran is just one step in what will be a sustained U.S. effort to pierce the "Electronic Curtain" Iran is attempting to place around its people. As part of this effort, we are increasing our communication efforts in the Persian-language through all available media (online, broadcast, print, etc.) to counter disinformation and persistent myths about the United States and our policies. We are exploring additional ways to make broadcast content available to Iranian audiences by countering Iranian jamming of foreign broadcasts. We will continue to explore innovative ways to put hardware, software, and expertise in the hands of Iranian citizens and assist them in bypassing their own government's censorship.

Finally, we are raising greater awareness for Iran's systemic efforts to deny information to its people. These efforts to control what the Iranian people see, hear, think, and feel are both a significant human rights violation and an approach that runs counter to the historical role successive Persian empires have played as a crossroads of civilizations.

We share internally best practices and employ similar tactics in other countries where systematic censorship and control of information challenge our diplomacy.

Question. With the U.S. military drawdown in Iraq, how would you increase public diplomacy efforts in that country to build on and improve America's relationship with Iraq and its citizens?

Answer. There is currently in place and underway a wide-ranging transition plan to enhance our public diplomacy efforts in Iraq. It includes both expanded communications with the Iraqi people and expanded educational and cultural programs to enhance direct engagement between Iraqis and Americans. If confirmed, I pledge to work with the Congress to extend the full range of our Nation's substantial public diplomacy abilities and tools to broaden understanding in Iraq of the new U.S.-Iraq civilian partnership, enshrined in the Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA).

The past decade has seen a major expansion of media outlets in Iraq and the arrival of broadly available cellular phone communications and open Internet access. If confirmed, I will work with our mission to vigorously leverage broadcast and new media—as well as press engagement—to project a bilateral partnership based on mutual interests and values, consistent with the evolving relationship. Our team of Arabic-speaking officers will be asked to conduct regular radio and TV interviews on Iraqi and pan-Arab television and will seek other creative means of leveraging the reach of television, the most common news source for Iraqis, to reinforce key themes. Embassy Baghdad will utilize its growing Facebook and YouTube presence to highlight the many partnership bilateral partnership activities under the SFA. I am a strong advocate for the effective use of social media and outreach programs that will include regular discussions with youth, women, and young professionals on a wide range of topics.

Our public diplomacy activities will support no less than six elements of the Strategic Framework Agreement. It is my hope to see that our engagement with Iraq effectively underscores the shared values and goals of our bilateral partnership.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs currently operates a broad range of academic and professional exchanges with Iraq, including the ones with which you are most familiar—the Fulbright Program, International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowships. These and other exchanges focus on education, English teaching, rule of law, entrepreneurship and economic growth, urban planning, public health, scientific research, and human rights.

We must do as much as we can to promote deep engagement between Iraqi and American educational institutions as a way of nurturing stronger people-to-people relations. Our public diplomacy program oversees seven university linkage programs that support exchanges between American and Iraqi universities. We will be continuing to make substantial investments in English teaching programs in Iraq to facilitate communication with and understanding of the United States. Our academic advising programs will promote U.S. study by Iraqis—a growing number of whom are funded by the Iraqi Government.

The United States has earned much good will through our efforts to support the preservation of Iraq's cultural and artistic legacy. Cultural heritage initiatives, including improved professional capacity in object conservation, historic preservation, and archaeology, continue to be an important part of our bilateral dialogue and will be supported to the best of our ability.

RESPONSES OF ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. Given your previous experience as Chief of Mission in Khartoum and Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and the Central African Republic, what lessons have most significantly shaped your approach to managing a post like Togo?

Answer. As Chargé d'Affaires in Khartoum and as DCM in Zimbabwe and the Central African Republic, I learned to anticipate what issues might arise in a very fluid political and social environment characterized by negative trend lines. During my tenure in these three countries, crisis management of unanticipated situations was often the rule. The situation in Togo, on the other hand, is more akin to what I experienced in Zambia, where the trend lines were largely positive. Togo currently appears well positioned to achieve a general improvement of the political, social, and economic environment. If confirmed, I will work with the Embassy country team, and through our bilateral and multilateral relationships, to harness the possibilities for improved governance, strengthened rule of law and accelerated economic liberalization.

Question. In your testimony, you noted that maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea is one of our principal concerns in Togo and that the U.S. Embassy will look to

use existing programs to help assist Togolese efforts. Piracy off the coast of Somalia, which has had a much larger economic impact and received far more attention, tends to be viewed often as primarily a naval problem, but its origins—and likely resolution—are found on land. How would you approach the question of piracy and maritime security, if confirmed?

Answer. Banditry, piracy, and armed robbery at sea are a crucial concern in the region and especially for a country like Togo, which benefits greatly from the port revenue from the transshipment of goods to the land-locked Sahelian countries to the north. Maritime insecurity is a threat not only to economic growth, but also national and regional security and stability. The maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea is vulnerable to a wide array of threats that have significant land-based dimensions, whether related to the origin of the threat, the locus of its effects, or the land-based capabilities required for preventive or enforcement interventions. As a result, land-based actors and capabilities are as important to maritime security as the sea-based actors and capabilities. Most attacks at sea against maritime commerce in the Gulf of Guinea do not meet the definition of piracy, since they largely occur within national or territorial waters. As such, the problem requires a different approach than that employed in the Gulf of Aden. We must invest in smart and targeted engagements that capitalize on local political will and nationally owned initiatives with regional consequences. If confirmed, I will work with the Togolese authorities to strengthen their capacity to patrol the coastline and police Togolese territorial waters. The United States has provided two Defender patrol boats to aid the Togolese Navy in these efforts. I will continue to use existing programs such as Africa Command's African Partnership Station to build the capacity of Togo and neighboring littoral states in this domain. Understanding that this is a regional issue, I will encourage President Faure to engage in consultations with neighboring coastal countries of the Economic Community of West African States to develop a joint plan to respond to this growing threat.

RESPONSES OF EARL GAST TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY JOHN F. KERRY

Question. As you know, we are currently in a very difficult fiscal situation. If the global foreign assistance budget is subject to cuts in FY 2012 and FY 2013, how will USAID approach this process in terms of its Africa programming? What priorities would guide the agency's thinking, particularly with regard to development outcomes and bilateral relationships?

Answer. Although the budget climate is challenging, USAID, in collaboration with our interagency partners, will prioritize implementing the Obama administration's Presidential Initiatives, combating major humanitarian crises and assisting those recovering from serious conflict, and advancing regional security, democracy and governance, and economic growth. By focusing our programming on these priorities, measuring outcomes, and working collaboratively with host governments, civil societies and private sector partners on the ground, we will help to resolve conflict, maintain stability, and promote development.

In particular, Africa's democratic gains cannot be taken for granted as democratic institutions across the continent have not been fully consolidated and remain fragile and vulnerable to authoritarian leaders and unconstitutional changes of government. In addition to supporting strong democracy programs throughout Africa, the Agency has a special focus on strengthening elected municipal-level governance and civil society counterparts in relatively well-performing African countries in order to deepen democratic governance and build systems of accountability.

Question. In your testimony, you noted that USAID is currently improving the impact, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of development programs. What are the best ways to measure aid effectiveness and what mechanisms are currently in place or being considered in order to measure the medium- or long-term impact of completed U.S. programs?

Answer. USAID's newly adopted evaluation policy offers a comprehensive approach designed to set the standard for measuring the results and impact of our programming on the ground. These efforts focus not just on the inputs that are provided or even the outputs achieved, but on accountable measures of development outcomes. Through the implementation of this policy—a key pillar of Administrator Shah's USAID Forward reform agenda—the Agency will more effectively determine where we are seeing results and intensify or scale up interventions as appropriate, as well as those areas where we need to modify or scale back our investments. The

policy will improve the quality of our monitoring and evaluation agenda and guide our program strategies, program design, and resource allocation decisions.

Question. During your nomination hearing, you discussed the importance of supporting good governance in Africa. In countries where we have not seen progress in democracy and human rights, and particularly in countries where we've seen a backsliding in critical elements of good governance, how should this affect U.S. aid funding and in what ways would you recommend re-thinking existing assistance programs?

Answer. U.S. support for democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) is central to protecting our national security, promoting our national values, and furthering U.S. interests (including economic) in Africa. Failed or authoritarian states pose a threat to the physical security of the United States through potential trafficking in drugs, persons, and weapons, and providing safe haven to those who wish our harm.

During the past decade, Africa has made significant progress in democratization, including the birth of a new democratic state of South Sudan, recent democratic elections in Zambia, and democratic transitions in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Niger. Since 1998, dozens of African countries have embraced democratic rule. This is a remarkable achievement given that 30 years ago military dictatorships and one-party states dominated the landscape. However, significant challenges remain, including persistent instability in Somalia, restrictions on civil society in Ethiopia, and the continued political crisis in Madagascar.

Strategic investments in DRG can make a big difference in whether a country progresses or backslides. Our assistance targets windows of opportunity for strengthening representative and responsive governance and civil society institutions, and to work across sectors—agriculture and food security, in education, in health, and in climate change—in increasing African partners' capacity for transparent and accountable governance.

In countries where engagement with central governments remains unproductive or not possible, efforts at the grassroots level to foster citizen demand for better governance and to facilitate tangible gains in local service delivery are important. USAID plays an important role in supporting civil society organizations delivering health, education, and other services while also supporting human rights and democratic activists outside of government and, when possible, reformers within government. Democracy, human rights, and governance programs have also been refocused more directly on promoting democratic principles in the delivery of services by integrating these principles through civil society support across several development sectors to build understanding of and demand for democratic governance at the local level.

Question. Please highlight what you consider to be three of USAID's most significant programming successes in Africa in recent years. What made these programs successful?

Answer. Among the many USAID success stories in Africa, three stand out as potent illustrations of what U.S. foreign assistance and priorities can accomplish: progress in addressing the scourge of HIV/AIDS, improved food security in Ethiopia, and the peaceful secession of South Sudan.

For over 20 years, one of the most significant health challenges facing Africa has been the rise and spread of the HIV epidemic. In addition to dire health consequences on affected individuals and families, the disease also places considerable demands on community resources and stunts economic growth. But according to a recent U.N. report, in 2010, new HIV/AIDS infections worldwide had dropped to their lowest levels since the peak of the epidemic, and treatment mobilized by the international community has saved the lives of 2.5 million people in poor countries worldwide since 1995. In 22 African countries, the rate of new HIV infections fell by more than 25 percent and AIDS-related deaths have dropped 21 percent between 2001 and 2009, largely as a result of international investments and coordination.

Through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), USAID and its interagency partners have worked together to make major strides in addressing and mitigating the effects of the disease. Today, PEPFAR is providing life-saving antiretroviral drugs to more than 3.8 million HIV-positive Africans, and care and treatment to over 10 million. USAID is the major implementer of PEPFAR throughout the world. PEPFAR is increasingly trying to link its efforts to other health programs in order to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of their programs. It has also targeted efforts toward women, who comprise the majority of people infected by HIV, and preventing mother-to-child transmission, which has allowed millions of babies to be born HIV-free.

In Ethiopia, USAID is partnering with the World Bank and other organizations to support the Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program. For the last 5 years, the Agency's programs have worked to shift Ethiopia away from dependence on emergency food aid and toward long-term self-sufficiency and food security. This involved resiliency programs that introduced drought-resistance seeds, constructed wells and catchment areas, strengthened livestock health, and promoted good sanitary practices. We have seen striking results of these efforts this year, when, despite Ethiopia's experiencing its worst drought in 60 years, more than 7.5 million fewer Ethiopians required emergency food assistance than did during the country's last drought.

USAID has prioritized investments in the Productive Safety Net Program—implementing market-driven approaches to diversify livelihoods, build markets, and build stronger links among farmers, markets, and financial services. Additionally, the President's Feed the Future initiative is capitalizing on the lessons learned through this program and others to build country-led approaches in Africa that increase food security, improve household incomes and nutrition, and reduce poverty by investing in the main engine of Africa's economies: agriculture.

This past year, South Sudan emerged as the world's newest nation following a peaceful, transparent, and open referendum process stipulated by the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the country's 22-year civil war. While South Sudan's challenges hardly ended with independence, the Government of South Sudan (GOSS), with USAID support, has built roads to facilitate trade with its neighbors; established systems to provide health care and education for its people; installed checks that ensure transparent management of its resources; and developed policies to protect its extraordinary natural resources. USAID continues to work with its institutions at all levels to sustain and deepen these accomplishments, including through the recent U.S.-sponsored international engagement conference for the Republic of South Sudan. USAID has been a strong partner of the GOSS since its inception, and that partnership continues today.

As you know, millions of Sudanese came together to vote against war for a peaceful independence. U.S. support helped to create the environment that led up to that extraordinary moment—a potent illustration of what diplomacy and development can achieve in Africa and how continued U.S. involvement is critical to supporting African progress. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my interagency partners to strengthen our relationship with South Sudan and assist the Sudanese people in meeting the various challenges impacting our newest democracy.



