

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., by video-conference, Hon. Jeff Merkley presiding.

Present: Senators Merkley [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Murphy, Kaine, Booker, Van Hollen, Johnson, Young, and Hagerty.

Also Present: Senator Duckworth.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF MERKLEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM OREGON

Senator MERKLEY. Welcome, everyone. This is Senator Jeff Merkley. I am checking to see if we have Senator Hagerty with us, who I think is—yes, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. Jeff, I am here. Good morning.

Senator MERKLEY. Tremendous. And I think we are beginning now so I will gavel this meeting to order.

Welcome, everyone. Warm welcome to my colleagues and our five nominees. Thanks on behalf of the committee to our nominees for taking the time to meet with us today.

Today, we will consider the nominations of five highly qualified individuals for a diverse array of positions that impact U.S. national interests and global economic growth and development and the advancement of human rights, democracy, and religious freedom.

First, we will consider Mr. Marc Stanley, the nominee to be Ambassador to Argentine Republic. Mr. Stanley is an established leader in the legal field and has served in leadership positions in numerous local and national charitable and civic organizations throughout his career.

Our second nominee is Mr. Rashad Hussain to be Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. Mr. Hussain previously served as U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which included meeting regularly with heads of state and numerous other roles in government, and endorsed by dozens of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders for this position advancing religious freedom around the world.

I would like to enter into the record two letters, one from Christian and Jewish leaders and one from the International Religious Freedom Roundtable in support of Mr. Hussain's nomination.

Is there any objection?

[No response.]

Senator MERKLEY. Hearing none, those are entered into the record.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of this hearing transcript.]

Senator MERKLEY. We will also consider Ms. Chantale Wong to be the U.S. Director of the Asian Development Bank, a position that comes with the rank of Ambassador.

Ms. Wong has deep experience in government and development finance and previously served as the acting U.S. executive director of the Asian Development Bank.

In her ample free time, Ms. Wong—which I am sure is very scarce—chronicled the annual congressional civil rights pilgrimages in Alabama with the late Congressman John Lewis during which I had the opportunity to meet her. Welcome. Welcome to see you in a whole different role today.

For the position of U.S. Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction Development, we will consider Dr. Adriana Debora Kugler. Dr. Kugler is a tenured professor of public policy and economics at Georgetown University. She has a distinguished list of honors and publications and deep experience in economics, including having [inaudible] economist at the U.S. Department of Labor.

And, finally, for the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs, we have Mr. Ramin Toloui as nominee. Mr. Toloui is professor of the practice for international finance at Stanford University. He has decades of experience in finance and investment. He has served as the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for international finance.

I will just remind everyone if you are not speaking please mute your mic so we do not get the opportunity to hear your side conversations. Thank you all.

Just over a month ago, the chairman of this committee, Senator Bob Menendez, took to the Senate floor to highlight the obstruction that has prevented the swift confirmation of nearly 100 nominations for the State Department and for USAID, including numerous career Foreign Service officers.

These nominees constituted individuals who would be responsible for critical national security roles. Thanks to the work of members of this committee, we have made progress and just last week referred out 33 nominees to the full Senate.

We are very appreciative of the momentum and movement that the committee has taken in advancing nominees for all of our critical national security positions.

But we still have 54 nominees pending on the Senate floor and 22 nominees pending before Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and future nominees to come.

I am sure many of my colleagues share my hope that this spirit of comity in the committee will continue with future slates of nominees.

With that, I will turn to Senator Hagerty for some opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank all the nominees for appearing before our committee today. I want to congratulate you and thank you for your willingness to serve our great nation. I am looking forward to hearing from each of you.

Today, we consider five nominees for important positions. I would like to start with the nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

This position links America's diplomatic power and America's economic might. It helps to advance American economic opportunities for U.S. businesses overseas, helps to attract foreign investment in the United States, and to employ economic pressure against our adversaries.

In my prior role as ambassador to Japan, I worked very closely with the previous incumbent on a variety of strategic initiatives like our Blue Dot Network. At a time when economic security and national security have become more intertwined than ever, we need an assistant secretary who will lead engagement in economic sectors of strategic significance to the United States: shoring up critical supply chains, cooperating with partners on advanced technologies, countering investments by malign actors in strategic infrastructure, and pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

I would like to turn to the nominee to be U.S. Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. As the world's largest development bank, the IBRD provides financial products and policy advice to help countries reduce poverty and extend the benefits of growth throughout the world.

At a time when our strategic adversaries are attempting to rewrite international rules and norms, it will be critical for the U.S. Executive Director of the IBRD to advance policies and values that represent the free world.

I would like to turn now to the nominee to be the United States director of the Asian Development Bank. This is a critical moment for the ADB to play a leading role in ensuring that economic, financial, and infrastructure needs of the Indo-Pacific reflect the values and policies of the United States as well as those of our allies and our partners in the region.

We must leverage the full scope of U.S. economic tools to promote concrete foreign policy goals and expand collaboration with key allies and partners.

Specifically, we must use these tools to counter the growth of state-directed economic engagement by China, which simultaneously distorts markets, pushes out American and allied companies, and undermines U.S. national security.

Next, I would like to turn to the nomination to be Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. This is a critical position, perhaps today more than ever, because religious freedom is under attack across the globe, from Christians in Iran and in the Middle East to Uighur Muslims in China.

Today, the United States needs a strong ambassador who will work tirelessly to sustain America's leadership in international religious freedom.

And last, but certainly not least, I would like to focus on the nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to Argentina.

Argentina is an important partner in terms of diplomacy, trade and economics, counter narcotics, counterterrorism, space, science, and technology.

I look forward to hearing from the nominee about how we can strengthen the U.S. partnership with Argentina while also countering China's malign influence in the country and throughout Latin America.

With that, I would like to turn it back to Chairman Merkley. Thank you.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Senator.

And so now we are going to proceed with the testimony and we are going to do something a little unusual in that when Senator Kaine arrives he is going to give an introduction after the testimony has been presented by Mr. Marc Stanley and also after testimony has been done by Mr. Rashad Hussain.

When we have completed those two testimonies we will go to Ms. Chantale, and Senator Tammy Duckworth is here to introduce her, and then Chris Van Hollen—Senator Chris Van Hollen of Maryland will introduce Dr. Adriana Kugler.

Mr. Marc Stanley, I am not going to give an extended introduction now. Senator Kaine will make remarks later to add to the few points that I made earlier, and we are going to turn directly to your testimony.

You have the floor.

STATEMENT OF MARC R. STANLEY OF TEXAS, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

Mr. STANLEY. Thank you.

Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Hagerty, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Argentine Republic.

I am deeply grateful that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have asked me to serve, and I do want to thank Senator Kaine in advance for his leadership, his friendship, and what I hope will be a kind introduction. I look forward to working with him as chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee.

Serving in this role will truly be the honor of a lifetime and another humbling chapter in a family story that is unique to the American promise, a story that finds its roots in small villages in Belarus, Ukraine, and Poland.

My father's family first made their way to Brooklyn, New York, with little to their name. My mother's father fled pogroms in the early 1900s and landed in London before my mother eventually crossed the Atlantic at age 19 to reach America's shores as well.

My parents met at a Jewish singles dance on Long Island, and after marrying and having two sons they moved to Dallas, built a business and planted the seeds of a fruitful life.

My younger brother and I were born in Dallas, first-generation Texans. Although my father and two brothers have passed, and I

miss them dearly, I am grateful that my 92-year-old mother, Renee, and my brother, David, are still with us in Dallas.

And Texas is where I met my extraordinary wife of 38 years, the love of my life, Wendy Hillebrand, and together we have been blessed every day by three incredible kids, Daryl, Paul, and Mikey, and their partners, Marshal, Nicky, and Jesse, and now one perfect granddaughter, Jed August Sosland. I want to thank my family and my friends for their love and for their support.

Throughout my life, public service, the pursuit of justice, the desire to give back and repair the world, what in Judaism we call *tikkun olam*, have always been a central part of my identity as a young intern and staffer on Capitol Hill, as a lawyer, as a volunteer, as an activist in everything from the fight to rescue Soviet Jewry to the cause of a safer state of Israel, to leadership roles in national and local nonprofits, and serving in state and federal government.

Now, if confirmed, I have the chance to continue forging that path on behalf of our nation. And I do not see this process simply one of ceremony. Argentina, Latin America's second largest country, is a critical partner in our hemisphere, and as the United States Ambassador, I intend to do my part to advance matters of mutual interest rooted in our mutual values.

And I know I will do so in a truly beautiful country, a place where I would love meeting the people and exploring, walking the streets of Buenos Aires, hiking in Bariloche and getting drenched at Iguazu.

I know I will be strengthened by the outstanding staff at our embassy, the distinguished members of the Foreign Service, and local Argentine staff who perform the quiet but vital work of diplomacy every day.

And I will come to this position with clear priorities in mind. These priorities are described in my formal statement, which was submitted to the committee, but limited to five minutes I will highlight just a few goals and be happy to go into more details in response to your questions.

First, COVID-19. Argentina has started to turn the corner on COVID-19 infections and the United States has played a great role. Ending the pandemic globally will benefit the United States, Argentina, and the entire world, and, if confirmed, I will continue to explore all avenues to assist Argentina in this global fight.

The economy. Sadly, Argentina is experiencing significant economic challenges, including its huge IMF debt and a prolonged recession. If confirmed, I will work to support Argentina's efforts to address those challenges.

Trade. Two-way trade has been shrinking, and some U.S. companies are leaving the field due to regulatory barriers. If confirmed, I will keep engaging the Argentine Government to address these challenges as we explore opportunities to expand U.S. trade and investment.

Human rights. Argentina has not yet joined the United States and others in pressing hard enough for the protection of human rights and meaningful reforms in countries like Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

And if confirmed, I plan to engage with Argentine leadership at all levels to seek ways to achieve our mutual goal of a hemisphere that honors our highest ideals.

Finally, as Ambassador, I will make it clear that America is truly back, that our presence is a positive one, that we are interested in deepening our people-to-people ties.

I am committed to traveling to all 23 provinces, to promote our businesses and promote our culture, and to remind our Argentine friends of everything that we have in common.

Thank you for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stanley follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARC R. STANLEY

Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as the Ambassador to the Argentine Republic. I am deeply grateful that President Biden and Secretary Blinken asked me to serve.

Serving in this role would truly be the honor of a lifetime—and another humbling chapter in a family story that is truly unique to the American promise.

That story finds its roots in small villages in Belarus and Ukraine. My father's family first made their way to Brooklyn, New York, with little to their name. My mother's father fled pogroms in the early 1900s and landed in London, before his daughter eventually crossed the Atlantic at the age of 19 to reach America's shores as well.

My parents met at a Jewish singles dance on Long Island, and after marrying and having two sons, moved to Dallas, built a business, and planted the seeds of a fruitful life.

My younger brother and I were born in Dallas—first generation Texans. Though we have lost our father and two brothers, whom I miss deeply, I am grateful that my 92 year old mother, Renee, and my brother David, are still with us in Dallas.

And Texas is where I met my extraordinary wife, the love of my life, Wendy Hillebrand, and together, we have been blessed every day by three incredible children—Daryl, Paul, and Mikey—and now, one grandchild.

I want to thank my family and friends for their love and support.

Throughout my life, public service, the pursuit of justice, the desire to give back and repair the world—what in Judaism we call “*tikkun olam*”—have always been a central part of my identity: as a young intern and staffer on Capitol Hill, as a lawyer, as a volunteer, as an activist in everything from the fight to rescue Soviet Jewry to the cause of a safer state of Israel to leadership roles in local and national non-profits and in state and federal government.

Now, if confirmed, I have the chance to continue forging that path on behalf of our nation. There is no possibility I find more thrilling or more humbling.

Argentina, Latin America's second largest country, is a critical partner in our hemisphere, and as the United States Ambassador, I intend to do my part to advance matters of mutual interest, rooted in our mutual values.

I know I will do so strengthened by the outstanding staff at our embassy—the distinguished members of the foreign service and local Argentine staff who perform the quiet but vital work of diplomacy every day.

And I will come to this position with clear priorities in mind:

1. COVID-19

Argentina has started to turn the corner on efforts to defeat a powerful second wave of COVID-19 infections, and the United States has already donated 3.5 million vaccine doses to Argentina and connected the Argentines with our vaccine manufacturers for the purchase and delivery of more life-saving shots.

Ending the pandemic globally will benefit the United States, Argentina, and the entire world. If confirmed, I will continue to explore all avenues to assist this global fight.

2. Economy

Argentina is Latin America's third-largest economy, but a long history of economic instability has taken a toll on its productivity and competitiveness. Argentina has been in recession since 2018, and its government must construct a macroeconomic policy framework that will put it on the road to financial sustainability.

If confirmed, I will work to support Argentina's efforts to address its economic challenges.

3. *Trade*

Trade with Argentina is an essential pillar of our bilateral relationship. We remain Argentina's largest foreign investor, but two-way trade has been shrinking and some U.S. companies are leaving due to regulatory barriers.

If confirmed, I will keep engaging the Argentine Government to address these challenges as we explore opportunities to expand U.S. trade and investment in industries like mining, cybersecurity, pharma, and technology. I will continue the Embassy's work to advocate vigorously for U.S. businesses.

4. *Human Rights*

Argentina and the United States enjoy a longstanding relationship founded on our fidelity to democracy, prosperity, security, and the protection of human rights across the Americas. But

Argentina has not yet joined the United States and others in pressing for meaningful reforms in countries like Venezuela and Cuba.

If confirmed, I plan to engage with Argentine leadership at all levels to seek ways to achieve our mutual goal of a hemisphere that honors our highest ideals.

5. *PRC*

As the United States sees greater competition with the People's Republic of China in Argentina and elsewhere, I will make it a priority to hold everyone's feet to the fire, especially when products like below-market 5G technology are entering the marketplace and enabling China to access all data and information among Argentina's people.

If confirmed, I will work with Argentine partners to uphold the rule of law and live up to the highest environmental, social, privacy, and labor standards worldwide.

6. *Public Diplomacy / Closing*

Finally, as Ambassador, I will make it clear that America is truly back. That our presence is a positive one. That we are interested in deepening our people-to-people ties. I am committed to traveling to all 23 provinces to promote our businesses and culture, and to remind our Argentine friends of everything we have in common.

If you support my confirmation and offer me this chance to serve, I promise to cooperate with you to demonstrate the power of American values and to advance our nation's interests. It would be a true blessing and privilege and source of pride to craft this next chapter.

Thank you.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Stanley. And we are going to adjust plans on the fly here as a courtesy to our fellow senators' schedules and so we are going to have Senator Tammy Duckworth introduce Ms. Chantale Wong and then have Senator Chris Van Hollen introduce Dr. Adriana Kugler.

And then, I think, if Senator Kaine has arrived we will have him do his two introductions before we continue with the testimony.

Let me turn it over to you, Senator Duckworth.

STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH, U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is such an honor to get to be here today, and thank you to Ms. Wong for giving me the honor of introducing you.

As a small child, she was only six years old when she separated from her parents in the Great Leap Forward. Chantale Wong knows what it is like to be hungry and homeless, and she has, tragically, experienced realities of grinding poverty.

As I think you will see for yourselves today, on a very human level Ms. Wong possesses a unique compassion for and insight into the plights of hundreds of millions of people who need the kind of

help that only large institutions with our partnership and support can provide.

You have here today a deeply good and warm-hearted person who lived in China, Hong Kong, Okinawa, and Guam until she was 21. She is also one of the best qualified nominees ever to sit before this committee as a presidential nominee to be our country's Executive Director of the Asian Development Bank.

It is my deep pleasure to introduce her to you. I can honestly say that I have known about Chantale before she knew about me. She is truly an icon in the Asian-American community and I have always been grateful for her groundbreaking leadership and vision.

It is because of pioneers like Chantale that many of us had such spectacular opportunities in public service. We first met in person at an alumni event at the University of Hawaii where we both earned our undergraduate degrees.

Chantale worked in various agencies over her 28-year public sector career, a career that I could only aspire to when I was a student at the University of Hawaii. Her positions have included being at NASA, EPA, Interior, and the Office of Management and Budget.

During the financial crisis of 2008 to 2009, she, at Treasury, helped to develop the framework for the financial instruments for the Troubled Asset Relief Program. She personally led the successful transformation of the federal budgeting process and even created a software tool that was used at over a dozen agencies. For that work, Chantale received the 2008 Presidential Award for Management Excellence during the George W. Bush administration.

Chantale is the Founding Chair of the Conference on Asian and Pacific American Leadership, now in its 32nd year. CAPAL is dedicated to attracting young professionals to careers in public service and has provided opportunities for over 600 young AANHPIs.

She is also a member of the Advisory Board of Veterans for Global Leadership, which creates leadership opportunities for veterans going into careers of diplomacy, security, and development.

Chantale joined the staff of the Asian Development Bank in Manila in 1999 as an environmental specialist to ensure that the bank's assessments complied with their environmental and social policies.

She also led development and publication of ADB's first Asian Environmental Outlook in 2001. She was subsequently appointed by President Bill Clinton to the board of directors at the ADB where she represented the United States as the ultimate executive director and provided oversight of the bank's entire operations.

Consequently, she has intimate familiarity with the bank's mission, culture, and impact. Chantale speaks fluent Mandarin, Shanghainese, and Cantonese and some Japanese, so maybe she can speak with you, the ranking member, Senator Hagerty.

Her ethnic heritage, decades of public service, technological leadership, and executive level program management experience are exquisite preparation for this challenge of a lifetime.

Her years of experience and expertise in international development finance, the environment, and technology makes her incalculably qualified for this role.

She is a parent, a Catholic, a fellow Asian American and artist. She was John Lewis’—as has already been mentioned, she was John Lewis’ personal photographer during his annual civil rights pilgrimages to Alabama—as you said, Mr. Chairman, that is where he first met her—and a member of the LGBTQ community. She is also a public servant, and I fully support Chantale Wong’s nomination.

Thank you.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you so much, Senator Duckworth, for that introduction.

We are hoping, Ms. Chantale Wong, that when you testify you will testify in English.

[Laughter.]

Senator MERKLEY. Quite a range of languages that you have mastered.

And now Senator Chris Van Hollen will introduce Dr. Adriana Kugler.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Hagerty, and to my colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

I am very honored to introduce to you President Biden’s nominee to be the next United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Dr. Adriana Debora Kugler.

Over the course of her distinguished career, Dr. Kugler has dedicated herself to making the American dream more real for more people, a mission inspired by her own story as the daughter of two Colombian immigrants.

She brings the experience, the integrity, and judgment and character required in the United States chief representative on the board of the World Bank Group.

After earning her BA in economics and political science from McGill University and her Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, Dr. Kugler quickly ascended to the heights of economics research and scholarship, earning posts at top-tier institutions and the World Bank, among other affiliations.

Her vast body of research has confronted challenges of labor market inequities, unemployment issues, trade, immigration, health care, and more, and she has held the title of full professor at the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University since 2010.

But beyond her many titles, Dr. Kugler has paired her academic credentials with hands-on experience in public policy arena to help change people’s lives.

From 2011 to 2013, she made history as the first Latina to hold the post of chief economist of the United States Department of Labor, and in that role she worked across 15 departments and agencies to tackle issues of unemployment, workforce investment, Social Security, and more.

I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Kugler when she was serving at the Department of Labor and I was serving in the

House of Representatives, and I can testify both to her public policy expertise as well and, importantly, as their willingness to consult with and work with Congress as a full government partner.

On a personal note, I am very glad that Dr. Kugler is not only a resident of my great state of Maryland, where she now lives with her husband and two children, but is also a graduate of Maryland public schools and was a Capitol Hill intern to Senator Mikulski.

Her longstanding dedication to fighting for working people, supporting business growth, and breaking cycles of poverty makes our state proud to call her one of our own, and she is an exceptional candidate to represent the United States at the World Bank, where she will work with our international and other partners to unlock economic opportunity in developing countries so we can drive growth not only abroad but here at home for workers and businesses.

To my fellow members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for these reasons and many more I urge you to support the President's nomination as the next United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Dr. Adriana Kugler.

I urge everybody to support her for this position. Thank you.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Senator Van Hollen. Senator Kaine is still not with us, according to his staff.

We will still hold the other introductions and now we will be turning to the testimony of Mr. Rashad Hussain of Virginia to be Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

STATEMENT OF RASHAD HUSSAIN OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. HUSSAIN. Thank you so much, and good morning, Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, and I want to thank Senator Kaine for his introduction.

It is an honor to appear before you as the President's nominee for Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for placing the trust in me to pursue this work on behalf of the American people.

I would also like to thank my family, my parents, my sister, Lubna, my brother, Saad, my wife, Isra, and our children—Sulaiman, Safiyyah, Sumayyah, and our youngest, Safurah, who turns 26 days old today. I am blessed to have your endless advice, support, and patience.

Religious freedom is enshrined in our First Amendment and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a core American value and a human right, and I am humbled to be charged with the sacred calling to protect the freedom of religion for people all over the world.

My family came to the United States from India, where my father was raised in a village with no electricity. I was born in Wyoming where my father worked in the mining industry, and I grew up in Texas.

My mother was a physician, always encouraged me to use my life to serve others. I have spent nearly 15 years as a public servant, working in all three branches of government under Democratic and

Republican administrations, upholding our Constitution, including as an attorney and as a diplomat.

Collaborating with civil society from across the political spectrum to protect international religious freedom and alleviate human suffering has been some of the most meaningful and rewarding work of my life.

During my time at the State Department, I worked in close partnership with civil society leaders on the Marrakesh Declaration, a landmark initiative on the protection of Christians and other religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries.

As a part of our opposition to blasphemy laws and the criminalization of free speech, I led a process to end the annual passage of the U.N. resolution that harmed religious minorities around the world, and along with our Special Envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism I traveled twice to the Holocaust sites with imams from the United States and many other countries to address anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial.

My work protecting human rights has taken me around the globe where I have met with civil society leaders, heads of state, and other senior government officials in countries such as Central African Republic, Egypt, Pakistan, India, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and China, which continues its oppression of religious communities, including the ongoing genocide of the Uighurs.

And I saw firsthand the trauma of the Rohingya living in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and heard stories of the horrendous acts of violence and mass atrocities they endured.

Respected members of this committee, I was on Capitol Hill on September 11th, 2001, as a staff member of the House Judiciary Committee. Since that day, I have been determined to do everything I can to protect our country and our national security interests.

While at the Justice Department and Department of State, I worked on the prosecution of terrorism, national security cases, and other counterterrorism efforts, including countering terrorist propaganda often used to target religious minorities.

As a Muslim American, I have seen the impact of bigotry and guilt by association tactics used against minority communities, including the message it sends and the danger it poses to young people.

Congress has stood at the forefront of the work of protecting religious freedom since the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 was passed on an overwhelming bipartisan basis. I am honored by the support of civil society and faith organizations from all across the political and religious spectrum and I look forward to our continued partnership.

In an era of vigorous partisan debates, Americans continue to be, largely, of one mind regarding the importance of defending international religious freedom.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the members of this committee and your staffs to extend this right to all. I will also leverage my existing relationships with Muslim-majority countries to protect the rights of religious minorities there.

I will redouble efforts to broaden the coalition to hold China accountable for its horrific crimes against the Uighurs and its repression of other ethnic and religious minorities.

I will look to build on the impressive work of Ambassador Sam Brownback, who expanded partnerships through the International Religious Freedom Ministerial and the International Religious Freedom Alliance, and the groundbreaking efforts of Ambassador David Saperstein, who institutionalized relationships with USCIRF and civil society organizations.

Tomorrow the United States commemorates International Religious Freedom Day. Our country was founded on the conviction that everyone should be free to believe what they choose.

Our own experience, our own example, is what compels us to advocate for the rights of the marginalized, the vulnerable, the oppressed, and the underrepresented peoples of the world.

If confirmed, with the support of the American people, I intend to carry out the United States' abiding commitment to championing international religious freedom for everyone everywhere.

Thank you for your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hussain follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RASHAD HUSSAIN

Good morning Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you as the President's nominee for Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for placing their trust in me to pursue this work on behalf of the American people. I would also like to thank my family—my parents, my sister Lubna and my brother Saad, my wife Isra, and our children, Sulaiman, Safiyyah, Sumayyah, and our youngest, Safurah, who turns 26 days old today. I am blessed to have your endless advice, support, and patience.

Religious freedom is enshrined in our First Amendment and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it is a core American value and human right. And I am humbled to be charged with the sacred calling to protect the freedom of religion of people all over the world.

My family came to the United States from India, where my father was raised in a village with no electricity. I was born in Wyoming, where my father worked in the mining industry, and I grew up in Texas. My mother, who is a physician, always encouraged me to use my life to serve others. I have spent nearly 15 years as a public servant working in all three branches of government under Democratic and Republican administrations upholding our constitution, including as an attorney and a diplomat. Collaborating with civil society from across the political spectrum to protect international religious freedom and alleviate human suffering has been some of the most meaningful and rewarding work of my life.

During my time at the State Department, I worked in close partnership with civil society leaders on the Marrakesh Declaration, a landmark initiative on the protection of Christians and other religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries. As part of our opposition to blasphemy laws and the criminalization of free speech, I led a process to end the annual passage of a U.N. resolution that harmed religious minorities around the world. And along with the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, I traveled twice to the Holocaust sites with Imams from the United States and many other countries to address anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. My work protecting human rights has taken me around the globe, where I have met with civil society leaders, heads of state, and other senior government officials in countries such as the Central African Republic, Egypt, Pakistan, India, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and China, which continues its oppression of religious communities, including the ongoing genocide of the Uyghurs. And I saw firsthand the trauma of Rohingya living in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar and heard stories of the horrendous acts of violence and mass atrocities they endured.

Respected members of the committee, I was on Capitol Hill on September 11, 2001 as staff member of the House Judiciary Committee. Since that day, I have been determined to do everything I can to protect our country and our national secu-

riety interests. While at the Justice Department and State, I worked on the prosecution of terrorism and national security cases and other counterterrorism efforts, including countering terrorist propaganda often used to target religious minorities. And as a Muslim American, I have seen the impact of bigotry and guilt by association tactics used against minority communities, including the message it sends and dangers it poses to young people.

Far too many people around the world continue to face arrest, torture, discrimination, and even death on account of their beliefs.

Antisemitism, Christian persecution, anti-Muslim hatred, and other forms of intolerance are on the rise. A staggering eighty percent of people worldwide live in environments with high or severe restrictions on religious freedom. These are not just statistics and bad laws—these are individuals taken from their families: the plight of the patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Church unable to leave his home to tend to his flock; the Saudi Government whipping and jailing blogger Raif Badawi for encouraging debate online; the Nigerian Government letting atheist Mubarak Bala sit in prison without charge for months; the Panchen Lama disappeared by the PRC and stolen from the global Tibetan Buddhist community; and the stories of Christians in Vietnam, the Ahmaddiya in Pakistan, and the Baha'i in Yemen. Their faiths may be different, but they share a common experience of persecution. I am committed to fighting, day in and day out, for their rights.

Congress has stood at the forefront of this work since the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 was passed on an overwhelming, bipartisan basis. I am honored by the support of civil society and faith organizations from all across the political and religious spectrum, and I look forward to our continued partnership. In an era of vigorous partisan debates, Americans continue to be largely of one mind regarding the importance of defending international religious freedom. If confirmed, I will work closely with the members of this committee and your staffs to extend this right to all.

I will also leverage my existing relationships within Muslim-majority countries to protect the rights of religious minorities there. I will redouble efforts to broaden the coalition to hold China accountable for its horrific crimes against the Uyghurs and its repression of other ethnic and religious minorities.

I look to build on the impressive work of Ambassador Sam Brownback—who expanded partnerships through the IRF Ministerial and the International Religious Freedom Alliance—and the groundbreaking efforts of Ambassador David Saperstein, who institutionalized relationships with USCIRF and civil society organizations.

Tomorrow, the United States commemorates International Religious Freedom Day. Our country was founded on the conviction that everyone should be free to believe what they choose. Our own experience, our own example, is what compels us to advocate for the rights of the marginalized, vulnerable, and underrepresented peoples the world over. If confirmed, with the support of the American people, I intend to carry out the United States' abiding commitment to championing international religious freedom for everyone everywhere.

Thank you for your consideration.

Senator MERKLEY. Mr. Hussain, thank you very much for your testimony.

And now we are going to turn to Ms. Chantale Wong. Welcome.

And I believe you may still be muted.

STATEMENT OF CHANTALE YOKMIN WONG OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Ms. WONG. Good morning, Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee.

I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Biden to be the United States Executive Director to the Asian Development Bank. I am humbled by this privilege.

I would like to start by thanking some important people in my life for their support: my mother, who is watching these proceedings with great pride from her San Francisco apartment, my daughter, Sara, my sister, Connie, as well as my dearest friend, Peter, and his wife, Klaudia Levin. I would also like to recognize

my mentor for 30-plus years, the iconic Alice Rivlin, who we lost two years ago.

My history has shaped me and instilled in me the values and passions that make me who I am. As mentioned, I was born in communist China. When I was six years old, in the middle of the tragedy of the Great Leap Forward and at tremendous personal risk, my parents arranged to have me smuggled, along with my grandmother, into Hong Kong in the bottom of a boat.

I can still smell the food in the galley that I was not allowed to eat on that journey. That powerful and poignant memory is still with me today.

During the Cultural Revolution, my father was sentenced to hard labor and my mother was a barefoot doctor in the countryside. That they even survived is a miracle and an experience too painful for them to recount.

After I fled communist China, I did not see and hardly communicated with my parents for 21 years and until I could get them out. I was raised mostly by Catholic nuns who imprinted their faith and compassion on me.

I can never repay my parents' sacrifice or the church's grace, but I have tried to pay it forward, living my life with the values that matter to me.

I came to Washington in 1989 after receiving a Master's from Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and before that, a Master's degree in environmental engineering from the University of California Berkeley with a focus on wastewater management, and a Bachelor's in civil and structural engineering from the University of Hawaii.

Ever since then, the consistent theme of my career has been dedicated to public service, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

I know the Asian Development Bank well, having previously worked there first as a subject matter expert in Manila in 1999, focused on ensuring that the bank's environmental assessments comply with their environmental and social safeguard policies.

I led, as mentioned, the development and publication of the bank's first Asian Environment Outlook in 2001, and then was appointed by President Bill Clinton as the Ultimate Executive Director.

I have had the extraordinary privilege of being appointed by President Obama to serve as Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Chief Financial Officer at the Millennium Challenge Corporation from 2011 to 2014.

I believe that, if confirmed, this foundation will prepare me well to be the executive director to the largest regional multilateral development bank serving Asia and the Pacific.

For more than five decades of its operations the bank has contributed to a dramatic reduction in poverty, from 1.5 billion people in 1990 to 263 million in 2015 in its developing member countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges, but the bank has moved swiftly to expand pandemic support and boost financial commitments.

While I applaud the bank's launch of the Strategy 2030, if confirmed, I will work to focus the bank's resources on sectors, espe-

cially quality infrastructure, in countries where it can be most impactful, assure financial sustainability, and maintain world-class systems of governance, human resources, accountability, and oversight.

Increased competition in the region from financiers with less transparency and weaker standards underscores one of the challenges the bank must address. In many ways, the United States have been an irreplaceable partner in helping Asia lift so many people out of poverty and disease.

The American values of democracy, respect for human rights, and private enterprise remain the only viable path for sustainable inclusive development and poverty reduction.

Now we have an opportunity to reengage with Asia and the Pacific, to promote the President's infrastructure, public health, and environmental policies. Working with members of this committee, we can have a permanent and constructive impact on billions of lives through presence, participation, and patience.

Again, I am so grateful to you all for your consideration of this appointment. I would be delighted to answer your questions. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wong follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHANTALE YOKMIN WONG

Good morning, Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Biden to be the next United States Executive Director to the Asian Development Bank. I am humbled by this privilege.

I would like to start by thanking some important people in my life for their support—my mother, who is watching these proceedings with great pride from her San Francisco apartment, my daughter Sara, my sister Connie, as well as my dearest friend Peter and his wife Klaudia Levin. I would also like to recognize my mentor, the iconic Alice Rivlin, who we lost two years ago.

My history has shaped me and instilled in me the values and passions that make me who I am. I was born in Communist China. When I was six years old, in the middle of the tragedy of the "Great Leap Forward," and at tremendous personal risk, my parents arranged to have me smuggled along with my grandmother to Hong Kong in the bottom of a boat. I can still smell the food in the galley that I wasn't allowed to eat on that journey. That powerful and poignant memory is still with me today.

During the Cultural Revolution my father was sentenced to hard labor and my mother was a barefoot doctor in the countryside. That they even survived is a miracle and an experience too painful for them to recount. After I fled Communist China, I didn't see and hardly communicated with my parents for 21 years and until I could get them out. I was raised mostly by Catholic nuns, who imprinted their faith and compassion on me. I can never repay my parents' sacrifice or the Church's grace. But I have tried to "pay forward," living my life with the values that matter to me.

I came to Washington in 1989 after receiving a master's from Harvard Kennedy School of Government and before that a master's degree in environmental engineering from the University of California, Berkeley with a focus on wastewater management, and a bachelor's in civil and structural engineering from the University of Hawaii. Ever since then, the consistent theme of my career has been dedicated to Public Service, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

I know Asian Development Bank well, having previously worked there first as a subject matter expert in Manila in 1999 focused on ensuring that the bank's environmental assessments complied with their environmental and social safeguard policies. I led the development and publication of the Bank's first Asian Environment Outlook in 2001, and then was appointed by President Bill Clinton as an Alternate Executive Director. I had the extraordinary privilege of being appointed by President Obama to serve as Vice President for Administration and Finance, and Chief Financial Officer, at the Millennium Challenge Corporation from 2011 to 2014.

I believe that, if confirmed, this foundation will have prepared me to be the Executive Director to largest regional multilateral development bank serving Asia and the Pacific. Over five decades of its operations, the Bank has contributed to a dramatic reduction in poverty from 1.5 billion people in 1990 to 263 million in 2015 in its developing member countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges, but the Bank has moved swiftly to expand pandemic support and boost financial commitments.

While I applaud Bank launch of Strategy 2030, if confirmed I will work to focus the Bank's resources on sectors, especially quality infrastructure, and countries where it can be most impactful; assure financial sustainability; and maintain world-class systems for governance, human resources, accountability, and oversight. Increased competition in the region from financiers with less transparency and weaker standards underscores one of the challenges the Bank must address.

In many ways the United States has been the irreplaceable partner in helping Asia lift so many people out of poverty and disease. American values of democracy, respect for human rights, and private enterprise remain the only viable path for sustainable, inclusive development and poverty reduction. Now we have the opportunity to re-engage with Asia and the Pacific to promote the President's infrastructure, public health, and environmental policies. Working with the members of this committee, we can have a permanent and constructive impact on billions of lives through presence, participation, and patience.

Again, I am so grateful to you all for your consideration of this appointment. I would be delighted to answer your questions.

Thank you

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you. We so much appreciate your diverse experience and your expertise that you bring to bear and testimony today. Thank you.

And now we will turn to Dr. Adriana Debora Kugler of Maryland.

STATEMENT OF DR. ADRIANA DEBORA KUGLER OF MARYLAND, NOMINATED TO BE THE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS

Dr. KUGLER. Good morning, Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, and thank you, Senator Van Hollen, for your very generous introduction.

It is truly a privilege to have been nominated by President Biden to represent the United States as Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. I am honored for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I would like to begin by thanking my husband of 27 years, Ignacio Donoso, and our two outstanding children, Danny, who is a second-year student at the University of Pennsylvania, and Miri, a sophomore at Walt Whitman High School in Maryland.

I am also tremendously grateful to my parents, Bernardo and Nelly Kugler, who have dedicated their lives to working on international development. I want to thank my family for their unwavering encouragement, support, and devotion throughout the years.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, as you know, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was created in 1944 and was charged with channeling long-term development finance to help Europe and other countries to restore stability in the world.

As the granddaughter of a family who fled Europe in 1939 to escape the Holocaust, sadly, leaving behind relatives who died in con-

centration camps, I am grateful that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was created to rebuild the world after the atrocities and destruction caused by World War Two.

Since its formation, the role of the World Bank has expanded from being a lending bank investing in fiscal and human capital to also becoming a knowledge bank that shares and promotes best practices and development policies around the world.

At present, the role of the World Bank and its leadership in multilateral institutions is as important as ever. Some of the most critical issues we face today, including the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, terrorism, and a drastic rise in poverty, are truly global issues that require engagement with our allies around the world.

If confirmed, I look forward to using my unique experience and skills in economic development, university administration, and government to help advance the goals of the U.S. in growing economic prosperity and creating greater stability around the world.

For over two decades I have been doing research and analysis of economic development as a Professor of Public Policy and Economics, now at Georgetown University and previously in universities in Texas and Europe.

In my work, I have studied how labor markets and social policies across the world can improve the lives of working people, help businesses create jobs, and help the least fortunate obtain education and training to get out of poverty and become self-sufficient.

In addition, an important part of my work focuses on cost-benefit analyses, which inform how to best spend taxpayers' money in programs with the highest return.

Over the years, I have worked on evaluating projects on the ground and, thus, I also understand the real problems of implementing that need to be overcome when policy is put into practice.

I firmly believe we are able to best advance U.S. goals if development assistance is guided by high standards of accountability.

My work in university administration as Vice Provost of Georgetown University overseeing and developing policies for all faculty gave me practical experience in cementing good management practices.

This experience will be useful for the U.S. Executive Director of the World Bank, particularly in advocating for accountability and transparency at this institution at the highest levels.

My experience in government as Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor helped me to understand the importance of breaking silos and working across agencies, building coalitions, and reaching out to different constituencies.

This experience will be valuable for the work of the U.S. Executive Director, which requires close collaboration across the U.S. Government and the highest level of integrity, transparency, and accountability to U.S. taxpayers.

I will also use these experiences to work with other shareholders in advancing our common objective to see well-designed development projects that respond to the most pressing needs in countries.

As a first-generation American and daughter of Colombian immigrants, I am so fortunate to have lived the American dream after having seen poverty and political instability up close.

I have the deepest appreciation for the importance of upholding and sustaining democratic institutions, respecting the rule of law and human rights, and a strong commitment to help those less fortunate than me.

If confirmed, I would commit to work tirelessly to achieve President Biden's goal of advancing U.S. values and interests by strengthening institutional capacity, investing in inclusive growth, encouraging fair and rules-based trade, and reducing poverty around the world.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to come before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kugler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADRIANA D. KUGLER

Good morning, Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee. It is truly a privilege to have been nominated by President Biden to represent the United States as Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. I am honored for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I would like to begin by thanking my husband of 27 years, Ignacio Donoso, and our two outstanding children, Danny, who is a second-year student at the University of Pennsylvania, and Miri, a Sophomore at Walt Whitman High School in Maryland. I am also tremendously grateful to my parents, Bernardo and Nelly Kugler, who have dedicated their lives to working on international development. I want to thank my family for their unwavering encouragement, support, and devotion throughout the years.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, as you know, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was created in 1944 and was charged with channeling long-term development finance to help Europe and other countries to restore stability in the world. As the granddaughter of a family who fled Europe in 1939 to escape the Holocaust, sadly leaving behind relatives who died in concentration camps, I am grateful that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was created to rebuild the world after the atrocities and destruction caused by World War II. Since its formation, the role of the World Bank has expanded from being a lending bank, investing in physical and human capital, to also becoming a knowledge bank that shares and promotes best practices on development policies and economic growth around the world.

At present, the role of the World Bank and U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions is as important as ever. Some of the most critical issues we face today, including recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, terrorism, and a drastic rise in poverty, are truly global issues that require engagement with our allies around the world.

If confirmed, I look forward to using my unique experience and skills in economic development, university administration, and government to help advance the goals of the U.S. in growing economic prosperity and creating greater stability around the globe.

For over two decades, I have been doing research and analyses on economic development as a Professor of Economics and Public Policy now at Georgetown University and previously in universities in Texas and Europe. In my work, I have studied how labor market and social policies across the world can improve the lives of working people, help businesses create jobs, and help the least fortunate obtain education and training to get out of poverty and become self-sufficient. I have seen how various public policies have yielded positive results while other policy reforms were not properly designed to achieve progress. In addition, an important part of my work focuses on cost-benefit analyses, which inform how to best spend taxpayers' money in programs with the highest return. Over the years, I have worked on evaluating projects on the ground and, thus, I also understand the real problems of implementation that need to be overcome when policy is put into practice. I firmly believe we are able to best advance U.S. goals if development assistance is guided by high standards of accountability.

My work in university administration as Vice-Provost of Georgetown University, overseeing and developing policies for all faculty, gave me practical experience im-

plementing good management practices, including the importance of aligning goals with incentives; putting in place accountability practices; and providing clear guidance and resources to implement human resource policies. This experience will be useful for the U.S. Executive Director at the World Bank, particularly in advocating for accountability and transparency at this institution at the highest levels.

My experience in government as Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor helped me to understand the importance of breaking silos and working across agencies, building coalitions, and reaching out to different constituencies. This experience will be valuable for the work of the U.S. Executive Director, which requires close collaboration across the U.S. Government, and the highest level of integrity, transparency, and accountability to U.S. taxpayers. I will also use these experiences to work with other shareholders in advancing our common objective to see well-designed development projects that respond to the most pressing needs in countries.

As a first generation American and daughter of Colombian immigrants, I am fortunate to have lived the American Dream after having seen poverty and political instability up close. I have the deepest appreciation for the importance of upholding and sustaining democratic institutions, respecting the rule of law and human rights, and a strong commitment to help those less fortunate than me. If confirmed, I would commit to work tirelessly to achieve President Biden's goal of advancing U.S. values and interests by strengthening institutional capacity; investing in inclusive growth; encouraging fair and rules-based trade; and reducing poverty around the world.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to come before you today. I would be happy to answer questions from the committee.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Dr. Kugler.

And we have now been joined by Senator Kaine. We are going to invite Senator Kaine to do introductions for Mr. Marc Stanley and Mr. Rashad Hussain.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Senator Merkley, Senator Hagerty, and all of my colleagues. It is a treat to sign on after a fairly contentious health meeting. I hope my friends, Marc Stanley and Rashad Hussain, have already acquitted themselves well. I have no doubt that they have. Let me tell you about both of them.

Marc Stanley is a long-time friend, and Rashad Hussain is not somebody that I know personally that well but he is a very esteemed and qualified Virginian. They are both super qualified for the positions for which they are nominated.

Let me start with Marc. I have known Marc for probably about 15 years. As you heard, he is a very experienced attorney in Texas with a great track record of success in the court.

But he has also been a real rock star when it comes to public service and philanthropy. He is a founding member of his law firm and has done great work there. But his career actually began on Capitol Hill while he was a student at George Washington University and had the opportunity to work on the House Committee on Administration as an aide to Chairman Frank Thompson at that time.

He has committed himself to serving his community in a number of ways, as a council member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and also as chairman of the Texas Public Finance Committee.

He is extremely well known for his devotion to his faith, Judaism, and public affairs done with others in the Jewish community in Texas, around the country, and around the world.

I first met Marc when I was chairman of the Democratic National Committee during the early years of the Obama administra-

tion, and we bonded because we are both trial lawyers but also he has got a Richmond connection because his dad went to the University of Richmond.

At every level of professional, philanthropic, and public service Marc has demonstrated excellence, character, and integrity, and he would do a wonderful job representing our country as Ambassador to Argentina.

Rashad Hussain—Rashad hails from Falls Church, Virginia, right here in the area, and his nomination to be Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is very important.

I will start by just noting if you think he looks tired, he has got a one-month baby at home—I am sure that that might explain some sleep deprivation recently—in addition to three other children.

Rashad has got a deep background in foreign affairs and also, in particular, law and religious freedom. He is currently Director of Partnerships and Global Engagement on the National Security Council, our advocacy for religious freedom around the globe. It involves heavy interaction and consensus building with stakeholder and civil society groups. His NSC role now is an important one.

And prior to that, Rashad was senior counsel in the National Security Division of the Department of Justice and then before that he worked at the Justice Department serving as U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

If confirmed, Rashad would be the first Muslim Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. I know two of the previous ambassadors very well. We have had up a diverse representation of Americans from different religious traditions.

But as the first Muslim ambassador it would be a good thing to show our commitment to religious freedom ourselves but also much of the persecution of religious minorities occurs in Muslim-majority countries and that gives Rashad, who has already demonstrated a sensitivity to this, an ability to promote and build partnerships to embrace respect for all faiths.

He has been nominated or recommended by many organizations including the American Jewish Committee, the Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance, and the International Christian Concern.

And the last thing I will say about Rashad is we would be very proud to have a Virginian in this position. The position was created by a lot of work done by former Virginia Congressman Frank Wolf, and it was Virginia in the 1780s that passed the statute of religious freedom that served as the basis for the First Amendment's protection of all, that in this country you will not be preferred or punished based on how you worship or not worship.

It is a Virginia value that is an American value. I am proud to be here and represent a qualified Virginian for the position.

Mr. Chair, thank you for letting me do my nominations out of order and I am looking forward to participating in the questions and answers with all these nominees.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Senator Kaine.

And it is now my privilege to provide the introduction for the Honorable Ramin Toloui, and he is a professor of the practice for international finance at Stanford University.

He is a fellow at Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. His teaching and research focus on international economic policy, financial crises, and economic impact of artificial intelligence.

Prior to joining Stanford, he had a two-decade career spanning public service and investment management. He served in the Obama-Biden administration as Assistant Secretary for International Finance at the Department of Treasury.

He previously was global co-head of the Emerging Markets Portfolio Management at the Pacific Investment Management Company, overseeing more than \$100 billion in investments.

He began his career as a civil servant at the Department of the Treasury. He earned his AB degree in economics from Harvard University and a Master of philosophy degree in international relations from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

Welcome, and we look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAMIN TOLOUI OF IOWA, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS]

Mr. TOLOUI. Mr. Chairman, thank you for that introduction.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as nominee to be Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs at the State Department.

Thank you for considering my nomination, and I would also like to thank the committee staff for meeting with me before this hearing to discuss critical economic and foreign policy issues facing the United States.

Thank you to President Biden for nominating me for this position and to Secretary Blinken for his support for my candidacy.

I am thrilled that my mother, Alyce, is sharing the stage virtually with me from Iowa City where I was born and raised. My father, Ahmad, who passed away last year, is with us today in spirit. I am profoundly grateful for all that their love has made possible in my life.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, I welcome the opportunity, if confirmed, to return once again to public service. I started my career as a civil servant in the Treasury Department from 1999 to 2006, serving in the International Affairs Division under Democratic and Republican presidents, President Clinton and President Bush.

I worked on issues ranging from stabilizing economies in crisis from southeastern Europe to Latin America, to building an international coalition to combat terrorist financing in the wake of 9/11.

Seven years ago, I was honored to be confirmed by the Senate as Assistant Secretary for International Finance at the Treasury Department. In that position, I was proud to play an important role in facilitating U.S. and International Monetary Fund assistance to Ukraine to resist Russian aggression, supporting economic stabilization in key countries in the Middle East and working to ensure that financial volatility in Europe and Asia did not disrupt the global and American economies.

Outside of government, I have had the opportunity to expand my skills in ways that can contribute to more effective policymaking.

During the past few years, I have been a professor of the practice of international finance at Stanford University, teaching the next generation of citizens and prospective policymakers about how to prevent and respond to financial crises, drawing on my experiences both in government and in the private sector.

At Stanford, I also designed and taught one of the first university courses in the world on the economic impact of artificial intelligence, preparing graduates to grapple with the profound ways in which technology is poised to affect jobs, wages, industrial organization, and global competition.

I hope to bring these insights on what it takes for Americans to thrive in this new technological era to the work of the State Department and the U.S. Government.

If confirmed, I look forward to applying these skills and experiences across the broad range of issues in which the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs at the State Department has an important role to play with a particular focus on three key challenges.

First, we must secure a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This means working with the interagency and others countries to restore safe and sustainable international travel and commerce.

It means addressing short-term supply disruptions and taking concrete actions to build more resilient supply chains for the future, especially in key areas like semiconductors and other critical sectors.

And it means using commercial diplomacy in new ways to unlock novel opportunities in the post-pandemic world for U.S. businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises.

Second, the United States must lead in shaping the norms and rules governing trade, commerce, and technology that will underpin the future global economy. This means working with like-minded nations to confront abusive policies by China that create unfair competition, disadvantage American workers, and conflict with American values.

It means shaping global technology adoption and governance in ways that promote openness, security, and reliability, and reflect democratic rather than authoritarian principles in areas ranging from 5G to artificial intelligence to the digital economy, and it means cooperating with allies in areas like national security investment reviews and export controls to achieve shared objectives.

Third, the United States must leverage economic tools to advance foreign policy objectives and respond to crises. Among other things, this means utilizing sanctions effectively in pursuit of U.S. economic—pardon me, diplomatic and national security goals.

It also means deploying U.S. foreign assistance, including the expanded capacities of U.S. Development Finance Corporation to support sustainable economic development, achieve key climate goals, and advance strategic U.S. interests, and it means deploying these tools in collaboration with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions to bolster their effectiveness.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you today and for considering this nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Toloui follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY RAMIN TOLOUI

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as nominee to be Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs at the State Department. Thank you for considering my nomination. I also thank the committee staff for meeting with me to discuss critical economic and foreign policy issues facing the United States.

Thank you to President Biden for nominating me for this position, and to Secretary Blinken for his support of my candidacy.

I am thrilled that my mother, Alyce, is sharing this day virtually with me from Iowa City, where I was born and raised. My father, Ahmad, who passed away last year, is with us today in spirit. I am profoundly grateful for all that their love has made possible in my life.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, I welcome the opportunity, if confirmed, to return once again to public service. I started my career as a civil servant in the Treasury Department from 1999 to 2006, serving in the international affairs division under Democratic and Republican Presidents, President Clinton and President Bush. I worked on issues ranging from stabilizing economies in crisis from South-eastern Europe to Latin America, to building an international coalition to combat terrorist financing in the wake of 9/11.

Seven years ago, I was honored to be confirmed by the Senate as Assistant Secretary for International Finance at the Treasury Department. In that position, I was proud to play an important role in facilitating U.S. and International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance to Ukraine to resist Russian aggression, supporting economic stabilization in key countries in the Middle East, and working to ensure that financial volatility in Europe and Asia did not disrupt the global and American economies.

Outside of government, I have had the opportunity to expand my skills in ways that can contribute to more effective policymaking. During the past few years, I have been a Professor of the Practice of International Finance at Stanford University, teaching the next generation of citizens and prospective policymakers about how to prevent and respond to financial crises, drawing on my experiences both in government and the private sector. At Stanford, I also designed and taught one of the first university courses in the world on the economic impact of artificial intelligence (AI), preparing graduates to grapple with the profound ways in which technology is poised to affect jobs, wages, industrial organization, and global competition. I hope to bring these insights on what it takes for Americans to thrive in this new technological era to the work of the State Department and U.S. Government.

If confirmed, I look forward to applying these skills and experiences across the broad range of issues in which the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs at the State Department has an important role to play, with a particular focus on three key challenges:

First, we must secure a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This means working with the interagency and other countries to restore safe and sustainable international travel and commerce. It means addressing short-term supply chain disruptions and taking concrete actions to build more resilient supply chains for the future, especially in key areas like semiconductors and other critical sectors. And it means using commercial diplomacy in new ways to unlock novel opportunities in the post-pandemic world for U.S. businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises.

Second, the United States must lead in shaping the norms and rules governing trade, commerce, and technology that will underpin the future global economy. This means working with like-minded nations to confront abusive policies by China that create unfair competition, disadvantage American workers, and conflict with American values. It means shaping global technology adoption and governance in ways that promote openness, security, and reliability—and reflect democratic rather than authoritarian principles—in areas ranging from 5G to artificial intelligence to the digital economy. And it means cooperating with allies in areas like national security investment reviews and export controls to achieve shared objectives.

Third, the United States must leverage economic tools to advance foreign policy objectives and respond to crises. Among other things, this means utilizing sanctions effectively in pursuit of U.S. diplomatic and national security goals. It also means deploying U.S. foreign assistance—including the expanded capacities of the U.S. Development Finance Corporation—to support sustainable economic development, achieve key climate goals, and advance strategic U.S. interests. And it means deploying these tools in collaboration with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions to bolster their effectiveness.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you today and for considering this nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much. I appreciate the testimony. We have now had testimony from all five of our nominees, and before I turn to the period for questions, we have a set of questions that are standard for this committee to ask.

I will ask you to all respond together. If your answer is yes, you can answer yes, and then I will pause if anyone wants to answer no. Then we will be able to hear you.

And so do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator MERKLEY. Did anyone wish to answer no to that question?

[No response.]

Senator MERKLEY. All right.

Hearing none, second, do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator MERKLEY. Okay. Hearing no noes, do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you. And do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you all very much.

As you undoubtedly understand, it is very important to the checks and balances of our government to be able to get information and insight from our key representatives in the executive branch and the various roles that you will be in.

I will now turn to the period of questions. I encourage you to keep your responses as brief as you can so that you can have the joy of responding to more inquiries and not proceed to upset various senators by filibustering their questions. That is a privilege reserved only for the Senate floor.

Mr. Stanley, let us begin with Argentina.

As you assess the drivers of Argentina's persistent economic challenges that include inflation and substantial public debt that exceeds their gross domestic product, certainly, high poverty exacerbated by COVID-19, to what extent is the United States working multilaterally with IMF leadership as Argentina strives to negotiate a new debt restructuring plan?

Mr. STANLEY. Thank you for the question, and you are right. Argentina is a beautiful country. It is a beautiful tour bus that does not have the wheels on working right. The IMF debt of \$45 billion is huge.

The issue, though, is it is the Argentines' leadership responsibility to come up with a macro plan to pay this back and they have yet to do so. They say one is coming soon.

The United States—the Biden administration has met with them even last week. The embassy in Buenos Aires and the State Department are engaged to try to find constructive ways to help. But in the end, it comes up to them to figure out a macro economic plan to put them back on track.

And I just want to say COVID has, certainly, not helped the situation at all. The good news is they are back on their feet. But there is no more important issue than getting back on their feet because they are a great bilateral partner for us for trade and economics, and we need a partner that is economically healthy.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much.

Mr. Hussain, the United States has utilized a variety of tools in response to human rights violations against ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang, China, including targeted sanctions, export controls, import restrictions.

However, we continue to see enormous oppression of the Muslim Uighur community with very high-tech strategies to control and such that the impact has been that it is conducting genocide as established and determined under both the Trump administration and the Biden administration.

What more should the United States be doing in this regard? What more can we do? Has what we have been doing been effective? Do we stay the course? Are there new strategies to implement?

Mr. HUSSAIN. Thank you for the question, Senator, and thanks for your leadership on this important issue.

I share your deep concerns about China. China is one of the worst abusers of religious freedom in the world. I have visited Xinjiang province and have seen firsthand China's blatant disregard for the Uighur community, their oppression, the genocide that is occurring there, and for their disregard of human rights toward a number of religious communities, including the Tibetan Buddhists, Protestants, Catholics, and the Falun Gong.

We will do everything in our power to make sure that we articulate those concerns in our report—the International Religious Freedom Report—that we speak directly to the Chinese about their policies and individual cases that we are concerned about as well, that we work closely with civil society around the world and that we use some of the tools that you have mentioned—sanctions, visa restrictions, export-import controls.

And then one of the things that I want to make sure that we do is we work closely with some of the Islamic countries around the world that could be more vocal in speaking out about what is going on with the Uighur population specifically, as you mentioned.

Some of those countries have expressed some concern, but I think if they are able to come together and apply more pressure to address this issue then we have a more significant chance of making an impact and helping the lives of people in China.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you.

My last question for this round is to Ms. Wong, and given that the Asian Development Bank is in the process of reviewing its environmental and social safeguards policies, what would you plan to do as executive director of the Asian Development Bank to encourage the institution and other shareholders to set ambitious climate

targets and to encourage the Asian Development Bank to prioritize clean energy solutions?

[No response.]

Senator MERKLEY. I believe you are still muted, but I am sure you are giving a great answer.

[Laughter.]

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

As you rightly point out, the Asian Development Bank is going through its safeguards policy review. It has not done it in 10 years so it is a really great opportunity for us to look at safeguards to not—make sure that we do not walk back from any of the social and environmental safeguards but that we move forward, particularly around climate change.

I believe that we need to be using the Asian Development Bank as a tool to help countries move to a clean growth path, going forward, and so my effort will be to ensure that both environmental safeguards in the climate change area to look at sources of fuel to ensure that we are going forward with a clean energy path.

Senator MERKLEY. Great. Thank you very much, and my time is up.

I am going to turn to Senator Hagerty, and Senator Hagerty, I am handing over the gavel, which I cannot hand it to you physically. It is a cup. You can use whatever you would like on your desk.

And since your questions are up next, I will try to be back by the end of your questions. If not, we will proceed to Senator Menendez upon the completion of the answers to your questions. Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY [presiding]. Honored to take over, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

And, first, I would like to just turn to Mr. Toloui to congratulate you on your nomination, to highlight the fact that in my previous job I worked very closely with your predecessor.

It is an extremely strategic role that you will play, if you are confirmed, and I just want you to know that my staff and I look forward to working with you if you are confirmed to make certain that you are successful because we perceive, and I am sure all the members of this committee share the same view, that you are in a position to make an extraordinary difference.

Next, I would like to turn to Mr. Hussain. First, I want to applaud you and your family and congratulate you for the addition of your newest family member. I know what that is like, but to your wife and your three older children, congratulations on the new addition. I do hope you get a little more sleep between now and the time you are confirmed, should you be.

I also want to applaud Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for doing the right thing in making the determination that the Chinese Communist Party is, indeed, engaged in genocide and crimes against humanity with respects to Uighurs and the Turkic Muslim population in China.

I also want to applaud Secretary of State Blinken for seeing that travesty and upholding that determination. The Chinese Communist Party persecute Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims because

the teachings of Islam may undermine the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party.

The United States should always remain a beacon of hope for those that espouse the freedom of religion.

Mr. Hussain, I am concerned that the Biden administration may overlook the ongoing genocide in China in order to strike some sort of naive grand bargain on climate.

If confirmed as Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, one of your responsibilities will be to help the Uighurs and the Turkic Muslims in China.

Mr. Hussain, if you are confirmed, do you agree that the United States should never use the religious freedom and human rights of religious minorities in China as a bargaining chip in climate negotiations with the Chinese Communist Party?

Mr. HUSSAIN. Thank you so much, Senator.

Yes, I do agree. We have made it very clear from the first days in office. Secretary Blinken, as you noted, maintained the designation of the treatments and the oppression of the Uighurs as a genocide, and as I described, the number of tools that we intend to use in dealing with this issue.

We will not relent in our efforts to help those that are suffering in China, including Uighurs and including other communities there, as I mentioned, the Tibetan Buddhists, the Protestants, the Catholics, and the Falun Gong and others.

Senator HAGERTY. I am pleased to hear that.

Dr. Kugler, I will turn my next question to you. As I told Deputy Secretary of Treasury Adeyemo last week, I remain concerned about China's activities and their growing influence at the World Bank.

Since its inception in 2003, the "Doing Business" report has ranked 190 countries according to indicators to see how easy it is to establish and grow private companies.

Despite the ongoing crackdown on private businesses by the Chinese Communist Party, China's ranking somehow rose seven places in the last rankings. China ranked 31st in the 2020 report, which was ahead of Switzerland by five places.

As a lifelong businessman with significant experience in private investment, this makes no sense to me. However, it makes perfect sense when we see that Chinese malign behavior has been involved in setting these rankings.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, an independent investigation by an outside law firm concluded that former World Bank CEO Kristalina Georgieva and other leaders pressured staff to improve China's Doing Business 2018 rankings.

The United States must do everything it can to protect the integrity of international institutions. My question for you is that, if confirmed, how will you ensure that China is not able to compromise the World Bank's values and actions?

Dr. KUGLER. Senator Hagerty, first, let me say that I deeply share your concerns about China's abusive behaviors, which not only undermine our U.S. values but they also try to undermine our rules-based global leadership system.

As someone who has used data for more than two decades, I deeply believe that any data, any reports that come out of the

World Bank need to be held to the highest standards of rigor, integrity, and transparency, and I would commit to doing that.

I would work, certainly, with our allies, with like-minded shareholders at the bank, and with the management at the bank to make sure that these sort of manipulation of data does not occur into the future.

Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate that. I appreciate that very much and I take very seriously your commitment to push back against this type of malign behavior to influence these types of rankings.

Now it is my honor to turn over the questions to Chairman Menendez.

[No response.]

Senator HAGERTY. Chairman?

[No response.]

Senator HAGERTY. If Chairman Menendez is not available, I would like to then turn it over to Senator Cardin, please.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty, and I appreciate very much this opportunity.

First, let me express my thanks to all of our nominees and their families for their willingness to serve our country during these extremely challenging times. It is difficult, and we appreciate the sacrifices that you are making.

I want to talk about President Biden's commitment that our foreign policy is going to be based in our values, our concerns about the growth of corruption, the autocratic regimes around the world, and that all of our tools of foreign diplomacy need to be focused at advancing our values, which is anti-corruption, democracy, et cetera.

If I may start with Ms. Wong in regards to the Asian Development Bank and its activities in Myanmar. Myanmar has made a sharp turn in the wrong direction with the military, again, having total control over the country.

Explain to me how we can leverage our involvement through the bank in Myanmar to advance our goals of a more democratic society for the people of Burma.

Ms. WONG. Thank you very much, Senator.

I totally agree with you that the situation in Burma is dire. I actually was there in 2019. I spent quite a bit of time going around to villages and meeting local people. It is one of the poorest countries in that region, and what has happened to it is very difficult to imagine currently.

I am actually not confirmed at the moment and it is not appropriate for me to take any particular position in terms of how to designate what happened in Burma, and so I am looking forward to getting briefed on that, if confirmed.

Having said all that, I will definitely commit to you we will be evaluating each project. I will be relying on the Treasury team as well to going forward on looking at that and ensuring—totally agree that ensuring that democracy and human rights are forefront in those values that we will uphold in that particular country.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that reply. As you know, at one time we had some of the toughest sanctions against Burma of any country in the world. We have relaxed that as they were moving

forward on a democratic path within the country. Then we only—including the president of the United States making a visit. That did not seem to change the direction of the military.

I think it is very important that we have a very strong position—a carrot-stick approach—that we are not going to give them benefits if they are not going to advance the goals that are important. I look forward to working with you in that regard.

Ms. WONG. Thank you, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Stanley, thank you for your willingness to take on Argentina. I know your abilities and your skills, and I thank you for being willing to take on this challenge. I know you will do a great job.

I want to talk about one of the issues you raised, that is, the human rights record in Argentina. When you look at its border areas, there is a lot of money laundering that takes place between Argentina and Paraguay and other countries in that region.

We need to strengthen our capacity to fight corruption in our countries that have significant challenges. Tell me just a little bit about your strategy on making sure that anti-corruption is a priority in our mission in Argentina.

Mr. STANLEY. Thank you, Senator Cardin. I am glad you are focusing on this.

Secretary Blinken—I do not know if you saw last week—gave a tremendous speech in Ecuador talking about how we are going to grow democracies in the Western Hemisphere, and the first issue he wanted to talk about was corruption, which he said is estimated to cost up to 5 percent of global GDP, how it stifles investment, deepens inequities, et cetera.

It is clear that corruption takes place in this tri-border area that you are talking about between Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina, and the United States is fully engaged in trying to fight that there.

There is tremendous cooperation with our defense agencies, with our intelligence agencies. We are doing a lot of exchanges. We are doing a lot of training. We are delivering a lot of anti-crime fighting equipment even. And so I am really proud of what is going on, but I think you are highlighting a very, very important issue.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you. Now it is my honor to turn this over to Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty, and congratulations to all of the nominees today. Thank you for your willingness to continue to serve this country.

I would like to start with you, Mr. Stanley, with a more parochial issue and that has to do with an insurance company in New Hampshire, which was doing work in Argentina. They were shorted significant funding. They have been to court and have had the court rule in their favor, and I am hopeful that, as Ambassador, you will push the Argentine Government to pay off on the debt that they owe to this insurance company. I have asked this question of previous Secretaries of State and previous Ambassadors to Argentina.

So far, no one has been successful, but I am counting on you and your good legal negotiating skills. Will you commit to working to do this?

Mr. STANLEY. Yes, Senator Shaheen. Thank you so much. There is nothing more important in our job than to represent Americans and American corporations that are trying to do business and, absolutely, I will investigate and see what I can do.

I am surprised Judge Prado did not have success in that because he is a terrific lawyer and judge, who was the last ambassador.

But I will, if confirmed, when I first get on the ground I will look at this immediately, and I will report back to you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. We stand ready in our office to provide any information that you need.

My next question is for both Ms. Wong and Dr. Kugler. As I am sure you are aware, in 2019 the Congress passed the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act, which makes it part of our international development policy to try and address the factors that hinder women's economic empowerment.

Can each of you talk about how you will work on that issue, if confirmed, at your appointments?

Dr. Kugler, do you want to begin first?

Dr. KUGLER. Absolutely. Thank you, Senator Shaheen, for this very important question.

I do so much agree with you that gender disparities remain a big challenge around the world, and they have only become worse during the pandemic and the recent global crisis.

It is very important that we continue to tackle issues of gender disparities, whether it is with regards to access to health, with regards to access to education, with regards to access to employment, and importantly, with regards to lack of access to finance, which hinders the progress of women entrepreneurs.

I thank you for your support of that bill. I know the World Bank recently has introduced a new initiative called the We-Fi Initiative, which stands for Women Entrepreneurs Financial Initiative, introduced in 2017. They have disbursed some \$300 million in about 60 countries.

But I do believe there is a lot of progress that still needs to be done. I, myself, have, for over two decades, devoted a good amount of my research efforts to looking to gender disparities in education and in employment.

I am deeply committed to this issue. I would certainly be committed to working forward in terms of reducing gender disparities, working at the Board to push for projects that support women entrepreneurs and to make sure that we do not forget that this pandemic has hit women the worst around the world.

Thank you very much.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Ms. Wong?

Ms. WONG. Thank you, Senator Shaheen, for your leadership on this issue.

When I was at the Millennium Challenge Corporation, we actually did a huge effort—in any project, any assistance that we do, we focus on women in the economy. And I would like to understand a little bit better, if confirmed, going into the Asian Development Bank if we could do something similar because, as Dr. Kugler has mentioned, it affects development, poverty. All of that affects

women significantly more so because they are the backbones of the economy.

And so understanding—in any of the projects that we go into understanding women and the economy and, particularly, in specific projects would be definitely my focus, going forward. Thank you very much.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you both very much. I hope you will commit to working with the State Department's Office of Global Women's Issues.

And I have a final question for you, Mr. Toloui. As we talk about the challenges of American business and think about the intersection of that with what happens overseas, one of the things that has been absolutely critical to New Hampshire's economy and, I think, also to many other states throughout the U.S. has been the visa workers who come, both the students—the J-1 visa students who come in and work in the summertime—also the H-2Bs, which New Hampshire is a state with—agriculture and hospitality industry has relied on them, and the fact that we have had a limit on the number of people who can come into the U.S., not just this year but over the past four years of the previous administration, has really had a huge impact.

And as we are looking at the workforce challenges that we have in this country right now, we need to figure out how we can get in those workers who have histories in the U.S. with our business employers and make sure that we can continue to provide that source of help for our businesses.

Those folks do not want to stay here. They want to go back to their home countries. Those jobs are not jobs that union workers generally want. They do not have the kind of benefits and long-term support that most union workers need.

Why cannot we get more of those workers into the United States? And what can you do, if you are confirmed, to make sure that we increase those numbers in a way that is important to American businesses?

Mr. TOLOUI. Senator Shaheen, thank you very much for raising this issue. I can commit to you that, if confirmed, I would like to work with you and your staff as well as others on this committee on this issue to find ways forward to address all of the issues that you enumerated.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. I will hold you to that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MERKLEY [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator Shaheen.

Thank you, Senator Hagerty. I am back. I will take the gavel back. And I believe, Senator, we do not have another Republican Senator with us is my understanding. That would mean Senator Kaine is up next.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and to these witnesses, very, very great.

Let me ask a question of Mr. Stanley.

Mr. Stanley, congratulations, first, and then an issue that has been a long-standing bipartisan issue in Congress is trying to do everything we can as the United States to work with Argentina so

that it can hold accountable those who bombed the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires in 1994, I believe.

We have kept pressure on in a bipartisan way, but the Governments of Argentina have kind of been vacillating as to how vigorously they will pursue accountability for this terrorist attack.

Should you be confirmed, I know this is an issue you know well and are deeply concerned about. What would be your intent as ambassador to Argentina to keep pressure on for appropriate accountability for those who—Lebanese and Iranians—who participated in this terrorist attack?

Mr. STANLEY. Thank you, Senator Kaine, and also thank you again for your introduction. That was really kind of you.

This is a huge issue and this is not a Jewish issue. This is an affront on Argentina. In 1994, a terrorist organization came onto Argentine soil and blew up the Jewish Center. They had previously attacked the Israeli Embassy. Eighty-five people died, and they were not all Jews. Many were wounded.

They have never gotten to the bottom line. No one has been called, like you said, to account for it.

This is the rule of law and this is justice, and we do call on the Argentines to continue to focus on this. I am pleased that the Argentine Government in 2019 did declare Hezbollah a terrorist organization finally.

I am pleased that President Fernandez recently was outraged by the appointment of one of the co-conspirators, allegedly, to leadership in the Iranian regime. But this was allegedly the Iranians funding Hezbollah and causing this kind of terror in South America, and I think all Argentines should be upset about it, and I think there should be a demand that this government and judiciary prosecute and find out who is responsible and get justice.

Thank you so much.

Senator Kaine. You bet. Mr. Stanley, I have great confidence that you will push as much as we can on this issue, and I appreciate so much your passion about it.

Mr. Hussain, one of the things that really interests me about your background that strikes me as such good preparation for the position for which you are nominated was your work during the Obama administration on the Marrakesh Declaration, which I believe was in 2015 and 2016.

This was an effort by politicians and scholars from countries in the Muslim world and elsewhere to join together in a declaration pushing Muslim-majority countries to treat fairly and equally religious minorities within their countries.

Please tell the committee a bit about your role in the Marrakesh Declaration on the American side, your work on it, and I would like, Mr. Chair, to introduce that declaration into the record of this hearing.

[The document referred to above is located at the end of this hearing transcript.]

Mr. Hussain. Thank you so much, Senator, and thank you for introducing me.

When I began traveling around the Muslim world to work on a range of foreign policy issues and to build partnerships in the areas

of education, entrepreneurship, health, science, and technologies, one of the things that became clear to me is that not all of these countries were protecting religious minorities, and I found it very disappointing and, to me, it was a moral obligation to do as an American, as a Muslim, everything that I could to make sure that Islam was not being used to justify the mistreatment of minorities.

We worked in a number of countries. We worked in Egypt with the Coptic community. We took an interfaith delegation with a Coptic leader from the United States, a prominent imam.

We worked in Tunisia and Morocco and Mauritania, Nigeria, the UAE, a number of countries and brought scholars together using our convening role to work on a set of protocols for the protection of religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries and worked very closely with civil society, worked with some of the leading Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders in the United States, prominent leaders and international religious field giants like Tom Farr, Chris Seiple, Bob Roberts, Ambassador Saperstein, leaders in the Muslim community, and it ended in the culmination of a declaration on the protection of religious minorities to denounce the treatment of the Christians and Yazidis by ISIS, in addition to a number of other examples, set forward a set of protocols and standards from within the Islamic tradition in addition to what we push as United States representatives—our values, our constitutional values, the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.

We also thought it would be effective and, in fact, one of the countries, Tunisia, there was a member of the parliament that adopted some of that language into the constitution that was being drafted at the time.

We are starting to see some tangible impact from it but we really want to move forward on it and come together for a full implementation plan to continue this work.

Senator KAINE. I think that work will be such good preparation for the position for which you have been nominated. I am proud to support you.

And, Mr. Chair, I am going to hand it back and race to the floor to vote.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Senator Kaine.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations again to all the nominees.

Dr. Kugler, Senator Hagerty sort of raised one of the questions I had regarding transparency at the World Bank, especially in light of the recent report on doing business where there was evidence that there were efforts to sort of cook the books with respect to China.

Another question for you, which is that we have seen during this COVID-19 pandemic the gap between the world's haves and have-nots grow even wider in terms of the great divergence between developed countries and undeveloped countries.

And, obviously, it is not only the right thing to do, but it also serves the interests of the rest of the world if, currently, the underdeveloped world is doing better, both in terms of our own exports and jobs.

Can you talk a little bit about—Dr. Kugler, about what you and the World Bank can do to address that growing divergence?

Dr. KUGLER. Thank you very much, Senator Van Hollen, for raising this important issue. As you know, the World Bank has committed some \$100 billion dollars over the course of the pandemic and has disbursed about 60 percent of that amount.

It has devoted most of these resources to low income and low middle income countries. That is good news in the sense that the World Bank is disbursing funds to those who are the neediest.

Much of this money has gone to strengthen health structures and health systems, to support small businesses, but also to provide basic income support and food security to many who have fallen into poverty. About 150 million people have fallen into extreme poverty since the beginning of the pandemic.

Having said that, there is some good progress. Some of these monies have been disbursed, but some of it has been disbursed slowly.

One issue is to make sure that the rest of these funds and future funds, are disbursed more effectively and, again, continue to go to low-income and low middle-income countries, which are the ones that need it the most.

There are a few tools that can be used to do that. But as was pointed out before, this has to be done with the right safeguards as well and with the right measures towards accountability because we know that corruption has also risen within this period of the pandemic and global crisis.

Just like here in the U.S., one of the things that is holding countries back is not being able to address the pandemic. A key comparative advantage at the World Bank is in terms of its expertise on health.

The World Bank could be doing more and engaging more in terms of helping the World Health Organization through its COVAX facility and others to facilitate the distribution of vaccines. That is key.

I think once we address the issue of the pandemic, we can move on also to address the issue of the economic recovery, which is important, obviously, for these countries. It is important to reverse the rapid increase in poverty, but it is important for the U.S. because 95 percent of consumers live outside of U.S. borders. If we hope for our economy to also fully recover, we need the rest of the world to come back again in the same way.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you and I appreciate your answer, including underscoring that last point.

Mr. Hussain, as you know, the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is an ex-officio member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. They have consistently recommended that more countries be designated as, quote, “countries of particular concern” when it comes to the lack of full religious liberty.

And yet, those countries have not been so designated by the executive branch. Can you just talk a little bit about that discrepancy?

And, obviously, the United States and Secretary of State and others look at a range of issues, but your job will be to underscore the

importance of religious liberty. How should that factor in to the U.S. State Department's overall designations?

Mr. HUSSAIN. Thank you so much, Senator.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Commission. They provide excellent research—excellent resources to advise the International Religious Freedom Office and Secretary of State and the administration.

We will look at all of the data they provide and combine it with our research and our assessments and will advocate vigorously within the Department of State to use every tool at our disposal including, when appropriate, designations of countries of particular concern in making those recommendations as part of the policy process within the State Department.

And there may be times when we—that there is a process by which different components within the State Department are able to make recommendations on those. But our job in the Office of International Religious Freedom is to make sure that all of the data is put forward on the religious freedom—the state of religious freedom in a particular country and to make the most vigorous case possible for using the most appropriate tools, including that designation.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Senator Van Hollen.

And I do not believe that Senator Menendez is with us. But let me just pause for a moment if he is.

Are there any other senators standing by in the electronic space? We do not see anyone. And, Senator Hagerty, did you have any closing comments or closing question you wanted to ask?

Senator HAGERTY. No. I would just like to thank you for conducting a great hearing today, Mr. Chairman. It has been my honor to serve alongside you as ranking member.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much for taking the gavel and for being here to pursue this important process of the Senate or in the confirmation of the nominees.

I will close with one last question for Dr. Kugler. We have had the International Panel for Climate lay out a code red report saying we are in deep, deep trouble in terms of planetary warming.

And yet, we have also had reports within the last week of extensive plans to massively expand the use of coal and of natural gas over this coming decade. Is it time for us to take a firm stand at the international banks and all sorts, not just the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to end the financing of fossil fuel projects or at least to use our weight towards that objective?

Dr. KUGLER. Thank you very much, Senator, for that important question.

As President Biden has indicated, this is a key issue for this administration. It is the biggest existential threat of our time and I do believe that we need domestic action to go hand-in-hand with global leadership on climate change.

There have been two good developments at the World Bank. The first one is that commitments for climate change and climate financing have increased substantially over the past few years—in

fact, new commitments of 35 percent by 2025. I think that is a very important step that has been taken in that direction.

The second thing is that there has been an increased effort to pay attention to how projects are funded and whether to support projects that produce fossil fuels.

As I understand at this point, there has been an effort to make sure that we help countries transition from fossil fuels to cleaner forms of energy and I do think that it is important to consider each of these projects on their own merits. It is important to look at it in the context of country strategies.

But we do need to make sure that the rest of the world, just like the U.S., makes progress in this direction because we cannot do it alone. We know China contributes 30 percent of greenhouse emissions and many other countries make big contributions as well.

Domestic action alone is not going to do it. We need to, certainly, move countries through the projects that are funded by the World Bank to transition to sustainable development and to a green recovery as well.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you, Doctor, and I will just note that the administration put out guidance in August, I believe it was, that said in our international financial institutions they would oppose new coal projects, new oil projects or the financing of those, but listed a series of exceptions for natural gas.

I just want to make sure people understand that natural gas is methane, that methane is far more damaging to the climate ounce for ounce, pound for pound, than is coal and it traps more heat, and that sustaining natural gas systems that leak enormous amounts of methane into the air is not compatible with an effort to globally attack a code red situation.

I am just giving you my personal view. I am sure other members of the Senate would have a different view. I think it is a really important conversation because the impacts we are seeing in my home state in terms of fire, ocean acidification, warming streams, diminishing snow packs are all having calamitous impacts and other states are experiencing this in different ways.

But it is an issue of which the planet cannot succeed without U.S. leadership, and so I am hoping that every time decisions come up one will remember we are in a code red situation and need to pivot quickly.

I put solar panels on the roof of my house here in D.C., which is a small roof, and I was very surprised when I got the first monthly report for September that the average amount of energy trapped was 30 kilowatt hours per day, which means I could drive 120 miles in an electric car on just the sunlight on my roof every single day for the month of September.

We have phenomenal—we have phenomenal technology at our disposal on wind and solar and many other possibilities, but we have to implement these technologies quickly.

On that note, I will end, and now that I put that forward, Senator Hagerty, would you like to have any final comment?

Senator HAGERTY. Again, as you say, there will be differing opinions here. Having spent a good part of my life focused on the developing part of the world and having just left Asia to come to do this job, I want to see these nations make thorough progress. But I

want to note the fact that China obliterates all the progress that developing nations make with their addition of coal-fired plants every year.

We need to take a global perspective on this, not punish our own economy and take a unilateral disarmament approach. But let us look at this in a more holistic manner that takes into account America's interests first and work with our allies to make progress in a way that makes sense.

I do not want us to see the utilization of our financial system, our regulations, and that sort of thing as an end run to address other issues.

Thank you very much.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you, Senator, and thank you to our nominees, Mr. Stanley and Mr. Hussain and Ms. Wong and Dr. Kugler, and the Hon. Ramin Toloui. We are delighted to have you bringing your expertise to a new chapter of service.

And I will note that the record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business on Wednesday, October 27th. Questions for the record should be submitted no later than Wednesday. That is just tomorrow. Not much time. I want to keep moving—push to move forward.

Thank you all very much and this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:37 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MARC R. STANLEY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Cooperation

Question. Argentina was our first Major Non-NATO in Latin America, and we have long-standing cooperation on security, non-proliferation, and climate issues, however, the U.S. and Argentina often hold divergent views over how best to promote democracy and stability in the hemisphere, as well as the roles of certain geopolitical actors.

- If confirmed, what priorities will you have for advancing our bilateral cooperation with Argentina? Where do you expect the greatest amount of progress in the bilateral relationship? Where do you think cooperation will be more challenging?

Answer. I understand the United States maintains a strong bilateral relationship with Argentina across a range of shared interests, including trade and investment, human rights, democracy, climate change, protection of the environment, cooperation on global health, defense, and security, and much more. If confirmed, I will ensure we make progress on some of the most pressing issues that include mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring strong commitments to combat climate change, and promoting democracy and human rights in the hemisphere and world.

Defending Democracy

Question. Despite assaults on democracy in numerous countries across the Americas and the risks they pose for our hemisphere, the U.S. currently does not enjoy close coordination with Argentina on addressing democratic decay in countries such as Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. For example, Argentina last week abstained from voting on an OAS resolution condemning events in Nicaragua and calling for the release of political prisoners.

- How do you explain Argentina's decision to abstain from a vote on Nicaragua at the OAS, especially given the country's own history of atrocities under dictatorship?

Answer. I was disappointed that Argentina, along with Mexico, abstained, on two separate occasions, from condemning at the OAS the egregious human rights violations by the Nicaraguan regime, though they did withdraw their ambassadors. Argentina historically sought to promote democracy and human rights without interfering in another state's internal affairs, a position that comes under strain when a regime such as Nicaragua's distorts its political process to dismantle democratic institutions. I understand Argentina is proud of its human rights record and is a member of the U.N. Human Rights Council. I found its vote in favor of a U.N. Human Rights Council resolution supporting the promotion and protection of human rights in Nicaragua encouraging. If confirmed, I will encourage Argentina to uphold its commitment to democracy and human rights on all opportunities and in all organizations.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to restore a shared, values-based approach to U.S. and Argentine efforts to address democratic backsliding in the hemisphere?

Answer. Our peoples share a love of democracy, an understanding of the importance of a strong middle class, an emphasis on education, and a respect for diversity that make our cultures so rich. If confirmed, I will develop open and effective channels of communication with the Argentine public and Argentine officials to emphasize the importance of defending democratic values in our own countries and across the hemisphere.

IMF Flexibility

Question. Argentina is currently struggling to deal with a debt payment crisis that is years in the making and seeks to recover from a deep economic contraction that saw GDP shrink 10 percent in 2020.

- What role would you advocate that the U.S. play with regard to Argentina's growing debt crisis?

Answer. The United States continues to support Argentina's engagement with the International Monetary Fund and encourage its Government to put forward an economic plan that shows how Argentina can return to growth, dismantle temporary market access restrictions, and maximize debt sustainability. If confirmed, I will advocate for a strong economic policy framework that provides a vision for private sector job growth, which would have the support of the United States and the international community.

Question. While Argentina seeks flexibility from the IMF and was able restructure its private debt after a default in May 2020, how should the U.S. interpret the fact that the Argentine Government continues to service its debt payments to China?

Answer. As members of the Paris Club, the United States expects Argentina to treat all creditors equally as it works to meet its international debt payment obligations. In June, Paris Club members (including the United States) provided flexibility and accepted Argentina's offer to make partial payments on the debt it owes to Club members, on the condition that Argentina demonstrates credible progress toward a new IMF program and abide by Club principles, which include a clause on the comparability of treatment of debt from all external creditors.

China's Influence

Question. In the last decade, China built a space monitoring station in Patagonia—a facility which Argentine officials have admitted that they little oversight of and scant information about its operations.

- What is your assessment of the operations at China's space monitoring station in Argentina? How should the U.S. view China's role and influence in Argentina?

Answer. I understand the PRC maintains the Neuquén station's purpose is peaceful space observation, but Argentina has no physical oversight of the station's operations. If confirmed, I will work with likeminded countries to encourage Argentina to require its space cooperation partners, including the PRC, to follow the fundamental principles of transparency, openness, and reciprocity.

AMIA Bombing

Question. July marked 27 years since the 1994 bombing of the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) center in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people and wounded hundreds more. It is absolutely critical that the United States stand with the families of the deceased in demanding truth and justice and rejecting impunity in this case.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that this issue is among your top priorities for the bilateral relationship?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the administration to continue the discussions on this issue with Argentine counterparts.

Question. Will you advocate that the Argentine Government pursue concrete enforcement action to hold Hezbollah and Iran accountable for their roles in the AMIA bombing?

Answer. The United States stands with the people of Argentina in the search for justice, and we share the sorrow of the families of the victims of the AMIA and Israeli Embassy bombings. The Fernandez administration emphatically condemned the Iranian Government's decision to designate suspected AMIA plotters Ahmad Vahidi and Mohsen Rezai as Minister of Interior and Vice President of Economic Affairs. If confirmed, I will join my voice to theirs, and stress that the Iranian Government must cooperate fully with Argentine authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Question. Will you advocate that the Argentine Government, maintain and enforce terrorism designations on all those associated with the AMIA bombing that are on Argentina's terrorism list and those who have INTERPOL red notices in connection with the bombing?

Answer. Yes. It is essential that Argentina maintain and aggressively enforce the terrorism designations that it has made, including that of Hizballah, and that it continues its longstanding effort to bring those responsible for the AMIA bombing to justice, especially those who have INTERPOL red notices.

Anomalous Health Incidents

Question. I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. If confirmed, and as Secretary Blinken stated in September, I along with the Department will commit ourselves to the health, safety, and security of our personnel and family members serving domestically and overseas. This commitment extends to the handling of anomalous health incidents (AHI), also referred to as "Unexplained Health Incidents." I would take these incidents seriously and would respond to them and report them consistent with Department guidelines.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. I understand that the Department encourages employees who suspect they may have been affected by an anomalous health incident to report the details of their situation to their Post Health Unit and RSO as soon as possible. No stigma attaches to such reporting, and I understand that the Department reminds Post RSOs and MED personnel to treat every report seriously, objectively, and with sensitivity. If confirmed, I will convene an Emergency Action Committee if the reported incident is a health-related incident in which the underlying causes, infectivity, and prognosis are not known.

Question. Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. I understand the Department implemented a Baseline Testing Program: On June 1, 2021, the Department launched a pilot study for employees and adult family members who are relocating overseas or returning to the United States. This program includes a baseline medical examination in Washington DC to establish assessments for comparison in the event the employee and/or their EFM report a potential an anomalous health incident.

If confirmed, I will meet with my medical and RSO teams and ensure that they brief me on all past incidents and ensure they adhere to established protocols.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO MARC R. STANLEY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Western Hemisphere

International Terrorism

Question. In July 2019, President Mauricio Macri signed Decree 489, which created a framework for Argentina to designate terrorist organizations take law enforcement actions, such as asset freezes and travel bans entities associated with such designated foreign terrorist organizations.

- What is your assessment of the current Argentine Government's commitment to enforcing Decree 489, including the designation of Hezbollah as an FTO, the designations of Hezbollah financiers in the Tri-Border Area (TBA), and the designations of former and current Iranian officials who are on Argentina's terrorism list?

Answer. I understand the Fernández administration decided to maintain the terrorist designation system created through Decree 489 and with it the domestic designation of Hezbollah and Iranians charged in the AMIA case. The United States stands with the people of Argentina in the search for justice and we share the sorrow of the families of the victims of the AMIA and Israeli Embassy bombings.

Question. Please explain in what concrete ways you will work with the Government of Argentina, if confirmed, to ensure robust enforcement of Decree 489.

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to stress the importance of the Argentine Government aggressively enforcing the domestic designation system created through Decree 489, as well as the Iranian Government's responsibility to cooperate fully with Argentine authorities to bring the designated terrorists to justice.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing U.S. support for the Interpol red notices issued on current and former Iranian officials involved in the bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center?

Answer. Yes. These individuals need to answer to the Argentine justice system, and the families of the victims deserve to see justice served.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Question. The Fernandez-Kirchner Government is seeking to renegotiate the terms of a \$57 Billion IMF loan launched in 2018 as the largest program in the Fund's history. The IMF has underscored the importance integrity and the rule of law as part of its loan requirements. Meanwhile, Vice President de Kirchner is under indictment related to allegations of her involvement in a corruption network set up by former President Nestor Kirchner.

- Will the administration insist that any IMF rescue package for Argentina includes enforceable checks on Argentina's systemic corruption?

Answer. I understand the United States continues to support Argentina's engagement with the International Monetary Fund and encourages the Argentine Government to put forward an economic plan that shows how Argentina can return to growth, dismantle temporary market access restrictions, and maximize debt sustainability. The United States and the international community support a strong economic policy framework that provides a vision for private sector job growth and for combatting corruption. If confirmed, I would engage with the Argentine Government to encourage measures that promote stability, predictability, and transparency in the business and investment climate and fight corruption.

Anti-Corruption

Question. I am concerned about reports that the Fernandez-Kirchner Government has neutralized the Anti-Corruption Office and the Financial Integrity Units, such as ceasing to alert the Argentine financial system of the risks associated with doing business with OFAC-designated Venezuelan individuals.

Answer. I found Argentina's decision to pause the alerts issued by Argentina's Anti-Corruption Office and the Financial Integrity Units concerning, one of several regrettable decisions regarding Venezuela. If confirmed, I would engage with the Argentine Government to encourage measures that promote accountability and transparency and fight corruption, including full implementation of existing laws, each essential to strengthen Argentine democracy and to protect human rights.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to communicate clearly and often with the Argentine public and Government about U.S. concerns with this situation? Do you

commit to work with the Argentine financial sector to address these concerns effectively?

Answer. Yes.

East Asia and the Pacific

China

Question. During the presidency of Cristina Kirchner, China and Argentina signed over 20 bilateral agreements. This strategic alliance spanned several industries, including military manufacturing, energy, and transport. If confirmed, do you commit to engage the Argentine public and Government on the threat posed by China's debt trap financing to their country's sovereignty and stability?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with Argentine partners to highlight the importance of competitive and transparent international trade, investment, and assistance rules that meet the highest environmental, social, and labor standards.

Human Rights and International Organizations

Question. In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Argentina remained on Tier 1 due to its ongoing efforts to combat trafficking in persons in country.

- Given its sustained success, how will you work with the Argentinian Government to continue their effective strategies if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure regular engagement with the Argentine Government and with civil society.

Question. How can you work with other regional ambassadors to emulate Argentina's success to combat TIP?

Answer. As a Tier 1 country since 2018, I understand Argentina made significant progress in combatting trafficking in persons and fully meets the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. If confirmed, I will work with the Argentine Government and my counterparts in the region to help Argentina share its best practices and serve as a leader in the hemisphere.

Question. In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Argentina was identified having general societal respect for religious freedom but with reported anti-Semitic incidents and other hate crimes. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to find new ways to promote respect for religious minorities and counteract religious discrimination?

Answer. Argentina has one of the world's largest Jewish communities and plays an important role in the global fight against anti-Semitism. The Argentine Government and the people of Argentina generally welcome and respect religious minorities, and that includes the Jewish community. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with the Ambassador-at-Large to deepen our collaboration with the Government and to build upon Argentina's solid foundation of tolerance. Anti-Semitism has no place in Argentine society, just as it has no place in our own.

Question. In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Argentina was identified as having serious human rights issues, including corruption, issues with the independence of the judiciary, forced labor, and more.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. If confirmed, on arriving in Argentina, I would make it an early priority to meet with members of the Government to address and advance human rights, and I will advocate for a particular focus on anti-corruption measures and judicial independence.

Question. How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

Answer. I understand that the U.S. Embassy in Argentina has robust engagement with civil society, especially with human rights NGOs and raises concerns with the Argentine Government when appropriate. If confirmed, I would join with the officers already working on this issue to deepen this engagement with both civil society and the Argentine Government.

State Department Management and Oversight

Question. Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID-19.

- What is your understanding of morale in Embassy Buenos Aires?

Answer. I understand that while the pandemic has proven difficult for Argentina and for our embassy in Buenos Aires, embassy leadership has done an excellent job in maintaining morale through active communication with the community. Morale continues to improve as the pandemic subsides in Argentina.

Question. How do you intend to improve morale?

Answer. Building morale depends on open communication. If confirmed, I will continue holding town hall meetings with the embassy community and get to know the team personally.

Question. How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision?

Answer. I understand on November 1, the Department of State will kick off a formal process for all missions to develop a new four-year integrated country strategy (ICS) that aligns with the administration's priorities. These include issues highlighted in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, National Security Memoranda, the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, and various Executive Orders including those on Climate Change, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, and Racial Equity in the federal government. If confirmed, I will ensure that each agency at Embassy Buenos Aires participates and fully invests in the ICS process.

Management: A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I have a hands-on management style of management while also empowering team leaders. I also deeply care about building relationships.

Question. Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No.

Question. How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I envision a positive, collaborative, and productive relationship with the deputy chief of mission.

Question. If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, my deputy chief of mission would serve as the embassy's chief operating officer, ensuring the effectiveness of all operations. I would also make the deputy chief of mission responsible for developing and mentoring staff.

Question. How should the chief of mission lead a post with multiple U.S. Government agencies present?

Answer. The chief of mission represents the U.S. President. The chief of mission must ensure consideration of the equities of each agency at post. If confirmed, I will have regular country team meetings which include the heads of all agencies at post. I will work to integrate the work of various agencies to achieve Mission goals.

Question. In your experience, how important are interagency relationships within a post?

Answer. To meet U.S. Government objectives in Argentina the mission would need to maintain positive and productive interagency relationships.

Question. If confirmed, how would you handle interagency disagreement within Embassy Buenos Aires?

Answer. If confirmed, I will evaluate interagency disagreements within the context of the administration's priorities and objectives outlined in our Integrated Country Strategy.

Question. In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide subordinates with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. Yes, and if I am confirmed I will do so.

Question. If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

Answer. Yes.

Question. It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

Answer. Diplomats can always engage more people more often on more issues, to the benefit of both countries. If confirmed, I plan to visit each province in Argentina and encourage embassy staff to continue to frequently get out of the embassy and out of Buenos Aires to meet Argentines where they live and where they work.

Question. How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

Answer. We need to promote access to local populations to meet our objectives. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impeded U.S. diplomats' ability to do so. If confirmed, I will work with all elements of the mission, including the embassy's health unit and regional security office, to ensure our diplomatic staff can safely travel throughout Argentina and engage with all local populations, and I will work with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs to ensure sufficient funding to do so.

Public Diplomacy: An Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts

Question. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Argentina?

Answer. I understand that Embassy Buenos Aires faces a challenging public diplomacy environment, but one with potential for growth. Many Argentines have traditionally held critical views of the United States. In fact, roughly half of the Argentine population views the United States unfavorably, according to recent polls. Despite this, many relate with the United States culturally because of the U.S. values of freedom of expression, respect for individual rights, and democracy. Since 2014, the number of Argentines studying in the United States rose by 20 percent, and U.S. students made Argentina a top-25 destination for study abroad. Argentina has an omnipresent and highly politicized media environment. Well-established, privately owned media organizations located in and focused on Buenos Aires dominate the market. Most of these organizations report favorably on the United States, but many smaller, less well-funded outlets consistently report on us negatively. Argentines avidly use social media; many get their news from social media and use those networks as platforms for political debates.

Question. What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face in Argentina?

Answer. I understand Argentina's highly polarized society and politicized media, widely dispersed population over a huge geographic area, and historical skepticism of the United States present public diplomacy challenges for U.S. diplomats.

Question. How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. I understand that our public diplomacy messaging strategy in Argentina aligns with priorities established by the Department of State and within the mission's own Integrated Country Strategy. As anywhere in the world, the embassy in Buenos Aires must tailor messaging to communicate U.S. policy effectively to Argentine audiences.

Question. "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Argentina personnel?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage Mission personnel in an open and transparent manner.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MARC R. STANLEY BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. For years, I have expressed the need to hold accountable the perpetrators of the Argentine-Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) bombing in 1994. As you know, the AMIA bombing killed 85 people, and is one of the most tragic acts of anti-Semitism committed in our hemisphere in recent times.

- How can the United States and Argentina bring the AMIA bombers to justice, and what would you do to bring about that justice?

Answer. The United States remains united with the people of Argentina in the search for justice and we share the sorrow of the families of the victims of the AMIA and Israeli Embassy bombings.

If confirmed, I will continue to stress that the Iranian Government has a responsibility to cooperate fully with Argentine authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Under the Fernández administration, Argentina has greatly strengthened ties with the People's Republic of China, allowing increased Chinese investments in natural resources, the defense industry and even space cooperation. Many of these projects, under the banner of the Belt and Road Initiative threaten to ensnare Argentina in excessive debt and predatory loans.

Question. What is your current assessment of Argentine-Chinese relations?

Answer. The Government of Argentina seeks to advance an independent foreign policy, maintaining positive relations with great powers. The United States maintains a strong bilateral relationship with Argentina across a range of shared interests, from human rights and democracy to development. Many countries in the region seek to diversify trade and foreign investment to grow their economies, including with China. Argentina trades more with China than with any country other than Brazil, with \$14 billion in total two-way goods trade in 2020.

The United States remains among the largest foreign investors in Argentina, with 250 U.S. companies doing business locally.

If confirmed, I will focus on expanding this robust trade and investment relationship with Argentina, including by working closely with all relevant U.S. interagency partners.

I will also work with Argentine partners to highlight the importance of competitive and transparent international trade, investments, and assistance that meet the highest environmental, social, and labor standards.

Question. If confirmed, what steps would you recommend this administration take to provide a viable alternative to Chinese Communist Party influence?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to advance our positive economic agenda in Argentina, including through supporting high-standard investment in infrastructure and economic development that creates jobs essential for regional pandemic recovery, be the impetus behind the "Build Back Better for the World" or B3W initiative launched by the G7.

With allies and partners, the United States helps build space for transparent private-sector infrastructure investment that upholds labor, environmental, and social safeguards and fosters inclusive growth in line with international best practices. You see these priorities and values reflected in the trade agreements into which we enter across the globe.

Question. Specifically on space cooperation, the Kirchner administration signed an agreement in 2014 with China to operate a deep space station in the province of Neuquén. That agreement gives China wide freedom and restricts Argentina's sovereignty over its own commentary. If confirmed, will you advise Argentina to revisit the unfavorable terms of the agreement?

Answer. The United States Government publicly discussed its concerns regarding the People's Liberation Army's efforts to develop bases around the world. Those concerns apply to the deep space station in Argentina that support's the PRC's space operations. If confirmed, I commit to raising these concerns with the Argentine Government.

The Kirchner administration signed the agreement in 2014 and the Argentine Congress ratified it in September 2020. This makes it more important than ever to

persuade Argentina to exercise oversight over the deep space station. If confirmed, I will urge Argentina to require its space cooperation partners, including the PRC, to follow fundamental principles of transparency, openness, and reciprocity. I will also encourage increased oversight over the station by helping Argentina use the ten percent of station's time to which the agreement entitles it. Finally, if confirmed, I will work with likeminded countries to push for a visit to the station in order get direct insight into this secretive facility.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MARC R. STANLEY BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. In recent years the Government of Argentina, under President Alberto Fernández, has pivoted away from regional institutions that the United States has engaged in order to advance regional development and stability, as well as American national security interests. It has pivoted away from the Lima Group and toward regional regimes hostile to the United States.

- Please describe the degree to which this regional pivot by Argentina undermines American national security interests.

Answer. If confirmed, I would aim to address the underlying economic conditions that restrict Argentines and Americans from investing in Argentina's future. I would ensure that Argentina looks to the United States as its partner of choice, whether that partnership relates to trade and investment, security cooperation, or protecting democratic values, and I would press U.S. agencies and business not to overlook opportunities to expand work with Argentine partners. The United States supports and promotes the rules-based international order founded on respect for sovereignty, the rule of law, open markets, private sector-led economic growth, the free flow of commerce and information, and freedom of the seas. Due to Argentina's economic and diplomatic heft in Latin America, sustaining our bilateral relationship is crucial to U.S. interests, especially as the Western Hemisphere confronts the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftershocks.

Question. Please assess what leverage the United States has for encouraging Argentina to reengage productively with regional institutions and pivot away from regional regimes hostile to the United States?

Answer. In its foreign policy, Argentina historically prefers to strike a "third way" that seeks positive relations with great powers without prioritizing any single country. We share an interest in democratic states that have strong institutions, provide for their people, and are productive regional partners. I understand our diplomatic engagement aims to maintain a productive dialogue on regional and international issues and minimize the frequency and severity of points of friction between our policy goals. If confirmed, I would leverage Argentina's proud heritage of leadership on human rights and democracy and membership at the U.N. Human Rights Council to encourage strong public stands in support of democratic institutions and against human rights violations wherever they occur.

Question. What leverage do you believe the United States should use to encourage Argentina to reengage productively with regional institutions and pivot away from regional regimes hostile to the United States?

Answer. The United States and Argentina enjoy shared history and values, especially regarding protecting democracy and human rights. If confirmed, I will persistently call Argentina's attention to human rights violations and faltering democratic institutions and encourage Argentina to take strong public stands in international and regional institutions to protect and promote democracy and human rights.

Question. Argentina remains a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA), and U.S. defenses are entangled with Argentina's. However, the Fernández Government has also deepened Argentina's relationship with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The Chinese have aggressively pursued trade and development deals with Argentina, which have recently acquired security dimensions: Argentina uses Huawei technology, purchases Chinese weapons, and allows Chinese military assets to be housed in the country.

- Please describe the degree to which you believe these security dimensions, introduced by cooperation between Argentina and China, undermine their ability to play a productive role as an MNNA.

Answer. Argentine helps make the Western Hemisphere safer and more prosperous when it engages as a constructive partner. Years of neglect and under-

funding have limited Argentina's military capabilities relative to its G20 peers and curtailed its ability to support peacekeeping and provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. If confirmed, I would encourage deeper defense cooperation and expanded military training, building on our shared democratic values and vibrant human rights traditions, while ensuring U.S. businesses and agencies take advantage of opportunities to compete fairly for Argentine procurements. The United States has long been the Argentine military's partner of choice for equipment and training.

Question. In light of these dynamics, do you believe that the U.S. should consider narrowing the scope of cooperation with Argentina, including in the context of Argentina's status as an MNNA?

Answer. The United States should take every opportunity to expand cooperation. Our active engagement with the Argentine military through trainings and procurements will maintain our long-standing position as the Argentine military's partner of choice. Narrowing the scope of cooperation would have the opposite effect.

Question. Last month, Argentina's Defense Ministry announced that the country will purchase fighter jets at a cost of up to \$664 million, and according to public reports they are considering purchasing these assets from Russia or China.

- Please describe the degree to which you believe that Argentina's purchase of such jets from Russia would undermine their ability to play a productive role as an MNNA.

Answer. The United States should take every opportunity to offer alternatives to Russian military systems. If confirmed, I will urge the Government of Argentina not to move forward with any potential military deals with Russia that risk the imposition of mandatory sanctions under CAATSA 231.

Question. If Argentina purchases these jets from Russia, do you believe that the U.S. should consider narrowing the scope of cooperation with Argentina, including in the context of the country's status as an MNNA?

Answer. If Argentina purchases jets from Russia, the United States should fully and aggressively implement the mandatory sanctions under CAATSA 231.

Question. Please describe the degree to which you believe that Argentina's purchase of such jets from China would undermine their ability to play a productive role as an MNNA.

Answer. The United States should take every opportunity to offer alternatives to PRC military systems, including fighter jets. Argentina choosing a PRC system would initiate a potential generational military industrial relationship that the United States should avoid at all costs.

Question. If Argentina purchases these jets from China, do you believe that the U.S. should consider narrowing the scope of cooperation with Argentina, including in the context of the country's status as an MNNA?

Answer. If Argentina purchases these jets from China, the United States should reevaluate the scope of cooperation with Argentina, while moving aggressively to offer alternatives for other Argentine military systems.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RASHAD HUSSAIN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. What is your understanding of morale in the office for the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom?

Answer. It is my understanding that morale in the Office of International Religious Freedom has been consistently high across the last two administrations, owing to the strong leadership of my predecessors Sam Brownback and David Saperstein and the open and collaborative workplace Senior Official Dan Nadel has fostered over that period and the team has upheld.

Question. How do you intend to improve morale?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to personally meet with each member of the team over my first few weeks on the job to solicit their opinions on what's working and where there might be room for improvement. I will also, from day one, enact an open-door policy where any team member can bring concerns or recommendations to me directly. Open and frequent communication is key to fostering an inclusive and maximally effective workplace.

Question. How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision?

Answer. If confirmed, I will review where our mission currently stands, listen to those who have been laboring in this space, and cast clear vision and communicate clearly our strategy to advance religious freedom and religious engagement. I will clearly explain my reasons for any desired changes or new areas of emphasis and then solicit the views of the career leadership team and key team members to devise how our lines of effort could be tweaked most efficiently and beneficially in pursuit of these new priorities, always in alignment with our legal mandate. I will also champion an office-wide system of continuous feedback, assessment, and recalibration to ensure buy-in and sustained good counsel.

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I endeavor to empower, to listen and learn from the diverse experts on my team, and to lead by example and through clear communication. I seek to ensure my teams are diverse and inclusive and that there is equity in the work and in our hiring and evaluation processes. I also seek to give my team members wide latitude and autonomy to take ownership of initiatives and make key decisions while also being a resource to them in case a new situation or any doubts arise. The obvious corollary to empowerment is training and development, which, if confirmed, I intend to liberally support across every function in the office. I hope to lead by example and hit the ground running, building on my previous experiences at the State Department.

Question. Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. I do not believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate anyone under any circumstance. If confirmed, I will pledge to only provide respectful, clear, and constructive feedback to team members and will expect my managers to do the same and hold accountable anyone who does not.

Question. How do you envision your relationship with your deputy?

Answer. If confirmed, I expect to continue to enjoy a close and collegial relationship with any deputy. The incumbent, IRF Director Dan Nadel, is a career Civil Servant who has been in this role for more than six years, and who has served since January as the Department's Senior Official for International Religious Freedom. I had the good fortune to collaborate with him on several important initiatives during my earlier tenure at the State Department, and I respect and trust Dan immensely. I look forward to working day in and day out with him on advancing religious freedom, if given the opportunity.

Question. If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to delegate much of the day-to-day management of the office to the Office Director, consistent with the approach of my two immediate predecessors. I will also call on the Director to serve as my surrogate when I'm unavailable for official duties.

Question. Do you believe that it is important to provide subordinates with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. I strongly believe in providing respectful, clear, and constructive feedback on performance to every member of my team. Not only does this engender better performance, but it also engenders trust and mutual respect. Offering regular performance feedback signals that one values their team member and their professional development and wishes their success. In the same spirit, I look forward to receiving constructive feedback from my team on my own performance as well.

Question. If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to each employee in my chain of command to improve performance and I will ensure high achievers are routinely rewarded for their contributions. I will expect my managers to do the same.

Question. As religious freedom continues to decline around the world, how do you plan to elevate the issue of religious freedom as part of the U.S. foreign policy agenda?

Answer. Promoting universal respect for human rights is a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department's reporting and assessments of the state of religious freedom continue to inform U.S. foreign policy decisions, including regarding countries that are U.S. allies. I will work diligently to promote international religious freedom for all at every opportunity and carry our American values into every engagement. It is very important that American diplomats around the world consistently advocate, both in public and private, for religious freedom for all. I will build on my prior experience and relationships at the State Department to hit the ground running, including by meeting early on with the heads of regional bureaus.

Question. How do you plan on engaging with the Assistant-Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to ensure that religious freedom is included in our human rights agenda?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to work seamlessly with the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to advance international religious freedom, as well as with other stakeholders such as the Ambassadors at Large for Global Criminal Justice, Women's Issues, and Trafficking in Persons. Secretary Blinken has clearly stated that our commitment to defending religious freedom goes back centuries and that we will continue to maintain America's longstanding global leadership on this topic. If confirmed, I will work with other bureaus, our missions around the world, and with partners across the interagency to realize this promise.

Question. If confirmed, will you ensure that the U.S. sends high-level participation in the next International Religious Freedom Ministerial?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will attend, and I will work to do everything in my power to ensure high-level U.S. participation at the next International Religious Freedom Ministerial.

Question. How do you assess the current use of Country of Particular Concerns designations? Are there areas of improvement?

Answer. The religious freedom designations are an important part of the toolkit Congress has given the State Department to ensure consequences for governments, entities, and individuals responsible for religious freedom abuses and violations. If confirmed, I will support deploying the full range of these tools, including vigorously advocating for CPC designations when the criteria for such designations are satisfied. If confirmed, I pledge to carefully review the religious freedom designations process to determine any potential areas for strengthening. It is worth carefully reviewing the use of the IRF Act authority to provide waivers for certain countries and to "dual hat" sanctions for others, and I would aim to do so early in my tenure.

Question. How do you assess the use of sanctions for religious freedom violations?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support deploying the full range of tools Congress has given the State Department to deter religious freedom violations and abuses and to ensure consequences and promote accountability for governments, entities, and individuals responsible for such abuses and violations, including, where appropriate, financial sanctions and visa restrictions. Based on the particular circumstances, such sanctions can be effective, and I will support their use, as appropriate.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RASHAD HUSSAIN BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. The treatment of Uyghurs in China is just one brutal example of the Chinese Government's long-standing disregard for basic human rights. The U.S. has consistently pushed the Chinese Government to end its repression of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, with no positive outcome. If confirmed, how will you strengthen existing U.S. policy to pressure China to respect the human rights of the Uyghurs? What more can the United States do to bring about accountability for crimes committed in Xinjiang and to encourage unfettered access by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the province? Additionally, would you support a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Olympics in Beijing to bring global attention the Chinese Government's ongoing human rights abuses including the genocide against the Uyghurs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to promote accountability for those responsible for PRC human rights atrocities and abuses and support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities.

If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those engaged in abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions.

If confirmed, I will consult closely with key stakeholders in developing our approach, ideally a shared approach with allies and partners, in advance of and during the 2022 Beijing Games and Paralympic Games.

Question. Since the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, there has been a growing threat against vulnerable populations, including but not limited to, women, LGBTQI persons, ethnic minorities such as the Hazaras, and religious minorities such as the Shi'ites. If confirmed, what steps will you take to help protect minority religious groups in Afghanistan?

Answer. During my trips to Afghanistan as Special Envoy to the OIC, I met with minority communities in Afghanistan, and I am deeply concerned about their safety. The images coming out of Afghanistan are heartbreaking and it is clear many people, including members of marginalized groups, are under grave threat. If confirmed, I will pursue all options to support individuals who have been, or are at risk of, discrimination and abuses including members of religious and ethnic minority groups, women, LGBTQI+ persons, and persons with disabilities.

As President Biden and Secretary Blinken have said, our commitment to at-risk Afghans has no end date. Secretary Blinken said, "We will use...every diplomatic, economic, political, and assistance tool at [our] disposal, working closely with allies and partners who feel very much the same way, to do everything possible to uphold" their human rights and fundamental freedoms. "And that's going to be a relentless focus of our actions going forward." If confirmed, I will be an active part of that effort, including working with Muslim-majority countries, civil society, and credible religious leaders who have spoken and written about the importance of protecting vulnerable populations in Afghanistan.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RASHAD HUSSAIN BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. You have written and spoken before in opposition to blasphemy and apostasy laws and particularly how they affect religious minorities. The Senate itself recently passed a resolution calling for the global repeal of blasphemy, apostasy, and heresy laws.

- If confirmed, how would you specifically advocate for the global repeal of blasphemy, apostasy, and heresy laws, particularly in those countries that regularly enforce them?

Answer. Governments that claim for themselves broad powers to ban certain forms of expression all too often misuse that power to repress peaceful dissent and silence the voices of independent media, civil society activists, human rights defenders, political rivals, and members of religious, ethnic, and other minority groups. I understand this is why the United States uniformly opposes blasphemy, apostasy, and anti-conversion laws, which are frequently used to oppress members of minority religious communities, those whose religious beliefs differ from the majority, or those with otherwise minority views. Individuals also use these laws as a pretext to justify violence against those whose religion or ethnicity differs from their own or to settle personal grievances. When governments actively or passively support such individuals, instead of protecting members of minority groups, those in society who want to take the law into their own hands are empowered to use violence against these victims.

If confirmed, I will build on my experience speaking directly to Muslim-majority countries that criminalize blasphemy, increasing pressure on governments to address abusive practices. I previously worked with Organization of Islamic Cooperation countries to eliminate the "Defamation of Religions" resolution at the U.N., which gave sanction to blasphemy laws. I will publicly oppose the enforcement and abuse of these laws, especially with criminal penalties, and will urge governments to repeal these laws. I would directly engage the U.N., likeminded partners, government officials and impacted communities locally, create a space for local advocates, defend the accused, and work to resolve individual cases, if confirmed.

Question. In July, I and several Senators sent a letter to Secretary Blinken expressing how blasphemy laws in Algeria, in particular, have been used to discrimi-

nate against Ahmadi Muslims. As a Muslim yourself, in your opinion, should Ahmadis be considered Muslims?

Answer. Yes, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This includes the capacity of every person to declare his or her religious affiliation and to gather with others who share his or her beliefs. Like any religious group, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community and individual Ahmadi Muslims can choose to define themselves as they see fit. Governments should not harass, abuse, or discriminate against individuals on account of their beliefs or affiliation.

Question. Do Ahmadi's have the right to profess to be Muslims without fear of persecution?

Answer. Yes. I believe that everyone should be free to profess and to practice their beliefs and able to exercise this right without fear of abuse, harassment, or persecution.

Question. As you know, both this and the previous administration determined that the Chinese Communist Party's treatment of the Uyghurs constitutes genocide. My and Senator Merkley's Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act would go a long way to end the financial incentives for the CCP's oppression of the Uyghurs. However, there are concerns that the Biden administration is open to sacrificing its commitment to human rights in order to gain Chinese cooperation in meeting emissions targets.

- In your opinion, is the genocide of the Uyghur Muslims a more urgent concern than global climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to promoting respect for human rights, including religious freedom, in the face of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) genocide and crimes against humanity against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. If confirmed, I will not advise that the United States sacrifice vital U.S. interests for PRC promises on climate change. As Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-PRC relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests.

The United States is also committed to working with other countries, including the PRC, to tackle the climate crisis. We can both speak the truth about the PRC's human rights abuses, promote accountability for its atrocities, and work to reverse the effects of climate change. As Secretary Blinken has said, our relationship with China will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be.

Question. Do you support the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act?

Answer. I am deeply concerned by the PRC's use of forced labor in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China. Despite growing international condemnation and extensive evidence of its human rights abuses and violations, the PRC continues to subject predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang to forced labor, detention in internment camps, forced sterilization, forced abortion, torture, and sexual violence.

If confirmed, I will work diligently with you and members of this committee to address forced labor practices in China, including through legislative measures such as the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RASHAD HUSSAIN BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

China/Genocide

Question. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is committing a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that is ongoing. The Biden administration had sent differing signals about the degree to which administration officials assessed that genocide is indeed ongoing, but on March 22 Secretary Blinken correctly emphasized "the P.R.C. continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity."

- Do you agree with the assessment that the Chinese Government is engaged in a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the XUAR that is ongoing?

Answer. Yes. I agree with the Biden-Harris administration's position that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. The crimes against humanity include imprisonment, torture, enforced sterilization, sexual violence including rape, and other forms of persecution. The PRC continues a government policy of widespread forced labor, including through the continued mass arbitrary detention of more than one million Uyghurs, and members of other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang.

Question. What role do you see for the State Department in countering that ongoing genocide, and more broadly the human rights atrocities being committed by the Chinese Communist Party?

Answer. I understand the State Department is working to employ all available tools to address the PRC's genocide, crimes against humanity, and human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang, including the imposition of sanctions and visa restrictions, enforcement of import controls, and targeted tightening of export controls.

If confirmed, I will work to promote respect for human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, in the PRC and accountability for the persons and entities responsible for violations and abuses.

If confirmed, I will also step up work with other countries, civil society, and others, both in the United States and around the world, on joint efforts to promote accountability for PRC perpetrators and to bring further global attention to the issue.

China/Dissidents

Question. The PRC and CCP engage in sustained, systematic, and granular intimidation of dissidents in China and abroad. That harassment includes the abuse and imprisonment of dissidents' family members. Nury Turkel is a Uyghur-American lawyer and leading critic of the PRC's atrocities against and genocide of the Uyghurs. In addition to testimony, op-eds, speeches, and other activities he currently serves as the Vice Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. The PRC is engaged in a campaign of intimidation to silence Turkel by targeting his family members. They refuse to let his ailing parents leave China and be reunited with him.

This campaign directly harms US citizens: his parents have two sons who are U.S. citizens and five U.S.-born grandchildren, who they've never met. Additionally, the campaign is an effort to interfere in American internal affairs and exercise leverage over US policy on religious freedom

U.S. officials have reportedly raised Turkel's case with the Chinese, but there has been no sustained follow-up and the Chinese are apparently under the impression the inquiries were pro-forma.

- What leverage does the US have to mitigate the harassment and intimidation of family members of Chinese dissidents, especially American citizens?

Answer. As I understand, the United States has several tools to promote accountability for those responsible for abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions. The United States also coordinates implementation of these actions with like-minded governments.

If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability and I intend to raise individual cases with the PRC Government and insist that U.S. citizens wrongfully or arbitrarily detained be released, that coercive exit bans be lifted, and that the PRC refrain from using such measures in the future.

As I understand, the administration is coordinating a whole-of-government effort to combat transnational repression, which is the practice of authoritarian governments targeting dissidents and activists outside of their national borders. The U.S. Government is working to build international opposition to transnational repression, deter and hold accountable perpetrating governments, including the PRC, is working to protect human rights activists, journalists, political dissidents, defectors and other targets of transnational repressions. If confirmed, I will support these efforts.

The United States opposes PRC efforts to repress its citizens or their family members, whether inside or outside of China. If confirmed, I will continue administration efforts to provide support for Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, as well as other human rights defenders. I will coordinate with allies and partners to speak out against such actions and to provide protection to targeted individuals. If confirmed, I also commit to raising individual cases with my PRC Government counterparts.

Question. Please commit to conveying to the Chinese that the United States expects and demands they allow Turkel's parents to be reunited with their American citizen children and grandchildren?

Answer. I am very concerned by the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s mistreatment of Mr. Turkel's parents, to include blocking them from leaving China. If confirmed, I will advocate strongly on their behalf with the PRC Government, as well as on behalf of other families similarly targeted. I will convey to the Chinese that they should allow Turkel's parents to be reunited with their American citizen children and grandchildren. Based on my past record on China, Mr. Turkel has supported my nomination publicly, and I look forward to working with him, USCIRF, this committee, civil society, and governments to address the genocide of the Uyghurs.

Question. Please commit that, if confirmed, you will use your office to highlight the plight of Turkel and other dissidents like him who are subject to intimidation and harassment by the PRC and CCP.

Answer. The United States opposes PRC efforts to repress its citizens or their family members, whether inside or outside of China. If confirmed, I will continue administration-wide efforts to provide support for Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, as well as other human rights defenders. I will coordinate with allies and partners to speak out against such actions and to provide protection to targeted individuals. If confirmed, I also commit to raising individual cases with my PRC Government counterparts alongside other senior USG officials.

CPC List

Question. In December 2020, the Department of State designated Nigeria as a country of particular concern (CPC) in response to pervasive and egregious violations of religious freedom.

- Do you believe Nigeria should remain or be removed from the State Department's Country of Particular Concern list?

Answer. I believe Nigeria should remain on the list. I am deeply concerned about the religious freedom situation in Nigeria, and I commit to advancing protection of this right in every country if confirmed. During previous travel to Nigeria, I met with Christian and Muslim leaders who are working together to counter terrorism and address attacks against religious communities. I believe the Nigerian Government must do more to address terrorism and violent crime and to increase accountability for those responsible. I will also continue my work of protecting Christian and other religious communities in OIC countries, including in Nigeria.

Religious freedom is a key U.S. foreign policy priority and plays a prominent role in our engagement with the Nigerian Government. I support continuing this work.

Question. Please describe the degree to which you consider anti-blasphemy laws to be acute threats to global or regional human rights?

Answer. I consider anti-blasphemy laws a very serious threat to human rights, and I have consistently opposed them as well as apostasy and anti-conversion laws, which are frequently used to oppress members of minority religious communities, those whose religious beliefs differ from the majority, or those with otherwise minority views. Governments that claim for themselves broad powers to ban certain forms of expression all too often misuse that power to repress peaceful dissent and silence the voices of civil society. Individuals often use these laws as a pretext to justify violence against those whose religion or ethnicity differs from their own or to settle personal grievances. When governments actively or passively support such individuals, instead of protecting members of minority groups, those in society who want to take the law into their own hands are empowered to use violence against these victims.

Question. If confirmed, how would you orient the office to mitigate the effects or erode the scope of blasphemy laws?

Answer. Blasphemy laws jeopardize human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of religion or belief and expression. If confirmed, I will press for the repeal of blasphemy laws and urge countries with these laws to provide their citizens with the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

If confirmed, I will publicly oppose the enforcement and abuse of these laws, especially with criminal penalties, directly engage the UN, likeminded partners, government officials to urge repeal of these laws and impacted communities locally, create a space for local advocates, defend the accused, and work to resolve individual cases, if confirmed.

Question. Is the administration withholding \$130 million in aid from Egypt on the basis of the conditions described in the *Washington Post* report? If the report is inaccurate, what parts are inaccurate?

Answer. I have not been involved in any administration action on these issues. As I understand it, these issues are beyond the scope of the mandate of the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. If confirmed and should I ever become involved in this work as the Ambassador-at-Large, I will consult with you and your staff for further discussion. More broadly, my understanding is the administration is putting human rights at the center of foreign policy and seeking concrete human rights improvements in Egypt—a goal I strongly support.

Question. Please provide a list of any individuals, including if relevant, the 16 referred to in the *Washington Post* story, who are the subject of conditions imposed on aid to Egypt. For each individual on the list, please list the following:

- Their names;
- Their organizational affiliations;
- The specific charges that the Egyptian Government has brought against them, which the U.S. is asking the Egyptians to dismiss; and
- Whether the individual is a U.S. citizen, or if not, whether the individual holds a Legal Permanent Resident Card, or if not, if the individual has applied for immigration or visa status and what that status is.

Answer. I have not been involved in the administration's actions on these issues. As I understand it, these issues are beyond the scope of the mandate of the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. If confirmed and should I ever become involved in this work as the Ambassador-at-Large, I will consult with you and your staff for further discussion. More broadly, my understanding is that the administration is putting human rights at the center of foreign policy and seeking concrete human rights improvements in Egypt—a goal I strongly support.

Question. Additionally, for any individual on the list described above who is not a U.S. citizen, please also describe:

- The process through which the State Department or as relevant the broader interagency reviewed the cases and came to the determination that their cases should be used as conditions for aid.
- Whether they are affiliated with groups that promote Islamist ideologies, distribute anti-Semitic materials, or distribute political disinformation.
- Whether the Biden administration intends to grant U.S. visas to them should the Egyptian Government release them.

Answer. I have not been involved in any administration action on these issues. As I understand it, these issues are beyond the scope of the mandate of the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. If confirmed and should I ever become involved in this work as the Ambassador-at-Large, I will contact your staff for further discussion. More broadly, my understanding is the administration is putting human rights at the center of foreign policy and seeking concrete human rights improvements in Egypt—a goal I strongly support.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CHANTALE YOKMIN WONG BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. Asia has the highest rates of malnutrition in the world, with 79 million children suffering from chronic malnutrition, and more than 32 million children suffering from acute malnutrition. This crisis affects not only the health and survival of these children, but the future economic productivity of the entire region. If confirmed, how will you ensure that the Asian Development Bank does all it can to help countries address this crisis of malnutrition?

Answer. I share your concern with the high rates of chronic malnutrition in Asia and the Pacific, especially among children. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Asian Development Bank to explore how it can help address this crisis, working in close coordination with other development partners and focusing on those areas where it has more capacity and expertise.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CHANTALE YOKMIN WONG BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. China is one of the largest borrowers of funds from the AsDB, although by all definitions, it is no longer a developing country by the World Bank's and AsDB's definitions. As you know, in May, the Senate passed as part of a larger China bill a directive to the U.S. Director of the AsDB to vote to prohibit future lending to China.

- In your opinion, should China be allowed to continue to borrow from the AsDB given China's growing role as a source of investment capital for other developing countries, as well as its ability to finance projects, even in lesser-developed regions, through domestic sources?

Answer. I believe the Government of China meets the Asian Development Bank (AsDB)'s criteria for graduation, given its high per capita income, institutional capacity, and ample access to other sources of development finance. If confirmed, I will encourage the PRC's graduation as soon as possible, and will seek to advance this position by working with Treasury, Congress, and other U.S. colleagues as well as likeminded partners on the AsDB Board.

Question. Do you believe that the AsDB's lending to China crowds out other nations in need of financing?

Answer. Yes, the AsDB should focus its resources on countries with lower incomes and less access to other sources of development finance. If confirmed, I will work with likeminded AsDB shareholders to press AsDB to graduate PRC from borrowing.

Question. If the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act is not passed and you are confirmed as the U.S. Director of the ADB, will you still vote to stop lending to China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use the voice and vote of the United States in a manner consistent with relevant laws and directives as well as administration policies toward AsDB lending. I will also work with AsDB to focus its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable countries and will press PRC to assume appropriate roles and responsibilities at the AsDB, including its graduation from AsDB lending.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CHANTALE YOKMIN WONG BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

Question. What level of influence does the United States have over the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) operations and ADB loan policy?

Answer. As the co-largest shareholder of the AsDB and one of the largest donors to the Asian Development Fund, the United States is a leading voice on strategic, policy, and operational issues. The U.S. Executive Director's Office uses both formal engagement through the Board seat as well as informal discussions to advance U.S. policy priorities, often working with likeminded shareholders. The strong environmental, social, and fiduciary standards that the AsDB applies, robust accountability mechanism, and important role for independent evaluation all reflect U.S. influence over the AsDB.

Question. Please discuss the current status of the ADB's portfolio in Afghanistan. What efforts is the Biden administration taking to curtail the Taliban's access to ADB resources?

Answer. I understand that all AsDB activities, including design and approval of new projects and disbursements for existing projects, in Afghanistan are currently paused, and the United States supports that stance.

Question. Does the ADB partner with China on its Belt and Road Initiative? If so, what is your view on that effort and how would you address it?

Answer. I am not aware of any formal partnership between the AsDB and PRC's Belt and Road Initiative. If confirmed, I will work with U.S. Government colleagues and likeminded partners to emphasize that the AsDB should not seek to advance the bilateral initiative of a single shareholder, particularly if it is associated with social, environmental, and fiduciary standards that are weaker than the Bank's own high standards.

Question. China is the world's second largest economy. It has access to capital and sizeable reserves in order to meet its own domestic development needs. China is also

the world's largest official creditor. Yet, China continues to borrow billions of dollars from multilateral development banks.

In 2016, China met the criteria for graduation from the World Bank, which the ADB uses as their threshold. Since then, China received \$7.6 billion and \$1.8 billion in non-sovereign loans to China from the ADB.

- If confirmed, would you object to and vote against additional financing and investments to China from the ADB?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use the voice and vote of the United States in a manner consistent with relevant laws and directives as well as administration policies toward AsDB lending. I will also encourage AsDB to focus its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable countries and will press PRC to assume appropriate roles and responsibilities at the AsDB, including its graduation from AsDB lending.

Question. What would be your strategy to end lending to China at the ADB?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use the voice and vote of the United States in a manner consistent with relevant laws and directives as well as administration policies toward AsDB lending. Working with U.S. Government colleagues, Congress, and likeminded partners on the AsDB Board, I will also encourage AsDB to focus its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable countries and will press PRC to assume appropriate roles and responsibilities at the AsDB, including its graduation from AsDB lending.

Question. There are currently 840 million people across the globe who do not have electricity. People who live in poor and developing nations want and need a stable energy supply to grow their economy and improve their lives.

Energy is a critical tool to help countries alleviate poverty. Yet, multilateral development banks have been imposing restrictions on financing of traditional energy projects. These restrictions only exacerbate the global inequities of energy.

To achieve its mission, the ADB must embrace, not exclude, affordable energy resources. Ultimately, the solution to energy poverty does not lie in limiting options but in using all available options.

- Are poverty alleviation and economic development the top priorities at the ADB?

Answer. Yes. The Bank's charter states that "[t]he purpose of the Bank shall be to foster economic growth and co-operation in the region of Asia and the Far East and to contribute to the acceleration of the process of economic development of the developing member countries in the region, collectively and individually."

Question. When reviewing projects at the ADB, what criterion will you use in determining whether the United States will support energy development projects?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use the voice and vote of the United States in a manner consistent with relevant laws and directives as well as administration policies toward AsDB lending. I believe the AsDB should carefully consider the total costs of energy resources, factoring in the social cost of carbon and the long-term impact on the climate by burning unabated fossil fuels. It is important that the AsDB is part of the climate solutions by helping countries in the region transition toward a low-emission growth path, helping countries to decarbonize their energy generation, and reach Paris alignment while continuing to promote growth and poverty reduction.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring the ADB is promoting all types of energy projects across the globe, including oil, gas, and coal?

Answer. I believe the AsDB should carefully consider the total costs of energy resources, factoring in the social cost of carbon and the long-term impact on the climate by burning unabated fossil fuels. It is important that the AsDB is part of the solution to climate change by helping countries in the region transition toward a low-emission growth path, decarbonizing their energy generation, reaching Paris Alignment while continuing to promote growth and poverty reduction.

Question. Would you recommend the United States support financing of fossil fuel projects for developing countries at the ADB?

Answer. I believe the AsDB should carefully consider the total costs of energy resources, factoring in the social cost of carbon, all externalities, and the long-term impact on the climate by burning unabated fossil fuels. It is important that the AsDB is part of the solution to climate change by helping countries in the region transition toward a low-emission growth path, decarbonizing their energy generation, reaching Paris Alignment while continuing to promote growth and poverty reduction.

Question. Along with the ADB, other development banks, including the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and national development banks, are funding projects in ADB member countries.

- How will you ensure ADB is not duplicating efforts, creating redundancies, and working at cross-purposes?

Answer. There are a number of donor coordination mechanisms that ensure the MDBs work effectively together.

First, Treasury’s Office of Development Results and Accountability (ODRA) plays a key role in ensuring the coordination is robust, alerting the U.S. Executive Directors of any concerns. ODRA is the lead office in charge of reviewing all MDB operations, which provides good oversight over which MDB is involved in specific projects. This allows the U.S. Chair to draw attention to donor coordination issues across the MDBs, which has been helpful in reducing duplication.

Next, the AsDB’s resident missions coordinate with all donors in each country to help ensure division of labor and to reduce duplication, including with USAID and other bilateral agencies.

MDBs, including the AsDB, prepare a Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for each country of operations, describing the sectors in which they plan to engage, guided by both the country’s own development strategy and the MDB’s own corporate priorities. The AsDB Board meets to discuss each CPS, which tend to also be public documents.

Finally, the AsDB also provides Regional Cooperation Strategies for AsDB-defined regions or subregions, which also provide us an opportunity to examine strategic priorities at a higher level.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CHANTALE YOKMIN WONG BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Constraints On Projects / Electrification

Question. On January 27, 2021, President Biden issued an Executive Order (EO) 14008, on “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,” which mandated that the U.S. will “immediately begin to develop a climate finance plan, making strategic use of multilateral and bilateral channels and institutions, to assist developing countries in implementing ambitious emissions reduction measures, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against the impacts of climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments and away from high-carbon investments.”

According to a 2019 study by the International Energy Agency, “Since 2000, overall energy demand [in Southeast Asia] has grown by more than 80 percent and the lion’s share of this growth has been met by a doubling in fossil fuel use. Oil is the largest element in the regional energy mix and coal—largely for power generation—has been the fastest growing.”

The Agreement Establishing the Asian Development Bank states that “The purpose of the Bank shall be to foster economic growth and co-operation in the region of Asia and the Far East. and to contribute to the acceleration of the process of economic development of the developing member countries in the region, collectively and individually.”

- If confirmed, do you intend to limit U.S. support inside the Asian Development Bank for projects related to the use of fossil fuels?

Answer. If confirmed, I will vote according to applicable laws and policies. The AsDB can play a vital role in expanding energy access in Asia and the Pacific while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. AsDB should select energy projects that account for the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing. AsDB should finance projects that utilize technologies providing energy access, while promoting energy efficiency that do not lock developing member nations into technologies that may soon be obsolete.

Question. Please assess the degree to which you believe that further limits on the Asian Development Bank’s support for investments related to the use of coal, oil, and gas, would affect the Bank’s ability to fund active projects aimed at meeting energy demand in Southeast Asia, including your assessment about the demand for such projects.

Answer. The AsDB can play a vital role in expanding energy access in Asia and the Pacific while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. AsDB should select energy projects taking into account the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing. AsDB should prioritize investments that include options for clean energy, innovation and energy efficiency to meet demand in Asia and the Pacific.

Constraints On Projects/China

Question. The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) take a whole-of-government and in many cases whole-of-nation approach to advancing their national security priorities. One prominent tool—which has been explicitly and extensively criticized by the Biden administration—is the use by the PRC and CCP of predatory debt diplomacy, in which they finance overseas projects and then leverage debt related to those projects for geopolitical concessions. China has extensively and specifically financed energy overseas projects, with a focus on fossil fuels. The two major Chinese policy banks—the Chinese Development Bank (CDB) and Chinese Export-Import Bank (EXIM)—funneled \$196.7 billion into overseas energy projects between 2007 and 2016, and roughly 75 percent of their expenditures are related to fossil fuel projects.

- Please assess the degree to which limits on the Asian Development Bank's support for projects related to the use of coal, oil, and gas affect the ability of the Bank to serve as an alternative to Chinese investments funneled through the CDB, EXIM and other Chinese state institutions.

Answer. The AsDB's transparency and adherence to safeguards are a critical part of its comparative advantage, and it should not lower standards in response to competition from PRC investment. The AsDB can play a vital role in expanding energy access and offering a high-quality alternative to PRC finance in Asia and the Pacific while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. To some extent, even the PRC has recognized this and announced it will cease government financing for international coal projects. AsDB should select energy projects taking into account the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing.

Solar Panels/XUAR

Question. In May the Coalition to End Forced Labour in the Uyghur Region released an academic report based on research conducted at the Sheffield Hallam University's Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, which concluded that functionally the entire global solar panel industry utilized supply lines that run through Xinjiang, where the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) are conducting an ongoing genocide against the Uyghurs that includes the use of slave labor. The report documented, inter alia, that 95 percent of solar panels rely on solar-grade polysilicon supply lines which run through Xinjiang account for approximately 45 percent of the world's solar-grade polysilicon supply, and that there are 90 Chinese and international companies whose supply chains are affected by Uyghur forced labour.

According to the *Washington Post*, officials from the office of the United States special presidential envoy for climate have briefed Congressional staffers that it will take up to a decade to move the global supply chain for solar panels away from Xinjiang.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is implicated in Chinese green technologies, including solar panels, in a number of ways. In addition to supporting projects that utilize such parts, the Bank states that it supports and “will continue to support the Government of the PRC's agenda to achieve high-quality, green development under the country's 14th Five-Year Plan.”

- Can you commit that, if confirmed, you will use the voice and vote of the United States inside the ADB to block support for projects that would utilize or provide financing for solar panels made in Xinjiang, with parts made in Xinjiang, or with materials sourced to Xinjiang?

Forced labor practices run counter to our American values as a nation, and they could expose consumers to unethical practices.

As the administration has said, the United States and the world's leading democracies stand united against forced labor, and the United States is committed to take every measure to rid global supply chains from the use of forced labor.

I understand that the U.S. Government has tasked agencies to put this into action, and if confirmed, I commit to work with all parts of the U.S. Government and my fellow Board members to do our part to seek to keep forced labor out of MDB-funded projects. If confirmed I will work with staff and board members to apply rigorous safeguards and standards to prevent human trafficking and forced labor.

China Investment

Question. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) provides extensive support for projects in China. It states that “In 2020, ADB committed around \$2 billion for 12 sovereign loans and \$406 million for seven non-sovereign loans (excluding B loans) for the PRC. This was supplemented by \$12.7 million (inclusive of co-financing) for 27 technical assistance projects.” Cooperation with China by the ADB has been criticized on a number of fronts, including because supporting projects in China may ‘crowd out’ other regional projects.

- Please describe the extent to which you support the continued investment by the ADB into China?

Answer. I believe PRC meets the AsDB’s criteria for graduation, given its high per capita income, institutional capacity, and ample access to other sources of development finance. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners in the region to seek PRC’s graduation as soon as possible, and will seek to advance this position by working with Treasury, Congress, and other U.S. colleagues as well as likeminded partners on the AsDB Board.

Question. Please assess the extent to which support by the ADB for projects in China “crowds out” investments from other potential recipients.

Answer. The AsDB should focus its resources on countries with lower incomes and less access to other sources of development finance. If confirmed, I will work with likeminded AsDB shareholders to press AsDB to graduate China from borrowing.

Afghanistan

Question. As of December 2020, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) had around \$500 million in loans and grants extended to Afghanistan. As the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan in August, the Bank issued a statement saying it remains “committed to supporting Afghanistan’s economic and social development.”

- Please describe how you believe the ADB should approach financing projects in Afghanistan, including measures that it should take to avoid funneling money to the Taliban.

Answer. I understand that the AsDB has paused its activity in Afghanistan. The international community, including the AsDB, should continue examining options to responsibly provide support to the Afghan people, while engaging in strong due diligence and application of appropriate safeguards to prevent the flow of funds to any entity supporting terrorism or other acts of violence against the United States.

Question. Please describe what sorts of projects you believe are appropriate to either initiate or continue in Afghanistan, which are or would be funded by ADB.

Answer. It is too early to say at this time. If confirmed, I look forward to working with others in the U.S. Government, Congress, AsDB Management, and other AsDB Board members to examine options to provide support to the Afghan people while preventing the flow of funds to any person or entity seeking to harm the United States.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO DR. ADRIANA DEBORA KUGLER BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. The International Development Association (IDA) financing for food security has nearly tripled since 2008, and the world is still facing an era of rising global hunger due to conflict, climate change, economic downturns, and now the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, how will you ensure that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development will continue to prioritize combatting the global hunger crisis?

Answer. I share your concern with the high rates of hunger and chronic malnutrition around the world, which have only deepened during the pandemic.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the World Bank to explore how it can do even more to help address this crisis, working in close coordination with other development partners and focusing on those areas where it has more capacity

and expertise. In particular, I understand that this remains an important area of focus of IDA, with increasing attention to early engagement and crisis preparedness. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the World Bank supports efforts to address access to adequate food by creating employment opportunities and providing income support; providing food access to the poorest; and freeing up bottlenecks in agricultural supply chains.

I also look forward to engaging with the Bank and other partners on issues that are closely related to food security, including addressing fragility, conflict, and violence; mitigating and adapting to climate change; and boosting quality infrastructure investment.

Question. Lower-income countries are experiencing high debt burdens, effectively reducing their ability to finance their own development. If confirmed, how will you encourage active participation in debt relief initiatives and the development of new initiatives for new debt challenges?

Answer. I fully share your concern about the increasing debt vulnerabilities many of the poorest countries face. The World Bank can play an important role in assisting countries with building debt management capacity, promoting debt transparency through debt data collection and reporting, and supporting countries participating in debt relief initiatives, such as the G-20 Common Framework.

Question. The global COVID-19 pandemic has led to massive inequality in the economic and development trajectory of countries. What, in your view, needs to change at the World Bank to address the problem of inequality within and between countries? If confirmed, how will you encourage the World Bank to take the proper steps to combat global inequality?

Answer. The World Bank can play an important role in addressing global inequality, given its twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity. If confirmed, I will advocate for a strong focus on inclusion in all World Bank projects. As control of the COVID-19 pandemic and access to vaccines will be critical to preventing the poorest countries from falling further behind during the recovery, I will encourage strong focus on vaccine finance and vaccine access for the poorest, working in close coordination with other international partners. If confirmed, I will continue to be a strong advocate for the World Bank to focus its resources on poorer countries, rigorously applying social and environmental safeguards, and maintaining robust accountability mechanisms. Within developing countries, the World Bank should focus on building debt management capacity and transparency; seek to address the drivers of fragility, conflict, and violence; promote gender equality and social inclusion, including through social safety nets and investments in the care economy; invest in human capital development; and support ambitious programs to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Question. In March 2021, the United Kingdom announced its intention to shift away from supporting fossil fuel projects overseas. The European Investment Bank—the world’s largest multilateral lender—announced it too will end virtually all support for oil, gas, and coal by the end of 2021. If confirmed will you advise the Secretary of the Treasury to support any fossil fuel projects?

Answer. If confirmed, I will vote according to applicable laws and policies, including the guidance that Treasury recently released concerning MDB financing of fossil fuel projects. The World Bank can play a vital role in expanding energy access in developing countries while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. The World Bank should select energy projects that account for the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing. The World Bank should finance projects that utilize technologies providing energy access, while promoting energy efficiency, that do not lock developing countries into high-emissions trajectories or technologies that may soon be obsolete.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO DR. ADRIANA DEBORA KUGLER BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

Question. China is the world’s second largest economy. It has access to capital and sizeable reserves in order to meet its own domestic development needs. China is also the world’s largest official creditor. Yet, China continues to borrow billions of dollars from multilateral development banks.

The World Bank classified China as being an upper-middle income economy. In 2016, China met the criteria for graduation from the World Bank. Since then, China received \$9 billion from the World Bank.

- Do you support the World Bank continuing to lend to China?

Answer. I believe the PRC meets the IBRD's criteria for graduation, given its high per capita income, institutional capacity, and ample access to other sources of development finance. If confirmed, I will press for the PRC's graduation as soon as possible, and will seek to advance this position by working with Treasury, Congress, and other U.S. colleagues as well as likeminded partners on the IBRD Board.

Question. If confirmed, what would be your strategy to end lending to China at the World Bank?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage the PRC's graduation as soon as possible, and will seek to advance this position by working with Treasury, Congress, and other U.S. colleagues as well as likeminded partners on the IBRD Board. I understand that as part of the 2018 World Bank capital increase, World Bank Management committed to substantially reducing the share of lending to countries with incomes above the graduation threshold, increasingly targeting lending in countries with incomes above the graduation threshold on addressing remaining constraints to graduation, and more fulsomely identifying those constraints. I will encourage Management to continue implementing those reforms. I will also press China to assume appropriate roles and responsibilities at the World Bank, including its graduation from IBRD lending.

Question. There are currently 840 million people across the globe who do not have electricity. People who live in poor and developing nations want and need a stable energy supply to grow their economy and improve their lives.

Energy is a critical tool to help countries alleviate poverty. Yet, the World Bank has been imposing restrictions on financing of traditional energy projects. These restrictions only exacerbate the global inequities of energy.

To achieve its mission, the World Bank must embrace, not exclude, affordable energy resources. Ultimately, the solution to energy poverty does not lie in limiting options but in using all available options.

- If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring the World Bank is promoting all types of energy projects across the globe, including oil, gas, and coal?

Answer. I believe the World Bank should carefully consider the total costs of energy resources, factoring in the social cost of carbon and the long-term impact on the climate by burning unabated fossil fuels. It is important that the World Bank is part of the solution to climate change by helping countries transition toward a low-emission growth path, decarbonizing their energy generation, reaching Paris Alignment while continuing to promote growth and poverty reduction.

Question. Would you recommend the United States support financing of fossil fuel projects for developing countries at the World Bank?

Answer. I believe the World Bank should carefully consider the total costs of energy resources, factoring in the social cost of carbon, all externalities, and the long-term impact on the climate by burning unabated fossil fuels. It is important that the World Bank is part of the solution to climate change by helping countries transition toward a low-emission growth path, decarbonizing their energy generation, reaching Paris Alignment while continuing to promote growth and poverty reduction.

Question. Chinese firms are the largest recipients of World Bank contracts. Chinese firms won nearly a quarter of investment projects (by value) between 2016 and 2020. At the same time, numerous state-owned Chinese firms have been debarred by the World Bank and other multilateral development banks for violating procurement policies.

- What are the risks and challenges posed by the World Bank's reliance on Chinese firms for implementation of its development projects? What is your plan to address this issue?

Answer. The risks and challenges are similar to those facing the entire global economy from reliance on PRC firms and workers in global supply chains, including those related to governance, human rights, forced labor, cyber security, and disruptions to the PRC economy. If confirmed, I will advocate for strong focus in procurement policy implementation on value-for-money over the full project lifecycle, rather than awards to the lowest bidder, enhanced scrutiny on abnormally low bids, and added attention to building contracting capacity and transparency in public financial management in World Bank recipient countries.

Question. In August, the World Bank halted funding for projects in Afghanistan after the Taliban took control of the country.

- Under what circumstances, if any, would you recommend the United States support World Bank projects in Afghanistan under the Taliban rule?

Answer. I understand that the World Bank has paused its activity in Afghanistan. The international community, including the World Bank, should continue examining options to responsibly provide support to the Afghan people, while engaging in strong due diligence and application of appropriate safeguards to prevent the flow of funds to any entity supporting terrorism or other acts of violence against the United States.

The Chinese Communist Party has been using its influence at multilateral institutions to bolster its own interests. A recent example is the scandal involving the World Bank's annual "Doing Business" report. Kristalina Georgieva, the current managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has been accused of directing staff to manipulate data to increase China's business ranking while at the World Bank. This was reportedly happening while the World Bank was actively courting China to raise funds for its General Capital Increase. This type of corruption is deeply concerning and undercuts the integrity of the World Bank. It damages the mission of the organization and undermines American interests and values.

Question. What reforms need to be made at the World Bank in light of these serious allegations?

Answer. I am also deeply troubled by these serious allegations. As someone who has worked for over two decades with data, I believe that any data and any reports produced by the World Bank need to be held to the highest standards of rigor, integrity and transparency.

The WilmerHale report makes clear that there is a need to explore how to boost transparency, strengthen controls over data, and create a more respectful workplace, with strong protections for whistleblowers at the World Bank. If confirmed, I look forward to working with partners at the World Bank and in the administration and Congress to advance such reforms.

I also look forward to working with a wide variety of partners to examine how the World Bank can measure and report on countries' business climates while avoiding some of the shortcomings of the Doing Business Report, including those that may have contributed to this incident.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure full accountability for this incident?

Answer. I understand that there are ongoing investigations and internal processes related to the incident. If confirmed, I look forward to understanding further details regarding the incident and will promote steps to bolster accountability, boost transparency, strengthen controls over data, and create a more respectful workplace, with strong protections for whistleblowers at the World Bank.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO DR. ADRIANA DEBORA KUGLER BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Constraints On Projects / Electrification

Question. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is part of the World Bank Group. On January 27, 2021, President Biden issued an Executive Order (EO) 14008, on "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad." Part 1, Section (g)(ii) of EO 14008 is a mandate on the Secretary of the Treasury to use the "voice and vote" of the United States to *inter alia* "[d]evelop a strategy for how the voice and vote of the United States can be used in international financial institutions, including the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund, to promote" the goals of the EO phasing out fossil fuels and promoting renewable energy.

The World Bank has already been taking actions to limit its support for projects supporting the supply of energy through coal, oil, and gas, as well as nuclear power. The World Bank-related mandates in EO 14008 seek to deepen and lock in those moves.

Much of the developing world relies on fossil fuels for energy, and access to energy has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. By 2019 the number of people without electricity access had dropped to 770 million due in large part to increased access to fossil fuels.

- If confirmed, do you intend to limit U.S. support inside IBRD for projects related to the use of fossil fuels?

Answer. If confirmed, I will vote according to applicable laws and policies, including the guidance that Treasury recently released concerning MDB financing of fossil fuel projects. The World Bank can play a vital role in expanding energy access in developing countries while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. The World Bank should select energy projects that account for the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing. The World Bank should finance projects that utilize technologies providing energy access, while promoting energy efficiency, that do not lock developing countries into high-emissions trajectories or technologies that may soon be obsolete.

Question. Please assess the degree to which your existing limits on IBRD's support for investments related to the use of coal, oil, gas, and nuclear power have affected efforts to support electrification in the developing world.

Answer. The World Bank Group has continued to provide strong support for power generation and the provision of electricity to households throughout the developing world. According to the World Bank's corporate scorecard, during its FY 2019–2021 fiscal years, World Bank Group projects contributed to 316,738 gigawatt-hours of new electricity generation, of which 247,735 GWh were from renewable sources, and provided new or improved electricity service to 362.6 million people.

Question. Please assess the degree to which you believe that further limits on IBRD's support for investments related to the use of coal, oil, gas, and nuclear power would affect efforts to support electrification in the developing world.

Answer. The World Bank can play a vital role in expanding energy access in developing countries while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. The World Bank should select energy projects taking into account the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing. The World Bank should prioritize investments that include options for clean energy, innovation and energy efficiency to meet demand in developing countries.

Constraints on Projects/China

Question. The People's Republic of China (PRC) takes a whole-of-government and in many cases whole-of-nation approach to advancing their national security priorities. One prominent tool—which has been explicitly and extensively criticized by the Biden administration—is the use by the PRC and CCP of predatory debt diplomacy, in which they finance overseas projects and then leverage debt related to those projects for geopolitical concessions. China has extensively and specifically financed energy overseas projects, with a focus on fossil fuels. The two major Chinese policy banks—the Chinese Development Bank (CDB) and Chinese Export-Import Bank (EXIM)—funneled \$196.7 billion into overseas energy projects between 2007 and 2016, and roughly 75 percent of their expenditures are related to fossil fuel projects.

- Please assess the degree to which limits on the IBRD's support for investments related to the use of coal, oil, and gas affect the ability of the World Bank to serve as an alternative to Chinese investments funneled through the CDB, EXIM and other Chinese state institutions.

Answer. The World Bank's transparency and adherence to safeguards are critical parts of its comparative advantage, and it should not lower standards in response to competition from PRC investment. The World Bank can play a vital role in expanding energy access and offering a high-quality alternative to PRC finance in developing countries while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. To some extent, even the PRC has recognized this and announced it will cease government financing for international coal projects. The World Bank should select energy projects taking into account the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing.

Solar Panels/XUAR

Question. In May the Coalition to End Forced Labour in the Uyghur Region released an academic report based on research conducted at the Sheffield Hallam University's Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, which concluded that functionally the entire global solar panel industry utilized supply lines that run through Xinjiang, where the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) are conducting an ongoing genocide against the Uyghurs that includes the use of slave labor. The report documented, inter alia, that 95 percent of solar panels rely on solar-grade polysilicon, that supply lines which run through Xinjiang account for approximately 45 percent of the world's solar-grade polysilicon supply, and that there are 90 Chinese and international companies whose supply chains are affected by Uyghur forced labour.

According to the *Washington Post*, officials from the office of the United States special presidential envoy for climate have briefed Congressional staffers that it will take up to a decade to move the global supply chain for solar panels away from Xinjiang.

- Can you commit that, if confirmed, you will use the voice and vote of the United States inside the IBRD to block any projects that would utilize solar panels made in Xinjiang, with parts made in Xinjiang, or with materials sourced to Xinjiang?

Answer. Forced labor practices run counter to our American values as a nation, and they could expose consumers to unethical practices.

As the White House has said, the United States and the world's leading democracies stand united against forced labor, and the United States is committed to ridding global supply chains—including, but not limited to, solar panels—from the use of forced labor.

If confirmed, I commit to work with all parts of the U.S. Government and my fellow Board members to do our part to seek to keep forced labor out of MDB-funded projects. If confirmed I will work with staff and board members to apply rigorous safeguards and standards to prevent human trafficking and forced labor.

Afghanistan

Question. As of August 2021, the World Bank was contributing more than \$2 billion to fund 27 active projects in Afghanistan. As the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan, the World Bank evacuated its Kabul-based staff, but in an internal memo described by Reuters president David Malpass expressed hope the World Bank “will be able to have a positive impact once the situation stabilizes.”

- Please describe how you believe the IRBD should approach financing projects in Afghanistan, including measures that it should take to avoid funneling money to the Taliban.

Answer. I understand that the World Bank has paused its activity in Afghanistan. The international community, including the World Bank, should continue examining options to responsibly provide support to the Afghan people, while engaging in strong due diligence and application of appropriate safeguards to prevent the flow of funds to any entity supporting terrorism or other acts of violence against the United States.

Question. Please describe what sorts of projects you believe are appropriate to either initiate or continue in Afghanistan, which are or would be funded by IRBD.

Answer. It is too early to say at this time. If confirmed, I look forward to working with others in the U.S. Government, Congress, World Bank Management, and other World Bank board members to examine options to provide support to the Afghan people while preventing the flow of funds to any person or entity seeking to harm the United States.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. RAMIN TOLOUI BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. How do you view your role, if you are confirmed as Assistant Secretary, in leading our international economic efforts abroad?

Answer. If confirmed, I think of the role of Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs as comprising three main components: (1) contributing to the crafting of U.S. Government policies at the intersection of economics and foreign policy by working closely with others in the State Department, the interagency, and

Congress; (2) providing internal leadership—guidance, direction, and a sense of purpose—to the capable and dedicated professionals at the Department working on economic and business issues around the world; and (3) providing external leadership by advancing U.S. objectives in the diplomatic sphere and engaging with American businesses, workers, and other stakeholders. These roles extend across the range of functional areas in which the bureau is involved, including commercial and business affairs, trade policy, transportation, finance and investment, economic development, communications and information policy, and threat finance and sanctions.

Question. What are your goals for this position? Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

Answer. If confirmed, my goals as Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs would center on applying diplomatic tools to advance U.S. economic and business interests, and leveraging economic and business tools to advance U.S. foreign policy and national security interests.

I would have a particular focus on three key objectives: (1) securing a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) shaping the international norms and rules governing trade, commerce, and technology that will underpin the future global economy; and (3) leveraging economic levers such as sanctions and foreign assistance to pursue U.S. diplomatic and national security goals.

A key challenge will be to identify concrete ways to work with like-minded nations to confront abusive policies by China that create unfair competition, disadvantage American workers, and conflict with American values. This is also an opportunity to expand collaboration with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions that share our values, so that the future arc of commercial and technological evolution reflects democratic rather than authoritarian principles.

I believe another key opportunity involves using U.S. commercial diplomacy in novel ways to expand opportunities for American workers and American businesses, particularly small- and medium-sized enterprises. The Championing American Business Through Diplomacy Act of 2019 (CABDA) envisages a leading role for the State Department in this area. I look forward to working to make that vision a reality, if confirmed.

Question. What additional tools would help enable you to achieve these goals?

Answer. If confirmed, I will look to make sure that the hundreds of Civil Service professionals and Foreign Service Officers who work at the Department all over the world have the resources they need to advance the full range of U.S. foreign economic policy priorities. I will also look to strengthen the bureau's work to train and retain a diverse cadre of officers in the Department working on economic issues through expanding professional development opportunities and advocating for greater recognition and promotion of economic work. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing a dialogue with Congress on these issues and working together to achieve these goals.

Question. What should be our goals, together with our allies, when it comes to the global economy and its recovery after COVID?

Answer. If confirmed, I see three key goals for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs to contribute to the specific issue of global economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. First, the bureau must work with the interagency and with international partners to restore safe and sustainable international travel and commerce. Second, we must work with others in the U.S. Government, the private sector, and foreign partners to address short-term supply chain disruptions, as well as to take concrete actions to build more resilient supply chains for the future, especially in key areas like semiconductors and other critical sectors. Third, we must engage in commercial diplomacy in new ways to unlock novel opportunities in the post-pandemic world for U.S. businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises.

As we look to the post-COVID world, the bureau also has an important role to play in shaping the international norms and rules governing trade, commerce, and technology that will underpin the future global economy, as well as realizing the vision of Build Back Better World (B3W) to mobilize investments in climate, health and health security, digital technology, and gender equity and equality.

Question. How do you plan to pursue these goals, if you are confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to drawing upon the full range of tools and processes of economic statecraft to pursue these goals: tapping the expertise of the dedicated professionals in the Department and elsewhere in the U.S. Government, working closely with interagency colleagues and Congress to shape U.S. Govern-

ment policies, engaging in productive partnerships with the private sector, and advancing these goals through diplomacy on the international stage.

Question. How do we best compete with China, especially in critical new and emergent technologies like AI, genomics, robotics, and quantum computing?

Answer. Preparing the United States to thrive in this technological era requires a multi-dimensional strategy. This includes making critical investments in our educational technological base at home to support domestic manufacturing in key sectors, as well as world-leading research and development (R&D) to support the creation, adoption, diffusion, and production of innovation in the United States. It includes working with allies and partners to take on abusive Chinese practices in the technology area, including theft of intellectual property and forced technology transfer, as well as to protect sensitive technologies by coordinating on tools such as investment reviews and export controls. It includes working with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions to shape the rules, norms, and standards governing the adoption and use of technology, so that future systems are open, secure, and reliable, reflecting democratic not authoritarian principles. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on the issues in these critical areas.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. RAMIN TOLOUI BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID-19.

- What is your understanding of morale in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs?

Answer. During the consultation process in connection to my nomination, I have been extremely impressed by the energy, knowledge, and commitment of the people in the bureau with whom I have met—from the career officials who have provided essential leadership in acting capacities during this transitional period, to the Foreign Service Officers and Civil Service professionals working on the front lines of critical economic issues. They have struck me as diligent in the technical aspects of their jobs, dedicated to the mission of the bureau, and highly motivated by making a difference for the United States.

Question. How do you intend to improve morale?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to strengthen morale in the bureau by providing clear guidance on priorities and their connection to broader U.S. economic and national security goals, working to ensure our team has the resources they need to be successful, and doing everything I can to make sure that individuals in the bureau feel that their contributions are valued. If confirmed, I look forward to continued consultations with Congress on the priorities of the bureau and resources needed to make it as effective as possible.

Question. How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision?

Answer. I would have three top priorities if confirmed—(1) secure a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by restoring safe and sustainable commerce, building more resilient supply chains, and reenergizing U.S. commercial diplomacy; (2) shape the international norms and rules governing trade, commerce and technology that will underpin the future global economy, which includes working with allies and partners to challenge abusive practices by China that undermine U.S. interests and values; and (3) leverage economic tools to advance foreign policy objectives and effectively respond to crises, including sanctions, foreign assistance, and multilateral coordination. I believe these issues are the right ones to create a unified mission and vision, and I will endeavor to organize our team around these issues.

Management: A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. In my experience, the best way to tap the full energy, creativity, and dedication of team members is to create an environment in which they each feel that their individual efforts are valued and contribute meaningfully to a larger goal. To cultivate such an environment, my approach is to articulate clear goals and organizational mission, give team members sufficient latitude and autonomy to pursue that mission in novel ways and feel a sense of ownership, encourage dissent and challenges to conventional thinking, provide respectful feedback that maintains high

standards and encourages professional growth, and demonstrate the importance of all managers in the organization acting on such values.

Question. Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No, it is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates. My goal will be to create a collegial, respectful, and collaborative work environment in the bureau, if confirmed.

Question. How do you envision your relationship with your deputy?

Answer. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs plays a key role managing bureau processes and ensuring strong interagency coordination. If confirmed, I look forward to finding creative ways to work in partnership with the PDAS to advance the bureau's mission, including addressing specific challenges as they arise.

Question. If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy?

Answer. If confirmed, I will aim to establish an effective collaboration and partnership with the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs that will best leverage our respective strengths to support the bureau's mission. I expect that this will include a substantial role for the PDAS in strengthening coordination and communication within the bureau, as well as with our partners across the Department, our interagency partners, the business community, and our economic officers in the field.

Question. Do you believe that it is important to provide subordinates with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. Yes, it is vital to provide team members with accurate and constructive feedback on their performance to encourage improvement, cultivate professional growth, recognize progress, and reward success. If confirmed, I am committed to doing so.

Question. If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I would support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees to achieve these goals.

Question. What would you do, if confirmed, to strengthen the U.S. Foreign Service's Economic Corps as well as civil servants to ensure we are better postured to compete economically with China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to get the Foreign Service's Economic Corps and civil servants the resources and support they need to advance a foreign policy for the middle class, assist American businesses to compete and win on the global stage, and confront the PRC's economic abuses. If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment to attract highly qualified economic foreign service officers and expert civil service officers from throughout the State Department, and to strengthen training and professional development in economic skills, infrastructure, and commercial diplomacy.

Question. Will you commit to providing SFRC staff with opportunities to observe State Department technical assistance on economic issues, such as workshops or other programming on issues like countering predatory finance, proper tendering, bidding, and procurement, management of key economic sectors, and other relevant areas?

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, my understanding is that the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs provides technical assistance in a few select areas and assists other Department bureaus, agencies, and partners that provide assistance in others. I understand the value of Congressional oversight. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with Congress to provide visibility into the work the bureau supports that is important to our economic diplomacy efforts.

Question. In your view, what role does the Development Finance Corporation play in countering China's state-directed economic investments?

Answer. I applaud the work of Congress in passing the BUILD Act and believe that the establishment of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) was an important step in enhancing our economic tools. DFC investments can

help advance important U.S. development and foreign policy objectives. I understand DFC reviews projects for criteria such as positive development impact, potential to fill the gap where traditional financing is unavailable, financial risk, and more. DFC can provide an alternative to PRC state-directed economic investments, help American companies compete and win overseas against Chinese companies, and offer potential partners and projects the option of values-driven investments informed by strong standards.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to strengthening the deal team model?

Answer. Because U.S. Government tools to assist U.S. companies effectively compete abroad reside in a number of different agencies, interagency collaboration is paramount to the effectiveness of U.S. assistance efforts. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the Deal Team Initiative launched in 2020 has improved interagency coordination and therefore U.S. Government support for U.S. companies. If confirmed, I will work to build on this progress and further strengthen collaboration between the State Department and our trade and development agencies in Washington and overseas as envisaged in the Deal Team Initiative.

Question. Do you commit to further advancing the objectives of the State Department's Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network?

Answer. Public financing alone cannot close the global infrastructure gap over the next twenty years—we need to mobilize private financing for quality infrastructure, including in the Indo-Pacific. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the participants in ITAN representing 14 U.S. agencies have collaborated to identify—and where possible provide support for—a large number of projects involving substantial investments. If confirmed, I will work to build upon the work of ITAN to date and continue helping foreign partners build better enabling environments to mobilize greater private sector financing in quality infrastructure investment through ITAN.

Question. For projects that are intended to open up opportunities for further private sector investment, do you commit that the Department of State will actually engage with the private sector before determining whether to fund a project?

Answer. Mobilizing private sector investment in infrastructure requires an understanding of the private sector's perspectives and incentives. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that many ITAN projects have a substantial focus on capacity building and technical assistance, including to shape an enabling environment for high-quality investment. If confirmed, I look forward to rigorous and regular consultations with the private sector on best practices and their views in pursuing infrastructure investments, so that U.S. Government assistance can be deployed as effectively as possible.

Question. Do you commit that the Department of State's strategic infrastructure pilot will not be solely or primarily used to fund climate-related initiatives? There are other relevant national security and foreign policy interests that should also be addressed.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs implements the Strategic Infrastructure Fund (SIF) pilot. My understanding is that the SIF is designed to advance U.S. efforts to cultivate a free and open Indo-Pacific by defending markets against coercion by strategic competitors and supporting projects that are also of strategic value to the United States. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the Department so that the State Department is considering the full range of U.S. interests in infrastructure.

Question. Do you believe the United States needs to advance a more robust trade agenda in the Indo-Pacific region? If so, what would you emphasize and what should our main goals be?

Question. In my view, key goals for our trade policy should be supporting American working families, defending our values, and protecting the long-term prosperity and security of the United States. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, my understanding is that trade policy in the Indo-Pacific is a key part of the administration's effort to Build Back Better. As President Biden has said, the United States is focused on making investments in U.S. workers and U.S. competitiveness before he signs new trade agreements, including in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I intend to work with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region to identify ways to advance cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, the digital

economy, and energy to help lay the groundwork for a region that is open, connected, prosperous, resilient, and secure.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. RAMIN TOLOUI BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. China has long been one of the biggest violators of U.S. sanctions. I am particularly concerned with the lack of action against China and the purchase of Iranian oil in violation of U.S. law. Last month, Reuters reported the “U.S. has reached out to China about cutting oil imports from Iran, officials say.” The article quoted a senior U.S. official stating, “[w]e are aware of the purchases that Chinese companies are making of Iranian oil.” Yet, we have not seen sanctions by the administration on these purchases.

- If confirmed, what will you do to seek better cooperation from China on sanction matters?

Answer. I understand that the United States has been engaged with JCPOA participants, including China, in an effort to achieve a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments with Iran. If confirmed, I will work with others in the administration to raise this issue with the Chinese as part of a dialogue on Iran policy. If confirmed, I will also work with others in the administration to counter Iranian sanctions evasion efforts by all who are involved, including Chinese entities.

Question. Do you agree that any significant transaction involving Iran’s energy sector, including the import of oil or petroleum products, violates U.S. sanctions?

Answer. I understand that the current Iran-related sanction authorities remain in effect, including sanctions that address Iran’s energy sector and certain transactions related to oil and petroleum products. To this end, if confirmed, I will work with others in the administration to constrain the Iranian regime’s efforts to evade U.S. sanctions on its energy sector.

Question. It has recently been revealed the Commerce Department has issued numerous licenses to allow billions of dollars in exports to Huawei despite the company’s significant violation of sanctions on Iran.

- What are your thoughts on balancing the need to hold companies accountable when they violate our laws, and the natural reluctance to disrupt significant commercial activity?

Answer. Ensuring American companies are competitive in the global economy is critical for our future prosperity. If confirmed, I will work with U.S. companies and others in the U.S. Government to strengthen the competitiveness of American businesses. At the same time, companies and individuals must comply with applicable U.S. law, including sanctions and export controls, when conducting business. Engaging in significant commercial activity does not exempt any of these actors from the need to fully comply with applicable U.S. law.

If confirmed, I will work with our interagency colleagues, including those at the Departments of Treasury, Commerce, Homeland Security, and Justice, to ensure U.S. law is properly enforced. I will also press other states and international bodies to use all appropriate diplomatic, enforcement, and regulatory tools to curtail business activities that are contrary to U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives.

Question. If confirmed, are you fully committed to carrying out the sanctions laws passed by Congress, even if you may disagree with the views of Congress?

Answer. Sanctions are a vital tool to advance U.S. interests and values. I appreciate Congress’s deep and continued interest in sanctions issues, and look forward to closely consulting on these issues, if confirmed. If confirmed, I am committed to following the laws passed by Congress, as well as using all of our diplomatic tools to address threats to our national security.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. RAMIN TOLOUI BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. Please assess the degree to which supply lines for EVs run through Xinjiang.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that China currently has a dominant position in the global lithium-ion battery supply chain. My understanding is that China is the largest market for lithium batteries and has a growing domestic demand for electric vehicles (EVs). If confirmed, I will work with the administration to assess the degree to which forced labor permeates supply chains for EVs, as well as other key sectors, and to address forced labor practices in Xinjiang and elsewhere in the PRC.

Question. Please assess the degree to which supply lines for EVs run through Xinjiang and involve the use of slave labor.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the use of forced labor in Xinjiang is a significant problem that could impact a number of industries that are potential inputs to the EV industry. If confirmed, I will work with the administration to assess the degree to which forced labor permeates supply chains for EVs; support and advocate for the end of forced labor and elimination of human rights abuses in our global supply chains; and work to hold those accountable who knowingly contribute to these human rights abuses in our global supply chains.

Question. Please assess the degree to which supply lines for solar panels run through Xinjiang.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that China currently has a dominant position in the global solar panel supply chain. My understanding is that China controls a large proportion of the global supply chain for solar-grade polysilicon, much of which is manufactured in Xinjiang. If confirmed, I will work with the administration to assess the degree to which forced labor permeates supply chains for solar panels, as well as other key sectors, and to address forced labor practices in Xinjiang and elsewhere in the PRC.

Question. Please assess the degree to which supply lines for solar panels run through Xinjiang and involve the use of slave labor.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the use of forced labor in Xinjiang is a significant problem that could impact a number of industries, including those involved in the production of solar panels. If confirmed, I will work with the administration to assess the degree to which forced labor permeates supply chains for solar panels; support and advocate for the end of forced labor and elimination of human rights abuses in our global supply chains; and work to hold those accountable who knowingly contribute to these human rights abuses in our global supply chains.

Question. Please describe steps you would take, if confirmed, to untangle any advocacy or activities by EB related to ESG that might promote the use of products made in Xinjiang with slave labor.

Answer. I believe forced labor in Xinjiang is a serious and important issue. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to work with the U.S. Government interagency, as well as allies and partners, to advocate for the removal of forced labor from key supply chains; cultivate diverse, secure, and reliable sources of supply for solar panels and advanced batteries, among other sectors; and develop more robust safeguards, enhanced auditing procedures, and greater transparency in the supply chain. If confirmed, I also commit to continuing to shine a light on forced labor practices, including through tools that underscore the risks for businesses and individuals of engaging with entities in Xinjiang and elsewhere. If confirmed, I commit to consult with you and other members of Congress on how we can work together to make concrete progress in this area.

Question. Please assess the degree to which EB's mission and equities would be undermined by activation of NS2.

Answer. I agree with the administration and significant bipartisan consensus in Congress that Nord Stream 2 is a Russian geopolitical project. In this context, the United States must be vigilant against Russia's potential use of energy to undermine Ukraine's economy and security, as well as broader European energy security. If confirmed, I commit to working with others in the administration, Congress, and our European allies and partners to support a more secure and sustainable energy future for Ukraine and to advance European energy security more broadly.

Question. Please assess the threat posed to EB's mission and equities by Russia using energy as a weapon.

Answer. Nord Stream 2 is a Russian geopolitical project. It is essential that the United States work with Germany and other allies and partners to reduce the risks

posed by the pipeline to Ukraine and frontline NATO and EU countries and to push back against harmful Russian activities, including in the energy sphere. If confirmed, I will work with my administration colleagues to advance a more secure and sustainable energy future for Ukraine and other frontline NATO and EU Allies and partners, as well as work with others in the U.S. Government and Europe to confront any Russian attempt to weaponize energy flows against our allies and partners.

Question. What do you assess is going wrong with sanctions enforcement

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the United States has used sanctions to respond to Iranian sanctions evasion, including a designation in August of an Omani national for facilitating the sale and shipment of illicit Iranian oil. I expect the administration to continue to oppose Iranian sanctions evasion efforts, including those involving Chinese entities. If confirmed, I will work with others in the administration to raise this issue with the Chinese as part of a dialogue on Iran policy.

Question. Please assess the benefits that China gets from such sanctions-busting.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, my understanding is that the administration is aware of reports that PRC-based companies are buying Iranian oil. If confirmed, I will work with others in the administration to raise this issue with the Chinese as part of a dialogue on Iran policy. If confirmed, I will also work with interagency colleagues to oppose Iranian sanctions evasion efforts, including those involving Chinese entities.

Question. If confirmed, how will you act to prevent such sanctions-busting.

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with other countries to ensure they are aware of our current Iran-related sanctions as part of an effort to constrain the Iranian regime's efforts to evade U.S. sanctions and help our partners address sanctionable activity in their respective jurisdictions. Specifically, if confirmed, I will work with others in the administration to raise this issue with the Chinese as part of a dialogue on Iran policy. If confirmed, I will also work with interagency colleagues to oppose Iranian sanctions evasion efforts, including those involving Chinese entities.

Question. Please describe any new significant sanctions that have been imposed on Iran since the inauguration of President Biden.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that since President Biden's inauguration, the administration has imposed sanctions on individuals and entities linked to Iranian intelligence and financial supporters of terrorist organizations including Lebanese Hezbollah. I understand that in August the administration designated an Omani national for facilitating the sale and shipment of tens of millions of dollars' worth of illicit Iranian oil to obscure Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force (IRGC-QF) involvement. Further, I understand that the administration has targeted leaders of a kidnapping network closely linked to the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security, as well as illicit actors who moved vast sums in order to support Hezbollah and the IRGC-QF. Most recently, in late October, I understand that the administration designated members of a network of companies and individuals linked to the IRGC's Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) program which has historically proliferated attacks against U.S. forces, our partners, and international shipping.

Question. Please describe the details of any arrangements, deals, or agreements that are being contemplated by the Biden administration to reduce pressure on Iran other than reentry into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Answer. I have not been made aware of any arrangements, deals, or agreements contemplated to reduce pressure on Iran, based on my consultations with State Department professionals.

Question. Please commit to enforcing IFCA sanctions related to the transport by Iran of fuel to Lebanon.

Answer. I understand that the humanitarian situation in Lebanon is dire. I understand that U.S. Senior Advisor for Global Energy Security Amos Hochstein travelled to Lebanon in October to discuss sustainable solutions to Lebanon's energy crisis. If confirmed, I commit to following the law and pursuing the full range of efforts to constrain the Iranian regime's attempts to evade U.S. sanctions on its energy sector.

Question. Please commit to enforcing Caesar Act sanctions related to the transport of fuel from Iran over Syria to Lebanon.

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to following the law and promoting accountability for the Assad regime and the atrocities it has committed in Syria, as envisaged in the Caesar Act.

Question. Please describe to what extent you believe that it would be in America's national security interest for resources to go to the Government of Lebanon even if that government was controlled or unduly influenced by Hizballah.

Answer. Hizballah is a terrorist organization. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the United States undertakes rigorous measures to safeguard U.S. assistance from conferring benefits to Hizballah or any other terrorist group, including thorough oversight, vetting, and robust risk mitigation practices. I understand that U.S. economic aid is not provided directly to the Lebanese Government but implemented through trusted NGOs and international organizations. As part of its security assistance, my understanding is that the U.S. Government conducts End-Use Monitoring (EUM) to mitigate the risk of unauthorized transfer or use of U.S. technology and equipment.

Question. Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that the Houthis' military offensive, with continued Iranian support, is exacerbating an already-dire humanitarian crisis, placing at risk a million internally displaced persons who found refuge in Marib after escaping fighting in other parts of the country.

Question. Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in general.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, my understanding is that the administration revoked the designations after taking into account warnings regarding the potential impact the designations could have had on commercial food shipments into Yemen and the provision of humanitarian aid. I understand that the administration listened to concerns voiced by the UN, humanitarian groups, and bipartisan members of Congress, among others, that the designations could have had a severe impact on Yemenis' access to basic commodities like food and fuel, which could increase the risk of famine. Based on my consultations, I understand that the short time that passed between the designations and the revocations limited the impact the designations had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports, including food and other essential supplies.

Question. Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that resolving the conflict in Yemen and bringing relief to the Yemeni people is a critical U.S. foreign policy priority. The Houthis' ongoing offensive on Marib runs directly counter to that goal, posing a dire threat to the humanitarian situation in Yemen and potentially triggering increased fighting throughout Yemen. Based on my consultations, my understanding is that the lifting of sanctions helps enable the delivery of life-saving food, emergency shelter, water, and sanitation and hygiene supplies, as well as essential non-food items, such as blankets and water containers.

Question. Please describe how, if confirmed, you would position EB to enforce and/or deepen America's embargo on Cuba.

Answer. I understand that since July, the administration has imposed four rounds of targeted sanctions against Cuban officials in connection with violence, repression, and human rights violations against peaceful protestors in Cuba, including numerous senior military officers and divisions of the armed forces responsible for violence against protestors. If confirmed, I will work with my State Department colleagues, others in the administration, and Congress to promote accountability for those who abuse human rights and repress the Cuban people.

Question. Mexico has taken several actions that discriminate against American energy producers and favor state owned enterprises (SOEs), including through modifications of the country's Hydrocarbons Law, proposed constitutional reforms to the electricity industry, and predatory behavior that potentially violate key tenets of the USMCA. Please assess the degree to which this discrimination has undermined sustainable trade between the United States and Mexico.

Answer. I understand that Mexico has adopted a series of administrative, regulatory, and legislative changes in its energy policies that undermine existing investments in the sector and the overall business climate. These measures are concerning and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with my USTR and State Department colleagues and others in the U.S. Government to understand the full scope and consequences of Mexico's actions.

Question. If confirmed, what specific steps will you be able to take to halt and reverse these counterproductive steps?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my USTR and State Department colleagues and others in the interagency to express concern to Mexico about the direction of its energy policy, closely monitor these and other problematic policy changes, and identify steps that the U.S. Government and State Department can take to promote fair energy market access for the private sector.

Question. Please assess the degree to which Mexico's recent actions in the electricity and energy production sectors are in violation of the USMCA.

Answer. I understand that USTR has confirmed that the energy sector is covered under USMCA. While USTR would be in the best position to comment on their ongoing review of these measures and their implications for Mexico's commitment to a fair and open investment regime, as well as their consistency with Mexico's USMCA obligations, I would welcome the opportunity to look into this and consult with you, if confirmed.

Question. Do you support the efforts and objectives of the EMGF?

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, my understanding is that the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners to promote greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity throughout the region. I also understand that the EMGF announced earlier this year that it plans to work with specialists to discuss and promote gas decarbonization. If confirmed, I would consult with my colleagues in the Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs, Energy Resources, and European Affairs on how to coordinate our engagement and advance U.S. national interests in the initiative.

Question. Do you support the United States continued involvement within the EMFG?

Answer. If confirmed, I hope to work with others at the State Department and within the U.S. Government on continued U.S. involvement with the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum.

Question. Do you support efforts by Israel and other regional partners to develop a sustainable natural gas infrastructure including through bilateral negotiations?

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that natural gas discoveries have helped redefine relationships and increase energy security in the Eastern Mediterranean, and that our partners building up capacity in renewable energy sources will further transform the energy landscape in this region. I support the development of sustainable, secure, energy sources by Israel and other regional partners, including through bilateral negotiations.

Question. Can you evaluate the impacts of the EMFG on advancing peace and cooperation between Israel and regional partners?

Answer. I understand that the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners, including greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity that supports Israel's greater integration in the region.

Question. Can you evaluate the impact that completing the EastMed pipeline would have on providing Europe with an alternative to Russian supplied gas?

Answer. Based on my consultations with State Department professionals, I understand that existing natural gas pipelines and pipelines already under construction provide energy diversification away from Russian gas in the region. My understanding is also that greater electricity interconnections between our partners to ensure our partners can generate reliable and sustainable electricity using renewable energy sources. If confirmed, I would work with other bureaus at the State Department and others in the U.S. Government to assess the numerous regional energy projects in the Eastern Mediterranean under consideration to advance these goals, including the EastMed Pipeline.

Question. Do you support the continued development of the EastMed Pipeline?

Answer. I understand that regional energy and electrical interconnections have the ability to increase our partners' and allies' energy security, diversify energy supplies, and aid in facilitating a stable and sustainable energy transition to adopt renewable energy sources. If confirmed, I would work with other bureaus at the State Department and others in the U.S. Government to assess the numerous regional energy projects in the Eastern Mediterranean under consideration to advance these goals, including the EastMed Pipeline.

Question. What impact do you think this energy forum has on regional dynamics, including those related to diplomatic, economic, and security?

Answer. I understand that the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners and promotes greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity in the region, which ultimately helps advances stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Marrakesh Accords



In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate

Executive Summary of the Marrakesh Declaration on the Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities

25th-27th January 2016

WHEREAS, conditions in various parts of the Muslim World have deteriorated dangerously due to the use of violence and armed struggle as a tool for settling conflicts and imposing one's point of view;

WHEREAS, this situation has also weakened the authority of legitimate governments and enabled criminal groups to issue edicts attributed to Islam, but which, in fact, alarmingly distort its fundamental principles and goals in ways that have seriously harmed the population as a whole;

WHEREAS, this year marks the 1,400th anniversary of the Charter of Medina, a constitutional contract between the Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, and the people of Medina, which guaranteed the religious liberty of all, regardless of faith;

WHEREAS, hundreds of Muslim scholars and intellectuals from over 120 countries, along with representatives of Islamic and international organizations, as well as leaders from diverse religious groups and nationalities, gathered in Marrakesh on this date to reaffirm the principles of the Charter of Medina at a major conference;

WHEREAS, this conference was held under the auspices of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI of Morocco, and organized jointly by the Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs in the Kingdom of Morocco and the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies based in the United Arab Emirates;

AND NOTING the gravity of this situation afflicting Muslims as well as peoples of other faiths throughout the world, and after thorough deliberation and discussion, the convened Muslim scholars and intellectuals:

DECLARE HEREBY our firm commitment to the principles articulated in the Charter of Medina, whose provisions contained a number of the principles of constitutional contractual citizenship, such as freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defense, as well as principles of justice and equality before the law; and that,

The objectives of the Charter of Medina provide a suitable framework for national constitutions in countries with Muslim majorities, and the United Nations Charter and related documents, such as

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are in harmony with the Charter of Medina, including consideration for public order.

NOTING FURTHER that deep reflection upon the various crises afflicting humanity underscores the inevitable and urgent need for cooperation among all religious groups, we

AFFIRM HEREBY that such cooperation must be based on a "Common Word," requiring that such cooperation must go beyond mutual tolerance and respect, to providing full protection for the rights and liberties to all religious groups in a civilized manner that eschews coercion, bias, and arrogance.

BASED ON ALL OF THE ABOVE, we hereby:

Call upon Muslim scholars and intellectuals around the world to develop a jurisprudence of the concept of "citizenship" which is inclusive of diverse groups. Such jurisprudence shall be rooted in Islamic tradition and principles and mindful of global changes.

Urge Muslim educational institutions and authorities to conduct a courageous review of educational curricula that addresses honestly and effectively any material that instigates aggression and extremism, leads to war and chaos, and results in the destruction of our shared societies;

Call upon politicians and decision makers to take the political and legal steps necessary to establish a constitutional contractual relationship among its citizens, and to support all formulations and initiatives that aim to fortify relations and understanding among the various religious groups in the Muslim World;

Call upon the educated, artistic, and creative members of our societies, as well as organizations of civil society, to establish a broad movement for the just treatment of religious minorities in Muslim countries and to raise awareness as to their rights, and to work together to ensure the success of these efforts.

Call upon the various religious groups bound by the same national fabric to address their mutual state of selective amnesia that blocks memories of centuries of joint and shared living on the same land; we call upon them to rebuild the past by reviving this tradition of conviviality, and restoring our shared trust that has been eroded by extremists using acts of terror and aggression;

Call upon representatives of the various religions, sects and denominations to confront all forms of religious bigotry, vilification, and denigration of what people hold sacred, as well as all speech that promote hatred and bigotry; AND FINALLY,

AFFIRM that it is unconscionable to employ religion for the purpose of aggressing upon the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries.

Marrakesh
January 2016 ,27th

**Christian and Jewish Organization and Leader Statements
Supporting Nomination of Rashad Hussain for Ambassa-
dor-at-Large for International Religious Freedom**

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION WATCHDOG ENCOURAGES
CONGRESS TO CONFIRM RASHAD HUSSAIN

<https://premierchristian.news/en/news/article/christian-persecution-watchdog-encourages-congress-to-confirm-biden-s-religious-freedom-nominee>

—Tuesday, August 3, 2021 by Premier Journalist

Open Doors USA, an organization that advocates for persecuted Christians worldwide, has expressed support for Joe Biden's recent appointment to Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

The Biden administration announced four new appointees related to specific religious offices on Friday, with a distinct focus on Rashad Hussain, the nominee for Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

Open Doors USA CEO David Curry said in a statement: "Open Doors has repeatedly called on the Biden Administration to fill these critical roles to international religious freedom, and we are heartened by today's nominations. Rashad Hussain is a well-qualified nominee with a deep understanding of the factors at play in China, India, and elsewhere. We look forward to building together the diverse coalition of leadership necessary to counter the rising tide of religious persecution worldwide."

Curry notes that "Mr. Hussain's experience could play a major role in addressing some of the most challenging issues facing Christians, especially in the Middle East and West Africa," and urges Congress to confirm this nominee quickly for the sake of religious freedom.

Hussain has served in several administrations, including the Obama administration in 2009. He has also worked at the National Security Council. The Ambassador at Large will play a crucial part in coordinating foreign policy direction concerning the persecution of religious communities across the world. Open Doors believes that the United States should focus these priorities on the extreme violence against Christians in Nigeria, the genocide against Uyghurs in China, and the deteriorating state of religious freedom in India.

Open Doors also expressed support for the other three appointees. They urged Senator McConnell and other Senators to fill these vacancies expediently.

BIDEN NAMES FIRST MUSLIM RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AMBASSADOR

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html?utm—medium=widgetemail>

(UPDATED) 12 Christian IRF advocates praise Rashad Hussain, Obama's OIC envoy, for his credentials and credibility. Two USCIRF commissioners and anti-semitism envoy also named.—Jeremy Weber and Religion News Service; July 30, 2021

The White House announced Friday a slate of nominations and appointments for top religious affairs roles, including the first Muslim American nominated to be the US ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom (IRF).

President Joe Biden will select Rashad Hussain as his nominee for that post, filling a State Department slot vacant since former Kansas governor and US Senator Sam Brownback—who co-chaired a bipartisan IRF summit for 1,200 attendees this month—left at the close of the Trump administration.

Hussain, who would need to be confirmed by the Senate, currently works as director for Partnerships and Global Engagement at the National Security Council. He previously served as White House counsel under President Barack Obama, as well as US special envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and US special envoy for the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, among other roles.

Knox Thames, who served as the State Department's special advisor for religious minorities during both the Obama and Trump administrations, told CT that Hussain was "a strong pick."

“He knows human rights and cares about religious freedom,” said Thames. “I saw firsthand how he raised these issues when he served as [OIC envoy]. I know he’ll be able to hit the ground running from day one to combat religious persecution.”

Judd Birdsall, a senior research fellow at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University who served with Hussain at the State Department from 2009–2011, told CT that the nomination is a “fantastic choice” because Hussain has “impeccable credentials, extensive diplomatic and legal experience, and unique credibility as a Muslim American.”

“I greatly respected his thoughtful, humble, and capacious approach to all things religion and diplomacy, including the promotion of religious freedom,” said Birdsall. “He understands the religious minority experience and is a passionate advocate for all those who suffer on account of their beliefs.”

Also noteworthy is the speed of the nomination, coming at a similar pace to President Donald Trump’s selection of Brownback as IRF ambassador after just six months.

“The most tangible measure of an administration’s commitment to international religious freedom is the quality of its IRF ambassador nominee and the speed with which it makes that nomination,” Birdsall told CT. “Whereas President Bush took 14 months to announce his nominee for the job and Obama took 17, Biden is strongly signaling his commitment to the issue by taking only seven months to announce an outstanding nominee.

“By nominating a Muslim to serve as IRF ambassador, the Biden administration is decisively turning the page on an era in which a perception of anti-Muslim sentiment undermined the nation’s reputation on religious freedom,” he said. “Rashad Hussain will help to restore America’s credibility as a champion of tolerance and inclusion.”

“The task of advancing religious freedom is best done when all faiths work together,” James Chen, vice president of global operations at the Institute for Global Engagement, told CT. “So the Biden administration’s appointment of Mr. Hussain is encouraging to see.”

Bob Roberts, global senior pastor of Northwood Church and founder of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, told CT he was “so excited” for Hussain’s nomination.

“He will be incredible. He’s a wise man of character,” said Roberts. “Him being a Muslim is a very positive thing, in that he will be able to walk into sensitive places in the world and be unparalleled in his ability to understand, speak to issues, and challenge right actions.

“We’ve had Christians in that role and a rabbi in David Saperstein,” he said. “A Muslim is a good choice.”

“President Biden’s appointment of a Muslim [IRF ambassador] is a reminder that the US position on religious freedom has always been for people of all faiths and even for those who express no particular faith,” Randel Everett, founder and president of 21Wilberforce, told CT.

Elijah Brown, general secretary and CEO of the Baptist World Alliance, told CT that the nomination is a “strategic development” because Hussain “brings a depth of experience across all three branches of the US government and a wide array of faith-based initiatives including Baptist-Muslim conversations.

“I join with many others in urging Congress to quickly confirm [him] to this ambassadorship,” he said, “as many—especially in light of the ongoing global pandemic—face unprecedented restrictions as they seek to live out their faith convictions.”

Jeremy Barker, the Erbil-based Middle East program director at the Religious Freedom Institute, told CT that Hussain is “a great choice” who has “done serious security and diplomatic policy work which will be vital in advancing religious freedom within an administration that had said it wants to prioritize human rights within its foreign policy.

“He is also a person of faith who takes his own religion seriously and understands that religious persecution strikes at something fundamental to an individual or community,” said Barker.

“International religious freedom has been and should remain an issue with overwhelming bipartisan support. The Senate should move quickly to get Mr. Hussain confirmed and in the job,” he said. “The work is too important to be left undone and the Biden administration is to be commended for putting a qualified nominee forward early in the process.”

“Rashad’s appointment demonstrates not only the importance the Biden administration places on religious freedom,” said Saeed Khan, an expert on American Muslim communities at Wayne State University, “it also shows the importance of the Muslim world to the administration both in terms of combatting Islamophobia and also promoting religious freedom in Muslim majority countries. Rashad’s back-

ground will allow him to have a frank discussion with Muslim majority countries about the importance of religious freedom.”

Biden is also expected to nominate Deborah Lipstadt as the next US special envoy to monitor and combat antisemitism. Lipstadt is a professor at Emory University in Atlanta and a prominent Holocaust historian. She is the author of *Antisemitism: Here and Now* and is known for successfully defeating a libel suit brought against her by Holocaust denier David Irving.

“We are greatly heartened by the anticipated announcement of Prof. Lipstadt to continue our nation’s fight against antisemitism both here and abroad,” said Mark (Moishe) Bane, president of the Orthodox Union. “She is a leader with great moral courage; her dedicated work, clear voice in fighting Holocaust denial and preserving the memory of the attempted destruction of the Jewish people make her an exemplary choice for this role.”

Lipstadt, who would have the rank of ambassador, also requires Senate confirmation. The anticipated announcement follows a May 24 letter from several leading Jewish organizations calling on President Biden to address the recent rise in antisemitic attacks.

“The presence and efforts of an Ambassador to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism send a powerful signal to governments around the world that the U.S. takes combating antisemitism seriously and calls on them to do the same,” the letter said.

“President Biden is to be congratulated for having moved relatively quickly in nominating people for religious freedom related posts,” Paul Marshall, a veteran IRF scholar and author and the religious freedom chair at the Institute for Studies of Religion at Baylor University, told CT. He noted that Lipstadt is “a skilled veteran” and that Hussein’s envoy roles had “shown both his abilities and his commitment to religious freedom.”

“Having a Muslim in the religious freedom ambassadorship may allay the canard that this is simply a sop to the religious right,” said Marshall, currently a senior fellow at the DC-based Religious Freedom Institute and the Jakarta-based Leimena Institute.

Nadine Maenza, chair of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), applauded the two nominations.

“We look forward to working closely with [them] to develop new ways for the United States to promote the freedom of religion or belief around the world,” she stated in a press release. “Global religious freedom violations continue to be a pervasive threat to our national security and global stability. [They] play an essential role in US efforts to counter that threat.”

In addition, Biden plans to appoint two new commissioners to USCIRF: Khizr Khan and Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum. Khan became famous in 2016 when he and his wife, Ghazala, spoke during the Democratic National Convention as “Gold Star” parents, discussing their son, Humayun, a US Army captain who died in Iraq in 2004.

Khan, a Harvard-educated Muslim immigrant, directly challenged then-candidate Trump’s proposal to ban residents of Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States, accusing the business mogul of having sacrificed “nothing—and no one.”

“Let me ask you, have you even read the United States Constitution? I will gladly lend you my copy,” Khan said as he held aloft a worn booklet containing the text of the document.

Khan, the founder of the Constitution Literacy and National Unity Project, runs his own law practice and has authored three books, including *Founding Documents of the United States of America*.

Kleinbaum, for her part, already served as a USCIRF commissioner in 2020 and leads the Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in New York City, a community that centers LGBT people. A human rights advocate, she also sits on Mayor de Blasio’s Faith Based Advisory Council and serves on New York City’s Commission on Human Rights. In addition, she is a board member of the New York Jewish Agenda and the New Israel Fund.

“Today’s announcement underscores the President’s commitment to build an Administration that looks like America and reflects people of all faiths,” stated the White House.

David Curry, CEO of Open Doors USA, told CT he was “heartened” by the Biden administration filling the critical IRF roles.

“Rashad Hussain is a well-qualified nomination with a deep understanding of the factors at play in China, India, and elsewhere,” he said. “We look forward to building together the diverse coalition of leadership necessary to counter the rising tide of religious persecution worldwide.”

In a later press release, Open Doors welcome all four selections, stated Hussain’s “expertise could play a major role in addressing some of the most challenging issues

facing Christians, especially in the Middle East and West Africa,” and called on Senator Mitch McConnell to “fill the last remaining vacancy [at USCIRF] in a timely manner.” Former USCIRF commissioner and spokesman for President Trump’s evangelical advisers Johnnie Moore congratulated Hussain and the other appointees and told CT he’ll “look forward to collaborating with each of them in order to advance the freedom of religion and belief around the world.

“There will, as always, be divergent points of view on certain ideas, policies, and strategies, but international religious freedom continues to be—and must remain—almost entirely bipartisan,” he said. “In fact, it must be nonpartisan. I intend on doing my part to keep it so.”

Kori Porter, CEO of CSW USA, told CT she “warmly welcomes” Hussein and his “excellent track record speaking out in support of religious minorities and against laws that violate freedom of religion or belief, including blasphemy laws.

“His nomination is an encouraging sign of the importance that the Biden administration places on religious freedom, which is particularly welcome as the world tackles the pandemic and worsening inequalities and rights violations,” she said. “We hope that Mr. Hussein will build on the excellent work of former ambassadors, particularly Ambassadors Saperstein and Brownback, in raising the profile of this fundamental human right.”

Thomas Schirrmacher, secretary general of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), told CT the alliance has had “great experience with Muslim friends filling strategic religious freedom positions,” such as Ahmed Shaheed, the current UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief (interviewed by CT here). The WEA is currently “building a strong global alliance with major Muslim actors who fight for religious freedom,” he said, evidenced by a joint statement and book release with Indonesia’s Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) at a DC event adjacent to Brownback’s IRF summit.

“With Rashad, we get one of the most experienced diplomats in dealing with concerned governments, so there is no need for him to warm up,” said Schirrmacher. “He can start to change things tomorrow.” Jack Jenkins, Kathryn Post, and Joseph Hammond reported for RNS. Additional reporting by Jeremy Weber for CT.

U.S. SENATE SHOULD QUICKLY AFFIRM TEXAN RASHAD HUSSAIN AS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AMBASSADOR

<https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2021/10/21/the-us-senate-should-quickly-affirm-texan-rashad-hussain-as-religious-freedom-ambassador/>

By Bob Roberts and Chris Seiple
The Dallas Morning News, *October 21, 2021*

Since Roger Williams founded America’s first Baptist church in Rhode Island in 1638, Americans have understood religious freedom to not only be the right thing to

When the state forces people to believe something they don’t want to, the state violates the most precious gift of God—liberty of conscience—and it creates resentment against the state. Williams’ solution was simple: Let people believe whatever they want, and gain greater loyalty to the state. In other words, religious freedom is good for society, and for security.

In 1998, Congress voted unanimously to create the position of the U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. Religious freedom is not so much a bipartisan issue as it is a nonpartisan issue: it is in the marrow of our bones to defend someone’s right to disagree with us. It is what most makes us American.

We should know: we are a 6th generation Texan whose ancestor fought at the Alamo (Bob Roberts), and the fourth of eight Marines in two generations of Seiples, whose father served as the first U.S. ambassador for international religious freedom (Chris Seiple). Together, we have worked with our government across administrations and politics, working with every religious freedom ambassador and around the world for a religious freedom that protects the conscience and ensures the security of all citizens.

Soon the U.S. Senate will consider President Joe Biden’s nomination for ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom, Rashad Hussain, a Texan who grew up in Plano. We have known and worked with him for many years. He is a trusted and experienced diplomat and national security expert, having worked to protect our national security at the White House, Department of State, and Depart-

ment of Justice in the past three presidential administrations, for Democrats and a Republican.

For example, Rashad led America's successful effort to eliminate the "Defamation of Religions" U.N. resolution, a sort of global blasphemy law. He has led many multifaith delegations and diplomatic missions to places such as the Central African Republic, Egypt, Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan to help protect vulnerable religious communities; and he actively supported visits by religious leaders to Holocaust sites to combat antisemitism. He has also worked as a national security law enforcement officer on counter-terrorism matters.

That Hussain happens to be a Muslim is a bonus. His service in this role, and his honorable record of public service, exemplify the deep and widespread contributions that Muslim Americans make to our country on a daily basis, in all walks of life.

As the first Muslim to serve in this role, Hussain would send a strong signal rejecting despicable anti-Muslim discrimination, stereotyping and hatred that we have seen in America and abroad. And, we should note, he is the perfect person to visibly and vocally defend the rights of religious minorities, especially Christians, in some Muslim-majority contexts that have struggled to promote religious freedom—as we have witnessed him do throughout his career.

Because of these combined attributes, Hussain has the trust and support of interfaith groups and civil society across religious and political spectrums, including the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, and Jewish and Christian leaders. We urge the rapid and unanimous confirmation of him.

If confirmed to this role, Hussain will be the focal point for the American fight against global restrictions on religious freedom, which is at an all-time high. The Pew Research Center's global study of restrictions on religion found in 2019 that governments in 180 countries harassed religious groups in some way, and that 57 countries have "high" or "very high" levels of government restrictions on religion. Christians face restrictions in 153 countries globally, the most of any religious group. Some religious communities are being subjected to horrific acts of genocide and crimes against humanity, including in places like China and Myanmar.

The United States was not founded for a particular creed or race or tribe; it was founded on the truth that all men are created equal and are endowed by their creator with unalienable rights. Roger Williams believed that liberty of conscience was the cornerstone of civilization. As we continue to strive to meet his vision, one thing is certain: The diversity and dynamism of our multifaith and multireligious society are a source of strength and an example for the world. Hussain will help keep it so.

Bob Roberts is the founder of GlocalNet, co-founder of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, senior global pastor at Northwood Church in Keller, and host of the Bold Love podcast.

Chris Seiple is president emeritus of the Institute for Global Engagement, a senior fellow at the University of Washington's Jackson School of International Studies, and global policy adviser to the executive leadership of the World Evangelical Alliance.

They wrote this column for *The Dallas Morning News*.

CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE WELCOMES NOMINATION OF US AMBASSADOR FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2021/08/03/press/5362/article.htm>

CSW warmly welcomes US President Joe Biden's nomination of Mr Rashad Hussain as the new US ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom.

Mr Hussain is the first Muslim to be nominated for the role, and has a proven track record of standing up for the right to freedom of religion or belief, particularly in combatting anti-semitism and hostility towards Christians and other religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries.

His previous roles include White House Counsel under President Barack Obama, US Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and US Special Envoy for the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications. His appointment as US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom still needs to be confirmed by the US Senate. Previous post-holders include US Senator Sam Brownback and Rabbi David Saperstein.

President Biden has also nominated prominent Holocaust historian Deborah Lipstadt as the next US Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, and two new commissioners to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). The nominees are Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, who served as a USCIRF commissioner in 2020, and Khizr Khan, a lawyer and Gold Star parent who spoke movingly at the Democratic National Convention in 2016 about his son's death.

CSW-USA's Chief Executive Kori Porter said: "CSW congratulates Rashad Hussain on his nomination as the next US ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom. The announcement is an encouraging indicator of the importance the Biden administration places on the fundamental right to freedom of religion or belief. We hope that Mr Hussain will build on the excellent work of his predecessors, and look forward to working closely with him in pursuit of the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief around the world."

CSW's Chief Executive Scot Bower said: "CSW welcomes the nomination of Rashad Hussain and urges the US Senate to confirm his appointment. Once in post we encourage Mr Hussain to pay close attention to the situation of freedom of religion or belief in China and Nigeria in particular, ensuring that egregious violations of this fundamental human right by the Chinese Communist Party, and by state and armed non-state actors in Nigeria, are kept high on the Biden administration's agenda."

WHY THE SENATE MUST FAST-TRACK BIDEN'S NOMINEE ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

WHILE RASHAD HUSSAIN'S CONFIRMATION WAITS,
MILLIONS ARE PERSECUTED FOR THEIR FAITH.

<https://religionnews.com/2021/10/13/why-the-senate-must-fast-track-bidens-nominee-on-religious-freedom/>

By David Curry¹

(Open Doors)—Since President Joe Biden's inauguration, religious freedom advocates urged the administration to prioritize the appointment of a new ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. The president listened to our pleas, and on July 30, Biden nominated Rashad Hussain, who currently serves as director for partnerships and global engagement at the National Security Council.

Hussain is unable to step into his new role until he is officially confirmed by the United States Senate. But the legislative body is facing a ludicrous backlog of nominees also awaiting a hearing, and it could take months—if not years—for Hussain's name to be called.

This post is not a run-of-the-mill government desk job. The IRF ambassador plays a critical role in human rights advancement worldwide at a time when state-sanctioned religious persecution has reached alarming levels. The Senate must fast-track Hussain's confirmation.

According to Pew Forum's latest research, government restrictions on religion have steadily increased for over a decade. Social hostility toward people of faith remains high. Among the world's approximately 2.3 billion Christians, more than 340 million are at high risk of discrimination because of their beliefs.

Many high-profile religious freedom crises are well known. There's the ongoing genocide of Uyghur Muslims in northwest China, the targeted killing of thousands of Christians in Nigeria by Islamist militants, the use of blasphemy laws to imprison religious minorities in Pakistan and, most recently, the takeover of Afghanistan by the notoriously intolerant Taliban. Yet these instances represent only a fractional part of the overall problem.

This ambassadorship is no small-time appointment. The role serves as the locus for a myriad of efforts aimed at advancing a core human right that has declined in recent years. The U.S. State Department, and specifically the Office of Inter-

¹(David Curry is president and CEO of Open Doors USA, which advocates on behalf of those who are persecuted for their Christian faith. Follow on Twitter @OpenDoors. For more than 60 years, Open Doors USA has worked in the world's most oppressive and restrictive countries for Christians. Open Doors works to equip and encourage Christians living in dangerous circumstances with the threat of persecution and equips the Western church to advocate for the persecuted. Christians are one of the most persecuted religious groups in the world and are oppressed in at least 60 countries. For more information, visit OpenDoorsUSA.org.)

national Religious Freedom, compiles an annual report documenting concerns in nearly every country on earth. Most of the issues documented will never receive significant media attention and, if not for the State Department's report, would never be compiled into a single, easy to find repository.

For outside observers, it may not be clear what the IRF ambassador does, beyond making public appearances and giving remarks calling for greater protections for religious freedom. This public role is an important task in its own right, but it's only a small part of the job. Much of the substantive work takes place in the relationships built by the IRF ambassador, both foreign and domestic. When reports emerge of Rohingya Muslims being driven from their homes in Myanmar, or of a Hindu family attacked for their faith in Pakistan, it is the IRF ambassador and the ambassador's team who often lead the way in focusing U.S. attention and bringing relief for the victims. In areas where government action may be limited, the IRF ambassador and the ambassador's office help connect faith leaders and nongovernmental organizations with the resources they need to make a difference.

Hussain is undeniably qualified to step into these important shoes. He's an Ivy League-educated attorney, a professor at Georgetown Law School and the former U.S. special envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation under President Barack Obama. His nomination was roundly welcomed by advocates from across the religious and political spectrum, and no political leader on either side of the aisle has articulated a compelling reason not to confirm him to the post.

To Beltway insiders in Washington, D.C., it may seem motivated by special interest to call for the prioritization of the IRF ambassador confirmation. After all, hundreds of positions remain unfilled across the U.S. government. Yet it is exactly positions like this one, which address critical human rights concerns and enjoy broad bipartisan support, that should be prioritized.

The situation for many people of faith around the world is bleak. Delaying urgent efforts to aid them is unconscionable, no matter which party you're from.

ERLC (ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION) COMMENDS FILLING OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM POST

<https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/erlc-commends-filling-of-religious-freedom-post/>

BY TOM STRODE, POSTED AUGUST 3, 2021 IN ERLC

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission commended President Biden's proposed filling of a vital executive branch post in the effort to protect people of faith around the world.

Biden announced July 30 the nomination of Rashad Hussain as ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Hussain—director for partnerships and global engagement at the National Security Council—will be the first Muslim to serve in the position since it was created in 1998 as part of the International Religious Freedom Act.

The action came as the ERLC and other religious freedom advocates are urging the U.S. House of Representatives to approve legislation to combat China's genocidal campaign against Uyghur Muslims in the western part of the country. The U.S. Senate passed July 14 the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which would prohibit products made with forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region from being introduced into the American market. The House passed a similar bill nearly unanimously last September before the measure died in the Senate.

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting adopted a resolution June 15 that condemned the Chinese Community Party's treatment of the Uyghurs and called for the U.S. government to take "concrete actions" to end the genocide. The SBC reportedly became the first Christian denomination to denounce China's campaign against the Uyghurs as genocide.

"One need only take a brief survey of the globe to see how religious freedom is under assault in multiple countries," the ERLC's Brent Leatherwood said in written comments. "We have long called for America to be a bold voice for liberty against these oppressive regimes. Taking steps such as passing the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act helps us project that voice.

"Similarly, naming a U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom helps us to consistently use that voice," said Leatherwood, the ERLC's vice president of external affairs and chief of staff. "We appreciate the Biden administration prioritizing this appointment, and we stand ready to work with Mr. Hussain upon

his confirmation to advance the fundamental human right of religious freedom internationally.”

The ambassador-at-large serves as the primary adviser to the secretary of state regarding global religious liberty and also advises the president. He supervises the State Department’s office of international religious freedom. If confirmed, Hussain will become the sixth person to fill the post since it was established 23 years ago. Sam Brownback, the previous ambassador-at-large, served during the last three years of the Trump administration.

Biden also nominated Deborah Lipstadt as the special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism. The Senate must confirm Lipstadt, professor of modern Jewish history and Holocaust studies at Emory University in Atlanta. She also was the founding director of the Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory. She would become the fifth special envoy since Congress established the anti-Semitism position in 2004. A law elevating the post to the level of an ambassador was enacted in January of this year.

In addition, the president appointed two members to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF): Khizr Khan, founder of the Constitution Literacy and National Unity Project, and Sharon Kleinbaum, rabbi of Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in New York City.

USCIRF, a bipartisan, nine-member commission, and the Religious Freedom Institute (RFI) applauded the nominations of Hussain and Lipstadt.

USCIRF’s commissioners “look forward to working closely with Rashad Hussain and Dr. Deborah Lipstadt, once confirmed, to develop new ways for the United States to promote the freedom of religion or belief around the world,” said Nadine Maenza, the commission’s chair, in a news release. “Global religious freedom violations continue to be a pervasive threat to our national security and global stability.”

The ambassador-at-large and special envoy “play an essential role in U.S. efforts to counter that threat,” she said.

Thomas Farr, RFI’s president, said his organization offered to the Biden administration in January its policy recommendations for global religious liberty, including the qualifications for a productive ambassador-at-large.

Hussain “admirably meets these standards,” Farr said in a written statement. “If America fails to defend the precious right of religious freedom—historically understood in our nation as the ‘first freedom’—who else will defend it?”

During the Obama administration, Hussain served as special envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and special envoy for strategic counterterrorism communications.

Khan, a Muslim, is a lawyer and author whose son, U.S. Army Captain Humayun Khan, was killed in 2004 while serving in Iraq and received the Bronze Star with valor.

Kleinbaum—who was appointed by Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer to a previous USCIRF term—has led her congregation to “become a powerful voice in the movement for equality and justice for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions,” according to the congregation’s website. In addition to her advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) rights, she is in a same-sex marriage to Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers.

R. Albert Mohler Jr. president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, questioned on his podcast Tuesday (Aug. 3) whether Kleinbaum would protect religious freedom in a clash with LGBTQ rights.

“Given her well-documented activism and her position on these issues, it’s very unlikely that this rabbi would support religious liberty when it comes to something like the threat of the Equality Act inside the United States, much less around the world, where the United States under the State Department of the Biden administration is putting pressure on nations all over the world to adopt the basic understanding of the LGBTQ revolution,” Mohler said, according to a transcript of “The Briefing.”

The House of Representatives passed the Equality Act in February, but the Senate has yet to act on it. The bill is a far-reaching gay and transgender rights proposal that opponents warn would have calamitous effects on freedom of religion and conscience, as well as protections for women, girls and unborn children.

Khan and Kleinbaum replaced Trump appointees Gary Bauer and Johnnie Moore on USCIRF.

USCIRF, which is made up of nine commissioners selected by the president and congressional leaders, tracks the status of religious liberty worldwide and issues reports to Congress, the president and the State Department.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONCERN (ICC)
URGES CONFIRMATION OF RASHAD HUSSAIN

PRESIDENT BIDEN ANNOUNCES NOMINEES TO KEY INTERNATIONAL
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ROLES

<https://www.persecution.org/2021/07/30/president-biden-announces-nominees-to-key-international-religious-freedom-roles/>

07/30/2021 Washington, D.C. (*International Christian Concern*)—International Christian Concern (ICC) has learned that President Joe Biden has announced his intent to nominate four individuals to key international religious freedom roles in his administration. The roles to be filled include the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom (IRF), the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and two Commissioners of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

Rashad Hussain, Biden's nominee for IRF Ambassador, currently serves as Director for Partnerships and Global Engagement at the National Security Council. Hussain also served in the Obama administration, where he spearheaded efforts on countering antisemitism and protecting religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries. If confirmed, Hussain would follow in the footsteps of Samuel Brownback, who served in the role under the Trump administration and was widely celebrated in advancing the cause of international religious freedom.

The two nominees for USCIRF Commissioners, Khizr Khan and Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, both have a background in human rights advocacy. Khan immigrated to the United States in 1980 and founded the Constitution Literacy and National Unity Project. He is also a Harvard Law School graduate and is licensed to practice law before the Supreme Court.

Rabbi Kleinbaum serves as spiritual leader of Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in New York. She also serves as a Commissioner on New York City's Commission on Human Rights and NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio's Faith-Based Advisory Council.

Deborah Lipstadt, Biden's nominee for Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, also has a strong background in advocacy against persecution and founded the Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory University.

In response to the new nominations, Matias Perttula, Director of Advocacy at ICC, said, "We here at ICC are excited to see a nomination for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom from the Biden administration. We hope to see a smooth confirmation process and look forward to working with Rashad Hussain to advance religious freedom globally."

AJC (AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE) APPLAUDS NOMINATION OF
RASHAD HUSSAIN TO HEAD OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM

<https://www.ajc.org/news/ajc-applauds-nomination-of-rashad-hussain-to-head-office-of-international-religious-freedom>

July 30, 2021—New York

American Jewish Committee (AJC) praised the Biden Administration for nominating today Rashad Hussain as United States Ambassador at-Large for International Religious Freedom. He will be the first Muslim to serve in this position.

"Rashad Hussain is an impressive advocate of freedom of religion or belief in challenging diplomatic contexts," said AJC CEO David Harris. "He is an ally in the global fight against antisemitism, including in his extensive engagement with the Muslim world, and an experienced advocate for building stronger Muslim-Jewish relations."

Hussain served as U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation under President Obama. He has been an active supporter of the Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council, co-convened by American Jewish Committee.

The Office of International Religious Freedom in the U.S. Department of State was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

INTER JEWISH MUSLIM ALLIANCE LETTER SUPPORTING
CONFIRMATION OF RASHAD HUSSAIN

<https://www.ijma-alliance.org/post/ijma-rashad-letter>

IJMA—INTER JEWISH MUSLIM ALLIANCE
September 28, 2021

U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6225

DEAR CHAIRMAN MENENDEZ AND RANKING MEMBER RISCH, We are writing as a bipartisan coalition of American Jewish and Muslim leaders, and others, to express our full and enthusiastic support for the nomination of Rashad Hussain to be the next U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

Ambassador Hussain was a founding member in 2019 of a national coalition of American Jews and Muslims, the Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance or IJMA. We at IJMA know Rashad well. He has worked for years both in government and in civil society on issues of international religious freedom. He has advocated for specific measures and programs to address antisemitism in Muslim-majority countries, to protect Christian and Muslim minorities throughout the world, and to combat religious bigotry regardless of its source. He works effectively with a very diverse range of persons and organizations, across lines of party and religion, as he demonstrated in IJMA and beyond.

The Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance or IJMA was founded in January 2019 by individuals and communal organizations of the two communities, to work together on projects that serve the interests of the entire nation. We promote understanding, civility and comity between our two communities as a model of American pluralism. One of our priority projects is addressing bigotry in each community directed towards the other community, through outreach and educational efforts. We address the most difficult issues in the Muslim-Jewish relationship. For instance, during the latest conflict between Israel and Hamas in May of this year, IJMA members unanimously agreed to a public statement against antisemitism and expressing sympathy for the victims of the conflict, the only Muslim-Jewish statement of its kind.

US leadership on international religious freedom is urgently needed today, following deadly threats to minorities in Afghanistan, ongoing antisemitism in Europe and the Middle East, anti-Muslim oppression in China and Myanmar, and renewed violence against Christians in Africa and beyond. Rashad provided personal and policy leadership to our civil society group. We look forward to his ability to serve in this new role, once confirmed by the Senate, representing our nation as the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

SINCERELY,

The Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance (IJMA)

Mohamed Abubakr, President of the
African Middle Eastern Leadership
Project

Atiya Aftab, co-founder of the Sisterhood
of Salaam-Shalom

Majid Alsayegh, Chairman of the
Dialogue Institute

Wa'el Alzayat, CEO of Emgage
Foundation

Adnan Ansari, Executive Director of
Muflehun

Imam Abdullah Antepli, Duke
University professor and co-director of
Muslim Leadership Initiative of the
Shalom Hartman Institute

Marshall Breger, Professor of Law at
Catholic University

Dr. Georgette Bennett, Founder &
President, Tanenbaum Center for
Interreligious Understanding and
Founder, Multifaith Alliance for
Syrian Refugees

Rabia Chaudry, attorney and author

Richard S. Cohen, President of President
of The Walden Group and Marcia's
Light Foundation

Richard Foltin, religious freedom writer
and consultant

Megan Hallahan, Executive Director of
the African Middle Eastern Leadership
Project

S.A. Ibrahim, former CEO of Radian
Group Inc. and interfaith leader

Rizwan Jaka, Chair of Interfaith &
Government Relations, All Dulles Area
Muslim Society

Humera Khan, President of Muflehun

Suhail Khan, External Affairs Director,
Microsoft Corp. and Vice President,
IJMA

Moses Libitzky, President of Libitzky
Property Companies of San Francisco

Maital Friedman, co-director of Muslim
Leadership Initiative of the Shalom
Hartman Institute

Imam Mohamed Magid, All Dulles Area Muslim Society and Chairman of Interfaith Peace Corps	Ann Schroeder, CEO of Global Source Partners, and board member of Dialogue Institute
Rabbi Jack Moline	Imam Talib Shareef, Masjid Muhammad, the Nation's Mosque and Vice Commander of the Muslim Americans Veterans Association
Sharon Nazarian, Senior Vice President for International Affairs, Anti-Defamation League (ADL)	Robert Silverman, Lecturer at Shalem College and President, IJMA
Melanie Nezer, immigration and refugee policy expert	Halie Soifer, Executive Director of the Jewish Democratic Council of America
Sheryl Olitzky, co-founder of the Sisterhood of Salaam-Shalom	
Rabbi David Saperstein, former Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom	

ADL—JONATHAN GREENBLATT

@JGreenblattADL

Congratulations to Rashad Hussain for his historic nomination for @IRF—Ambassador at Large, and to Rabbi @Skleinbaum and @KMKhan—Law on being appointed as @USCIRF commissioners. @ADL's Task Force on Middle East Minorities looks forward to working with you

ADL—SHARON NAZARIAN, SENIOR VP, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

@sharon—nazarian

I proudly joined this coalition letter of American Muslim and Jewish leaders writing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to express our enthusiastic support for the nomination of Rashad Hussain to be the next US @IRF—Ambassador

THE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE (RFI) APPLAUDS PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN'S NOMINATION OF RASHAD HUSSAIN AS AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

NORTH AMERICA ACTION TEAM, PRESS RELEASE

<https://www.religiousfreedominstitute.org/news/biden-administration-announces-key-international-religious-freedom-appointments>

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE / TOM FARR
August 2, 2021

The Religious Freedom Institute (RFI) applauds President Joe Biden's nomination of Rashad Hussain as Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, and calls upon the Senate to confirm his appointment as soon as possible.

"This is a critically important position in American foreign policy," said RFI President Tom Farr. "We want President Biden and his administration to succeed at advancing religious freedom abroad. An increase in religious freedom will aid the victims of religious persecution, increase human and social flourishing, enhance global stability, and benefit American national security. RFI will continue to work with Biden administration officials to achieve these goals."

Farr went on to say, "We are in the midst of a global crisis of religious freedom, which makes U.S. leadership critical. RFI provided its recommendations for international religious freedom policy to the Biden administration in January 2021, including the qualifications needed for an effective ambassador at large. Rashad Hussain admirably meets these standards. If America fails to defend the precious right of religious freedom—historically understood in our nation as the 'first freedom'—who else will defend it?"

"Rashad Hussain is a wise choice for International Religious Freedom Ambassador, and I commend the Biden administration for the speed with which it made the nomination. Hussain is eminently qualified for the position, and as a man of

faith, he understands that religious freedom is important because religion is important,” said Ismail Royer, Director of RFI’s Religious Freedom Action Team.

**ELIJAH BROWN, GENERAL SECRETARY AND CEO OF
THE BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE**

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

Elijah Brown, general secretary and CEO of the Baptist World Alliance, told CT that the nomination is a “strategic development” because Hussain “brings a depth of experience across all three branches of the US government and a wide array of faith-based initiatives including Baptist-Muslim conversations.

**THOMAS SCHIRRMACHER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE (WEA)**

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

“With Rashad, we get one of the most experienced diplomats in dealing with concerned governments, so there is no need for him to warm up,” said Schirmacher. “He can start to change things tomorrow.”

[Schirmacher] has had “great experience with Muslim friends filling strategic religious freedom positions,” such as Ahmed Shaheed, the current UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief (interviewed by CT here). The WEA is currently “building a strong global alliance with major Muslim actors who fight for religious freedom,” he said, evidenced by a joint statement and book release with Indonesia’s Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) at a DC event adjacent to Brownback’s IRF summit.

**KORI PORTER AND SCOTT BOWER, CEOS OF CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE**

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2021/08/03/press/5362/article.htm>

Kori Porter: “[I] warmly welcome” Hussain and his “excellent track record speaking out in support of religious minorities and against laws that violate freedom of religion or belief, including blasphemy laws.

“His nomination is an encouraging sign of the importance that the Biden administration places on religious freedom, which is particularly welcome as the world tackles the pandemic and worsening inequalities and rights violations,” she said. “We hope that Mr. Hussein will build on the excellent work of former ambassadors, particularly Ambassadors Saperstein and Brownback, in raising the profile of this fundamental human right.”

Scot Bower: “CSW welcomes the nomination of Rashad Hussain and urges the US Senate to confirm his appointment. Once in post we encourage Mr Hussain to pay close attention to the situation of freedom of religion or belief in China and Nigeria in particular, ensuring that egregious violations of this fundamental human right by the Chinese Communist Party, and by state and armed non-state actors in Nigeria, are kept high on the Biden administration’s agenda.”

**AJC APPLAUDS APPOINTMENT OF RASHAD HUSSAIN TO HEAD
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

<https://www.ajc.org/news/ajc-applauds-appointment-of-rashad-hussain-to-head-office-of-international-religious-freedom>

“Rashad Hussain is an impressive advocate of freedom of religion or belief in challenging diplomatic contexts,” said AJC CEO David Harris. “He is an ally in the glob-

al fight against antisemitism, including in is extensive engagement with the Muslim world, and an experienced advocate for building stronger Muslim-Jewish relations.”

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONCERN/PERSECUTION.ORG—FORMER
DIPLOMAT AND DOJ ATTORNEY RASHAD HUSSAIN NOMINATED FOR
IRF AMBASSADOR

<https://www.persecution.org/2021/08/02/former-diplomat-doj-attorney-rashad-hussain-nominated-irf-ambassador/>

08/02/2021 United States (International Christian Concern)—The Biden administration has nominated a new Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom. Rashad Hussain is entering the confirmation process and is expected to be confirmed after which he will join the Department of State’s Office of International Religious Freedom. Hussain brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the position of IRF Ambassador. He is an attorney who served as an associate White House Counsel and as the United States Special Envoy to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation under then President Barack Obama. Hussain also served in the Department of Justice as a trial attorney as well as a criminal and national security prosecutor. He has developed key partnerships and relationships abroad throughout his career and is well postured to press US interests in international religious freedom.

Hussain was born in Wyoming to Indian American parents and would be the first Muslim to hold the post of IRF Ambassador. His educational background includes the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Harvard, and Yale.

“At International Christian Concern we are excited to see the Biden administration nominate Rashad Hussain for the post of Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and are praying for a successful confirmation process as well as a strong continuation of Ambassador Brownback’s legacy in international religious freedom. Christians in India, Pakistan, China, North Korea, Nigeria and across the Middle East need strong advocates in the United States to lead on advancing their fundamental human right to follow Jesus,” said Matias Perttula, Director of Advocacy at International Christian Concern.

OPEN DOORS USA URGES SWIFT CONFIRMATION OF PRESIDENT
BIDEN’S PICK FOR AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/religious-freedom-newsroom/press-kits/>

August 2, 2021

SANTA ANA, Calif.—David Curry, CEO of Christian persecution watchdog organization Open Doors USA urges a swift appointment of Rashad Hussain, President Biden’s nomination for the role of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, announced today.

“Open Doors has repeatedly called on the Biden Administration to fill these critical roles to international religious freedom, and we are heartened by today’s nominations. Rashad Hussain is a well-qualified nominee with a deep understanding of the factors at play in China, India and elsewhere. We look forward to building together the diverse coalition of leadership necessary to counter the rising tide of religious persecution worldwide,” said Curry.

Curry said, “Mr. Hussain’s expertise could play a major role in addressing some of the most challenging issues facing Christians, especially in the Middle East and West Africa. We urge the Senate to take action on religious freedom by confirming his nomination quickly.”

The Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is the key coordinator for U.S. government policy on the persecution of religious communities around the world. Without multinational leadership committed to advocating for religious freedom, Curry says the condition of persecuted groups is not likely to improve anytime soon.

Open Doors asserts top priorities for any new International Religious Freedom Ambassador must include the extreme violence against Christians in Nigeria, the genocide against Uyghur Muslims in China, and the deterioration of religious freedoms in India, among others. The core of religious freedom is a call for equality,

tolerance and acceptance for all people of faith, no matter how or whether they choose to believe.

Isaac Six, Director of Advocacy for Open Doors USA, said, “We’re glad to see the White House answer the call of Open Doors USA and many other groups who have been advocating for a qualified appointment to this position since the start of the Biden administration.”

“We also welcome the nomination of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism and the appointment of two new USCIRF Commissioners. We urge Senator McConnell to fill the last remaining vacancy on the Commission in a timely manner,” said Six.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION COMMENDS FILLING OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM POST

<https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/erlc-commends-filling-of-religious-freedom-post/>

August 3, 2021

The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission commended President Biden’s proposed filling of a vital executive branch post in the effort to protect people of faith around the world.

Biden announced July 30 the nomination of Rashad Hussain as ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Hussain—director for partnerships and global engagement at the National Security Council—will be the first Muslim to serve in the position since it was created in 1998 as part of the International Religious Freedom Act.

The action came as the ERLC and other religious freedom advocates are urging the U.S. House of Representatives to approve legislation to combat China’s genocidal campaign against Uyghur Muslims in the western part of the country. The U.S. Senate passed July 14 the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which would prohibit products made with forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region from being introduced into the American market. The House passed a similar bill nearly unanimously last September before the measure died in the Senate.

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention’s annual meeting adopted a resolution June 15 that condemned the Chinese Community Party’s treatment of the Uyghurs and called for the U.S. government to take “concrete actions” to end the genocide. The SBC reportedly became the first Christian denomination to denounce China’s campaign against the Uyghurs as genocide.

“One need only take a brief survey of the globe to see how religious freedom is under assault in multiple countries,” the ERLC’s Brent Leatherwood said in written comments. “We have long called for America to be a bold voice for liberty against these oppressive regimes. Taking steps such as passing the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act . helps us project that voice.

“Similarly, naming a U.S. ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom helps us to consistently use that voice,” said Leatherwood, the ERLC’s vice president of external affairs and chief of staff. “We appreciate the Biden administration prioritizing this appointment, and we stand ready to work with Mr. Hussain upon his confirmation to advance the fundamental human right of religious freedom internationally.”

JOHNNIE MOORE, FORMER USCIRF COMMISSIONER AND SPOKESMAN FOR PRESIDENT TRUMP’S EVANGELICAL ADVISERS

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

Former USCIRF commissioner and spokesman for President Trump’s evangelical advisers Johnnie Moore congratulated Hussain and the other appointees and told CT he’ll “look forward to collaborating with each of them in order to advance the freedom of religion and belief around the world.

“There will, as always, be divergent points of view on certain ideas, policies, and strategies, but international religious freedom continues to be—and must remain—al-

most entirely bipartisan,” he said. “In fact, it must be nonpartisan. I intend on doing my part to keep it so.”

JIM WALLIS
@jimwallis

Aug 4

I fully support the nomination of Rashad Hussain by @POTUS to be @IRF—Ambassador He has significant experience, depth of perspective, and broad concerns for people of all faiths. I’ve seen first hand his ability to relate to a broad cross section of very diverse people.

KNOX THAMES

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

Knox Thames, who served as the State Department’s special advisor for religious minorities during both the Obama and Trump administrations, told CT that Hussain was “a strong pick.”

“He knows human rights and cares about religious freedom,” said Thames. “I saw firsthand how he raised these issues when he served as [OIC envoy]. I know he’ll be able to hit the ground running from day one to combat religious persecution.”

INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

“The task of advancing religious freedom is best done when all faiths work together,” James Chen, vice president of global operations at the Institute for Global Engagement, told CT. “So the Biden administration’s appointment of Mr. Hussain is encouraging to see.”

CHRIS SEIPLE, PRESIDENT EMERITUS, INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT & GLOBAL POLICY ADVISER TO THE WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

<https://twitter.com/CSeiple/status/1451148806876286978>

“@SenateDems should unanimously confirm Rashad Hussein as next US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. Rashad embodies and firmly believes in liberty of conscience for everyone, everywhere. With @bobrobertsjr @dallasnews”

BOB ROBERTS, SENIOR PASTOR OF NORTHWOOD CHURCH AND FOUNDER OF MULTI-FAITH NEIGHBORS NETWORK

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

Bob Roberts, global senior pastor of Northwood Church and founder of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, told CT he was “so excited” for Hussain’s nomination.

“He will be incredible. He’s a wise man of character,” said Roberts. “Him being a Muslim is a very positive thing, in that he will be able to walk into sensitive places in the world and be unparalleled in his ability to understand, speak to issues, and challenge right actions.”

“We’ve had Christians in that role and a rabbi in David Saperstein,” he said. “A Muslim is a good choice.”

RANDEL EVERETT, FOUNDER AND PASTOR OF 21WILBERFORCE

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

“President Biden’s appointment of a Muslim [IRF ambassador] is a reminder that the US position on religious freedom has always been for people of all faiths and even for those who express no particular faith,” Randel Everett, founder and president of 21Wilberforce, told CT.

“I join with many others in urging Congress to quickly confirm [him] to this ambassadorship,” he said, “as many—especially in light of the ongoing global pandemic—face unprecedented restrictions as they seek to live out their faith convictions.”

**JEREMY BARKER, MIDDLE EAST PROGRAM DIRECTOR,
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE**

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

Jeremy Barker, the Erbil-based Middle East program director at the Religious Freedom Institute, told CT that Hussain is “a great choice” who has “done serious security and diplomatic policy work which will be vital in advancing religious freedom within an administration that had said it wants to prioritize human rights within its foreign policy.

“He is also a person of faith who takes his own religion seriously and understands that religious persecution strikes at something fundamental to an individual or community,” said Barker.

“International religious freedom has been and should remain an issue with overwhelming bipartisan support. The Senate should move quickly to get Mr. Hussain confirmed and in the job,” he said. “The work is too important to be left undone and the Biden administration is to be commended for putting a qualified nominee forward early in the process.”

**PAUL MARSHALL, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CHAIR, INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES OF RELIGION, BAYLOR UNIVERSITY**

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

“President Biden is to be congratulated for having moved relatively quickly in nominating people for religious freedom related posts,” Paul Marshall, a veteran IRF scholar and author and the religious freedom chair at the Institute for Studies of Religion at Baylor University, told CT. He noted that Lipstadt is “a skilled veteran” and that Hussein’s envoy roles had “shown both his abilities and his commitment to religious freedom.”

“Having a Muslim in the religious freedom ambassadorship may allay the canard that this is simply a sop to the religious right,” said Marshall, currently a senior fellow at the DC-based Religious Freedom Institute and the Jakarta-based Leimena Institute.

NADINE MAENZA, CHAIR OF THE US COMMISSION ON
INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM (USCIRF)

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

“We look forward to working closely with [them] to develop new ways for the United States to promote the freedom of religion or belief around the world,” she stated in a press release. “Global religious freedom violations continue to be a pervasive threat to our national security and global stability. [They] play an essential role in US efforts to counter that threat.”

JUDD BIRDSALL

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/july/rashad-hussain-irf-ambassador-religious-freedom-uscirf-khan.html>

Judd Birdsall, a senior research fellow at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University who served with Hussain at the State Department from 2009-2011, told CT that the nomination is a “fantastic choice” because Hussain has “impeccable credentials, extensive diplomatic and legal experience, and unique credibility as a Muslim American.”

“I greatly respected his thoughtful, humble, and capacious approach to all things religion and diplomacy, including the promotion of religious freedom,” said Birdsall. “He understands the religious minority experience and is a passionate advocate for all those who suffer on account of their beliefs.”

Also noteworthy is the speed of the nomination, coming at a similar pace to President Donald Trump’s selection of Brownback as IRF ambassador after just six months.

“The most tangible measure of an administration’s commitment to international religious freedom is the quality of its IRF ambassador nominee and the speed with which it makes that nomination,” Birdsall told CT. “Whereas President Bush took 14 months to announce his nominee for the job and Obama took 17, Biden is strongly signaling his commitment to the issue by taking only seven months to announce an outstanding nominee.

“By nominating a Muslim to serve as IRF ambassador, the Biden administration is decisively turning the page on an era in which a perception of anti-Muslim sentiment undermined the nation’s reputation on religious freedom,” he said. “Rashad Hussain will help to restore America’s credibility as a champion of tolerance and inclusion.”

**Material Submitted Supporting the Confirmation of Rashad Hussain to be
Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom**

Submitted by The International Religious Freedom Roundtable



The Honorable Bob Menendez
Chairman of the Committee
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member of the Committee
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

We write as an informal group of organizations and individuals who are scholars, religious and secular leaders, human rights advocates and practitioners to urge your full support for the immediate confirmation of Rashad Hussain as the new Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

While we hold a broad diversity of theological views and political positions, we all agree on the importance of international religious freedom. According to the Pew Research Center's most recent report on government restrictions on religion, the median level of restrictions globally now is at its highest since Pew began tracking these trends in 2007.¹ For example, Uyghur Muslims in China face intrusive surveillance, imprisonment, and forced labor, Christian and Yazidi communities in the Middle East are threatened with destruction, and the Rohingya in Burma continue to be targets of government and societal violence. With these rising threats and numerous other pressing dangers to fundamental and universal human rights, it is vital that an Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is swiftly confirmed.

Religious freedom strengthens cultures and provides the foundation for stable democracies and their components, including civil society, economic growth, and social harmony. As such, it is also an effective counter-terrorism weapon as it pre-emptively undermines religious extremism. History and modern scholarship make it clear that where people are allowed to practice their faith freely, they are less likely to be alienated from the government, and more likely to be good citizens.

It is vitally important that this position be filled as soon as possible. For even as we speak, the cause of religious freedom finds itself in an increasingly precarious position, as we see restrictions on religion rising around the world. In addition to the rising level of government

¹ *Government restrictions on religion rise globally*. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. (2020, November 12). <https://www.pewforum.org/2020/11/10/in-2018-government-restrictions-on-religion-reach-highest-level-globally-in-more-than-a-decade/>

restrictions, the severity of these has been increasing as well; 28% of countries now have what PEW defines as “high” or “very high” levels of restrictions on religion.

Mr. Rashad Hussain is impeccably qualified for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. He has worked to promote religious freedom for people of all faiths for more than a decade, having served as U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation from 2010-2015 and U.S. Special Envoy for strategic counterterrorism communications from 2015-2017. He currently serves as the Director for Partnerships and Global Engagement at the U.S. National Security Council. Throughout his career, Mr. Hussain has shown a deep commitment to not only the global cause of religious freedom, but to performing his work with excellence. This is clearly demonstrated by his long-standing track record of protecting the Freedom of Religion and Belief:

- He received the Distinguished Honor Award in 2013 for his exceptional service to US government agencies.
- He collaborated with civil society and religious leaders on the [Marrakech Declaration](#), a resolution endorsed by over 300 major Muslim scholars calling for action to protect the rights of Christians and other minorities in Muslim-majority countries.
- He led negotiations to eliminate the OIC’s “[Defamation of Religions](#)” resolution at the United Nations that had supported blasphemy laws and criminalization of speech.
- He led interfaith delegations [to Egypt](#) to address mistreatment and discrimination against the country’s Coptic Christians; [to the Central African Republic](#) to address religious-based violence; and to Pakistan to address discriminatory policies and the mistreatment of the Ahmadi community.
- He has spearheaded efforts on countering antisemitism and protecting religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries, including traveling with two [delegations](#) of US and international imams to the [Holocaust sites](#).
- He has highlighted persecution of minority religious communities through visits to China, India, the Cox’s Bazaar Rohingya refugee camps, Bahrain, and a number of European nations.

We urge you now to swiftly move this nomination to the Senate floor and confirm Mr. Rashad Hussain as the new Ambassador- at-Large for International Religious Freedom. The appointment of the new IRF Ambassador will reaffirm the importance of this fundamental human right and assure persecuted communities that America continues to stand for their freedoms. In order to reach the solutions that our global challenges demand, it is vital that this position be filled.

Respectfully,

Greg Mitchell
Chair, International Religious Freedom Roundtable
Chair, IRF Secretariat

ORGANIZATIONS

AFRICA FAITH AND JUSTICE NETWORK

ALEVI PHILOSOPHY CENTER ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION FOR ADVANCEMENT OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR

BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

BEKTASHI COMMUNITY OF NORTHERN MACEDONIA

BELIEG-VIETNAM

BELLWETHER INTERNATIONAL

BOAT PEOPLE SOS

CAMPAIGN FOR UYGHURS

CENTER FOR PLURALISM

CHINA AID ASSOCIATION

CHURCHES FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY NATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

COORDINATION DES ASSOCIATIONS ET DES PARTICULIERS POUR LA LIBERTE DE

CON DAU PARISHIONERS ASSOCIATION

CONSCIENCE

CSW USA

FAITH & LIBERTY

GREAT TRUTH

GWCCCE

HUMAN RIGHTS WITHOUT FRONTIERS

HINDUS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

INDIAN AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL
INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
INTERFAITH COMMUNITY TREASURE COAST
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONCERN
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON NIGERIA
INTERNATIONAL INTERFAITH PEACE CORPS
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION TO PRESERVE HUMAN RIGHTS
JUNIOR SACERDOTAL COUNCIL OF CAO DAI
JUSTICE FOR ALL
LACUNA GROUP INTERNATIONAL
MINARET FOUNDATION
MUSLIM WOMEN SPEAKERS
OPEN DOORS USA
PARITY
RED EAGLE FREEDOM INSTITUTE
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM COALITION
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE
RUMI FORUM
STAND LEAGUE
THE UNION OF COUNCILS FOR JEWS IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION
UNITED MACEDONIAN DIASPORA
21WILBERFORCE

Individuals

With titles and organizations for identification purposes only

Colonel James E. Schaefer
Chaplain, U.S. Army (retd.)

Dogan Bermek
Alevi Philosophy Center

Dr. Ger FirsGerald
George Mason University

Dr. James C Wallace
Lacuna Group International

Dr. Judd Birdsall
Senior Research Fellow
Georgetown University

Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett
Lantos Foundation

Gary Van Kennen
Executive Committee New York State Council of Churches

Ghaidaa Heto
I-Strategic LLC

Hamid Gharagozloo
International Organization to Preserve Human Rights

Hanh Thai-Tang
Junior Sacerdotal Council of Caodai

İbrahim Anli
Rumi Forum

Isaac Six
Senior Director
Open Doors USA

Jeremy P. Barker
Director of the Middle East Action Team
Religious Freedom Institute

Kori Porter
CEO
CSW USA

Kyle Abts
Executive Director
International Committee on Nigeria

Larry Lerner
President
The Union of Councils for Jews in the former Soviet Union (UCSJ)

Mike Ghouse
Center for Pluralism

Mohamed Elsanousi
The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers

Osman Oztoprak
Alliance for Shared Values

Rasheed Ahmed
Indian American Muslim Council

Reverend Elijah M. Brown, PhD
General Secretary and CEO
Baptist World Alliance

Reverend Lydia Gonzalez
GWCCCE

Reverend Marian Edmonds-Allen
Parity

Reverend Sue Taylor
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office

Scott Morgan
Red Eagle Enterprises

Sydney Kochan
Special Projects Coordinator
Jubilee Campaign

Thang Nguyen
CEO and President
Boat People SOS

Thierry Valle
President
Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience

Tony Tran
Con Dau Parishioners Association

William Jay Murray
President
Religious Freedom Coalition

Submitted by Multifaith International Religious Freedom Advocates

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Menendez
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign
Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

October 25, 2021

Dear Senators Schumer, McConnell, Menendez and Risch:

We, the undersigned leaders and international religious freedom advocates in American Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities, are writing to strongly support the confirmation of Rashad Hussain for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. We have worked alongside and followed Special Envoy Hussain's pioneering work on advancing religious freedom since he was Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 2010. Special Envoy Hussain's experience working with religious leaders will be uniquely valuable in advancing religious freedom of persecuted Christian, Jewish, and other minorities.

As part of his experience working with governments, civil society, and multilateral organizations around the world, Hussain has been a champion for human rights, countering extremist violence, and promoting peace through partnerships. He has worked in all three branches of government and presently serves in the National Security Council, returning to the White House following five years at the Justice Department's National Security Division. We are confident that Hussain will be a fierce advocate for religious freedom, as he was when he was the OIC Envoy.

Special Envoy Hussain has played a leading role in working with government and civil society in efforts to protect the rights of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and other religious minorities around the world. This work has taken him – often with interfaith delegations he has led – on religious freedom missions to address difficult circumstances in a number of countries, including Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Egypt, China, and Bangladesh. Consistent with these efforts, in 2011, he led an effort at the UN Human Rights Council to remove and replace the "Defamation of Religions" resolution that for years supported criminalization of speech and the use of blasphemy laws.

Perhaps even more significantly, Hussain facilitated an effort that was endorsed by the OIC to protect Christian and other minority communities in Muslim-majority countries. This initiative culminated in the Marrakesh Declaration, a ground-breaking document signed by over 300 leading Muslim religious leaders and scholars around the world. Hussain has also worked to counter

anti-Semitism, and he has traveled with US and international imams to Holocaust sites in Germany and Poland.

Special Envoy Hussain is a respected figure in the American Muslim and interfaith communities who possesses a remarkable combination of experience, knowledge, diplomatic ability, and important relationships that will advance our national interests in unique ways at this important time in history. We enthusiastically urge you to confirm him in this role.

Sincerely,¹

1. Dr. Judd Birdsall, Director, Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD); senior research fellow at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs
2. Rev. Dr. Elijah M. Brown, General Secretary, Baptist World Alliance
3. Rev. Susan Hayward, United Church of Christ and Professor at the Harvard Divinity School
4. Suhail Khan, Senior Fellow, Institute for Global Engagement, VP of Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance, and Member, Muslim Jewish Advisory Council
5. Rabbi M. Bruce Lustig, Senior Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation, Member of Higher Committee of the Human Fraternity
6. Imam Mohammed Magid, President, International Interfaith Peace Corps
7. Rabbi Noam Marans, Director, Interreligious and Intergroup Relations, American Jewish Committee
8. Dr. A. Roy Medley, General Secretary Emeritus, American Baptist Churches, USA
9. Rabbi Jack Moline, President of Interfaith Alliance
10. Pastor Bob Roberts, Global Senior Evangelical Pastor Northwood Church, Founder of Glocalnet & Multifaith Neighbors Network
11. Ambassador Rabbi David Saperstein, former Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Director Emeritus of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
12. Dr. Chris Seiple, President Emeritus of the Institute for Global Engagement (IGE) and global policy advisor to the executive leadership of the World Evangelical Alliance
13. Imam Talib Shareef, the Nation's Mosque, Masjid Muhammad
14. Robert Silverman, Co-Founder, Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance

¹ Signatories are signing in their personal capacities; affiliations are listed for identification purposes only.

15. Katrina Lantos Swett, Past Chair and Vice-Chair of USCIRF, Co-Chair of the IRF Summit 2021 and President of the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice
16. Rev. Adam Russell Taylor, President, Sojourners
17. Knox Thames, Senior Fellow, Institute of Global Engagement (IGE); Visiting Expert, U.S. Institute of Peace; former Special Advisor for Religious Minorities in the Near East and South / Central Asia, U.S. Department of State
18. Dr. Bill Vendley, Religions for Peace, Secretary General Emeritus
19. Rev. Jim Wallis, Chair in Faith and Justice, McCourt School of Public Policy, and Director, Georgetown University Center on Faith and Justice; Founder and Ambassador, Sojourners
20. Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Co-Convenor, National African American Clergy Network
21. Rev. Jim Winkler, President and General Secretary of the National Council of Churches
22. Dr. C. Jeff Woods, Interim General Secretary, American Baptist Churches USA

Submitted by Muslim American Civil Society Organizations

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Menendez
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign
Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

October 25, 2021

Dear Senators Schumer, McConnell, Menendez and Risch:

We, the undersigned Muslim American civil society organizations, write to provide our strongest support for the confirmation of Rashad Hussain as Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom. We can think of no one more qualified for this role.

Mr. Hussain is an award-winning diplomat, attorney, and highly respected community leader who has worked in all branches of the federal government, including executive branch service at the White House, the Justice Department's National Security Division, and the State Department. He has dedicated his public service career to advancing U.S. national security and promoting and protecting human rights, particularly religious freedom.

As Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Mr. Hussain prioritized religious freedom and led several ground-breaking initiatives that served to advance religious freedom for all, and particularly for minority religious communities. For example, Mr. Hussain:

- facilitated a major global initiative promulgating the Marrakesh Declaration, a document signed by over 300 credible Muslim scholars from around the world articulating from within the Islamic textual tradition the rights of minorities living in Muslim-majority countries.
- led the successful effort to end the pernicious "Defamation of Religions" resolution in the UN, and to replace it with a consensus plan of action to combat religious discrimination that fully complied with U.S. First Amendment principles. This year, the international community celebrated the 10-year anniversary of that accomplishment, which has created a robust platform for the international exchange of best practices on protecting religious freedom.
- helped organize Muslim leaders on two trips to visit Holocaust sites to address Holocaust denial and strengthen the interfaith commitment to combating atrocity crimes.

- led an interfaith delegation to the Central African Republic to promote inter-religious peace, which resulted in a sustained civil society capacity building program to support the national dialogue.
- led an interfaith delegation to Egypt to help protect the Coptic Christian community.

Mr. Hussain also executed some of the most sensitive and difficult diplomatic and civil society engagements on the topic of religion. He traveled to Afghanistan twice to promote peace and to calm tensions arising from the alleged desecration of the Quran by U.S. personnel. He pressed Pakistani officials on the need to protect the Ahmadiyya Muslim population in Pakistan from ongoing repression. And he worked to promote intra-faith harmony in Bahrain, including by meeting for the first time ever by a U.S. diplomat Ayatollah Isa Qassim, the leader of the Bahraini Shia community at the time.

All of these experiences demonstrate that Mr. Hussain is the right person for this role at this time. There are two ongoing genocides in the world, both of which target Muslims: the Uighur genocide in Xinjiang and the Rohingya genocide in Myanmar. Muslims are also targeted for state-sanctioned violence in many parts of the world, including in India. With his depth of experience on human rights and multilateral diplomacy, Mr. Hussain would be able to use the Ambassador at Large position to galvanize international support to address these situations.

Moreover, Mr. Hussain's credibility with Muslim counterparts and interlocutors gives him an advantage in pressing Muslim-majority countries to fully protect the rights of religious minorities, including Christians, Jews, and non-Sunni minority Muslim groups. He has successfully done this in the past, and as the Ambassador at Large, would be able to devote his full attention to this important foreign policy priority.

Since the adoption of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, we have had five Ambassadors serve in this role. If confirmed, Mr. Hussain would be the first Muslim American in the role, which would send a clear and unmistakable message that Muslims are an integral part of the American interfaith mosaic.

Mr. Hussain's record of service is exemplary, and his dedication to promoting U.S. national security is unassailable. We are certain that he is the best candidate for the role of Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, and we urge you to confirm him expeditiously to advance our national interest in protecting human rights around the globe.

Sincerely,

1. All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS)
2. America Indivisible
3. American Islam
4. American Muslim Bar Association (AMBA)
5. American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP)
6. Arakan Rohingya Union
7. Association of Muslim Scientists, Engineers, and Technology Professionals (AMSET)
8. Burmese Rohingya Association of North America
9. Burmese Rohingya Community of Georgia

10. Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC)
 11. EMGAGE
 12. Global Deaf Muslim (GDM)
 13. Illinois Muslim Civic Coalition
 14. International Interfaith Peace Corps (IIPC)
 15. Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA)
 16. Islamic Networks Group (ING)
 17. Islamic Society of Central Florida
 18. Islamic Society of Greater Houston (ISGH)
 19. IslamInSpanish
 20. Justice for All
 21. KARAMAH: Muslim Women Laywers for Human Rights
 22. Masjid Muhammad, The Nation's Mosque
 23. Michigan Muslim Community Council (MMCC)
 24. Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA)
 25. Muslim Bar Association of New York (MUBANY)
 26. Muslim Democrats
 27. Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)
 28. Muslim Public Service Network (MPSN)
 29. National Association of Muslim Lawyers (NAML)
 30. Poligon Education Fund
 31. Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Zaytuna College
 32. Shaykh Waleed Basyouni, AlMaghrib Institute
 33. Universal Muslim Association of America (UMAA)
 34. Women in Islam Inc.
 35. Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality & Equality (WISE)
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