

## NOMINATIONS

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2021

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

Also Present: Senator Warner.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. We are here today to consider the nominations for four important positions: Ambassador John Bass to be the Under Secretary for Management, Mr. Scott Nathan to be the chief executive officer for the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, Ambassador Mark Brzezinski to be the Ambassador to Poland, and Mr. Michael Adler to be the Ambassador to Belgium.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations. I appreciate your willingness and that of your families because we understand families are part of the sacrifice to serve our country in this capacity.

Before I start any comments, I understand that our colleague from Virginia, from the great Commonwealth of Virginia, the former Governor of Virginia, Senator Warner, is here to introduce Mr. Nathan.

Senator Warner?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. MARK R. WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that recognition, and to you and Ranking Member Risch and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to make an introduction.

I know Ambassador Bass a bit, but I know Mark Brzezinski—Ambassador Brzezinski and Michael Adler very well. You have got an extraordinary panel in front of you today.

But we all get called upon sometimes to do these introductions but today is something that is very special to me because I get the chance to introduce and present to the committee somebody who is

a close friend, trusted confidante, and somebody I know who is going to be an excellent choice to lead the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, my friend, Scott Nathan.

I have known Scott for more than 15 years. I first got to know him in my waning days, as you mentioned, when I was—still had a real job, governor, and Scott was introduced to me initially as a like-minded adviser on security issues, having come up in the business world and then transitioned to the public sector.

Scott, I think—and I say this particularly to my friends on the Republican side—brings a very pragmatic outside perspective to the issues of economic diplomacy, trade policy, emerging markets, and international development.

Over the years, I have come to appreciate Scott's wisdom and expertise, and I can tell you he is practical, collaborative, and very independent minded. But I have also gotten to know him as a friend.

I do not want to steal his thunder, but he has got his wife, Laura, and his two kids, Asher and Lia, check behind him. I have got to know them, frankly, since they have been born. But I have seen him and his family on the personal side and this is a—these are good people.

My message to you today is I think the DFC is an incredible valuable tool. Senator Risch and I serve on the Intelligence Committee together and we know the challenges our nation faces as we compete with China and other adversaries in terms of economic development.

I think in Scott you are going to find somebody who is uniquely suited for this job. He comes here with both law and business degrees in hand. He had an extraordinarily impressive career in the private sector for almost two decades.

He worked in the investment business, becoming a very prominent partner on a major fund where he also served as the role of risk management, something I think, again, that is terribly important in this new role with the DFC. He then transitioned to government service, working at both OMB doing policy work and the State Department where he worked in promotion of American economic interests abroad, again, something that I think will serve him well at the DFC.

I know you have got a lot in front of you. I will skip through all these wonderful other descriptions of the important role of the DFC. But I can think of no one that I am prouder to introduce, prouder to present and give more full-fledged endorsement to than my friend, Scott Nathan.

And with that, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for the courtesy of allowing me to go first.

Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Warner, for that glowing introduction of Mr. Nathan. I know that being governor is an exalted status but some of us believe that being a U.S. Senator is a real job as well.

On that note, I will let you go to some other important meeting that I am sure that you have at the Intelligence Committee.

Senator RISCH. Senator Shaheen and I also have ideas on the governorship. At some point in time—

[Laughter.]

Senator SHAHEEN. Yes, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I just realized I am surrounded by former governors. All right.

Ambassador Bass, it is good to see you again before the committee. You have a long and distinguished public service trajectory that I believe will serve you well upon your confirmation to be the Under Secretary of State for Management.

As you well know, Secretary Blinken inherited a damaged and depleted department, as I documented in a committee report last year, "Diplomacy in Crisis." The last administration's repeated assault on State Department personnel, management, and resources were unconscionable and dangerous for long-term U.S. foreign policy interests. Confidence in leadership decayed and key bureaus were gutted.

In fairness, as I have acknowledged before, many institutional, budgetary, and morale problems are also the result of multiple administrations and congressional action and inaction as well. That is why I believe there is now broad bipartisan consensus that critical efforts needed to be taken to address core structural and resource issues that have too long plagued the department.

While I was encouraged to hear Secretary Blinken's speech on State Department modernization in October, I hope you will provide us some more specifics today on how you intend to execute each of the five pillars he outlined, particularly on how you plan to build capacity on critical issues like cyber and technology, climate and global health, and to improve diversity at the department.

Separately, I would like to take a moment to speak about your recent work in Afghanistan, as this committee would also be interested in hearing your views on the evacuation efforts that you helped oversee this past August.

While the State Department performed heroically in that effort, the fact of the matter is that the department and the United States never should have been in the position where that sort of desperate heroism was necessary.

To my mind, and this is directly relevant to the job that you have been nominated for, it speaks to serious shortcomings in the department's planning and contingency response capacity.

I recognize that today's hearing is not a post-mortem on Afghanistan. But I am interested in what lessons you learned from this experience and how you will apply those lessons as the Deputy for Management, if confirmed.

Mr. Nathan, congratulations on your nomination. I appreciate your visit with me yesterday. If confirmed, you will be leading an agency that is without question an important new asset for advancing U.S. economic competitiveness in the global economy, alleviating poverty and improving opportunity, growth, and stability in countries, all of which are incredibly important U.S. foreign policy objectives.

However, during the DFC's brief history there have been many questions raised, from the decision to grant authorities to the DFC to pursue domestic deals under the Defense Production Act to the series of projects in upper middle income countries to over prom-

ising on prospective investments. There is a need for a cultural reset at the DFC.

Yet, the agency has demonstrated its potential, coming into existence at a critical moment for enhancing U.S. development finance policies and programs with a significant potential to be a vehicle to provide support to our friends and allies who are under increasing economic and diplomatic pressure from Beijing.

I look forward to hearing your vision for ensuring the DFC is fulfilling the BUILD Act's mandate to pursue projects that advance clear development outcomes while also taking strategic approaches for advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives.

This includes the importance of addressing the climate crisis, the need to convert the global economy to clean energy, as highlighted during last month's COP26.

Ambassador Brzezinski, welcome back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Your nomination comes at a critical time for Poland, and I must note the United States' steadfast commitment to Poland's security. As you know, Poland is a longtime friend and NATO ally, and nothing will undermine our commitment to supporting Poland and defending NATO's Eastern flank.

The illegitimate Lukashenko regime's use of migrants and hybrid tactics at borders—Poland's border is unacceptable and inhumane. Poland is on the front lines and the United States will always support Poland in defending its territorial integrity and security.

However, while Poland's security is of utmost importance, we must also underscore that NATO is strengthened by our commitment to democratic values and human rights.

To that end, I am deeply concerned by continued attacks on the independence of Poland's judiciary. In Warsaw, it will be your job to urge the Polish government to live up to its commitments as a NATO ally that supports a vibrant judiciary, free press, and rights for all of its citizens, and I am confident you are the right choice to represent the United States in Warsaw.

Finally, Mr. Adler, congratulations on your nomination. I trust that, if confirmed, you will draw from your experience in the private sector to advocate for U.S. interests in Belgium.

As you know, hundreds of U.S. firms are represented in Belgium. In 2020, it was the thirteenth largest recipient of U.S. exports and we appreciate Belgium's support for the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council to further strengthen transatlantic ties.

In addition, we are grateful for Belgium's partnership in the global coalition to defeat ISIS. Belgium is a NATO partner, a leader on human rights and democracy, and I look forward to getting you to Brussels as soon as possible to continue to strengthen our relationship with that important ally.

We look forward to each of your testimonies. Let me turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Risch, for his comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, on the nomination of Under Secretary of State for Management, this position is not only responsible for keeping our diplomats safe and embassies functioning properly but also sup-

porting and improving the State Department workforce. It plays a crucial role in helping coordinate State Department operations with this committee.

There are enormous pressures on State Department personnel that need immediate attention. Embassy personnel are being attacked in what State is awkwardly calling anomalous health incidents. All of us, on a bipartisan basis, are very concerned about this situation. We have struggled to get straight answers out of the department on what is going on.

Moreover, in many posts, our diplomats are having trouble getting outside of the embassy walls to meet with the local population, putting a serious strain on their ability to advance vital U.S. national interests. We know Russian, Chinese, and Iranian diplomats do not have these restrictions.

Determining the future of this workforce and how it operates is one of the most important responsibilities of this position and one that could have ramifications for years, if not decades. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these important issues.

On the nomination of CEO of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, the DFC has the potential, the potential, to serve as one of the most influential tools to unleash the power of the private sector, lift countries out of power and counter the predatory state-sponsored development models pursued by strategic competitors.

To that end, the DFC should focus on two core missions. It should promote economic freedom through support for private sector-led growth in developing countries and it should protect economic freedom through investments in sectors of strategic significance to the United States.

Investments in the digital economy, advanced technologies, energy infrastructure, supply chains, and public health are critical in an era of strategic competition with China and to provide alternatives to state-directed investments. Senator Warner's reference to the Intelligence Committee and our work in overseeing these types of matters is important and, certainly, this agency plays a crucial role there.

Last month, I sent a letter to the DFC expressing serious concerns that 18 of the 21 current solar project sourced panels are from China, even after revelations of forced labor in China's solar industry. That situation is unacceptable and unsustainable. If confirmed, I expect you to fix it and make sure DFC's supply chains do not touch forced labor.

Additionally, the agency's keen interest in pursuing deals in wealthy countries is inexplicable. The DFC must shrug off its old OPIC mindset and fully embrace the new agency's dual missions. It must strike a healthier balance between pursuing projects with a greater development focus and those guided by strategic interests.

On the nomination of our Ambassador to Poland, I will associate myself with the remarks of the chairman regarding our commitment to Poland and its security. Poland is under a growing threat from Russia and its proxy, Belarus. I am glad to see a growing U.S. troop presence there. But being an ally requires more than just military cooperation. Values matter.

The Polish Government seems set on consolidating its control over previously free media and to terminating the largest U.S. investment in Poland, Discovery Media's ownership of TVN.

Both decisions are counter to the commitments to human rights and freedom of speech we expect that our allies will maintain. I expect to hear your thoughts on all of these critical issues.

Finally, on the nomination of Ambassador to Belgium, Brussels is home to many European NGOs and international organizations as well as headquarters of the EU and NATO. It is an important post, especially within the context of Brussels' influential position in European politics.

Like in many European countries, China has sought to expand its influence in Belgium by purchasing stakes in important Belgian companies, particularly ports. I would like to hear how you plan to address this growing issue, should you be confirmed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

All right. We will start the testimonies. We will start with Mr. Nathan and just work our way down the dais. We would ask you to summarize your comments in about five minutes or so. Your full statements will be included for the record, without objection, and feel free to introduce any members of your family that are here.

Mr. Nathan?

**STATEMENT OF SCOTT NATHAN OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CORPORATION**

Mr. NATHAN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for having me here today and for the time you and your staff have spent with me prior to this hearing.

Senator Warner, thank you for your kind introduction and for your friendship over many years.

With me here today are my wife, Laura, and our two children, Asher and Lia. I am grateful for their love today and every day. My parents and my brother are also watching this hearing and I want to acknowledge their role in getting me to this moment.

I am honored to be nominated by President Biden to be the chief executive officer of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. Throughout this confirmation process, I have relied on the input, guidance, and support of the current acting as well as the former leadership of both DFC and its predecessor, OPIC.

I am deeply grateful to Adam Boehler, Ray Washburne, Elizabeth Littlefield, Rob Mosbacher, Jr., David Bohigian, Edward Burrier, and Dev Jagadesan. The value and spirit of these conversations reflect the broad support for this agency.

I also want to thank the fantastic group of hardworking professionals at DFC as well as throughout the interagency, whom I have so far met in preparation for this confirmation process.

This is an exciting and important time for DFC. The agency is less than two years old but the expectations for it are high. DFC was created with bipartisan support and a consensus that it could be an effective tool of U.S. foreign policy.

The needs of the developing world are too great to meet with government resources alone, and DFC can be a catalyst for bringing private capital to worthy projects. By bringing together OPIC and DCA through the BUILD Act, setting a new dual mandate both developmental and strategic, and providing expanded tools and investment targets, Congress has challenged DFC to make a greater impact.

My consultations with members of this committee and staff have been very valuable. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to shape and to continue to grow DFC's capabilities and capacity so that it can properly fulfill the responsibilities it has been given.

DFC mobilizes capital for private sector-led growth in the developing world and provides a clear alternative to state-directed investments by authoritarian governments. DFC's product offering gives developing countries a positive choice reflecting our democratic values for meeting their infrastructure and economic needs.

While investing in private sector companies and projects, DFC can insist on transparency, rule of law, financial sustainability, and high environmental and labor standards. Unlike some of our strategic competitors, we do this with no strings attached.

I believe in the power of the private sector, free markets, and inclusive economic growth to improve lives and bring countries out of poverty.

I entered adulthood right as the Cold War was coming to a close. Just months after I graduated college, the Berlin Wall fell and the world changed dramatically. For the first time, millions in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union tasted freedom and could pursue their own economic liberty.

This sea change profoundly impacted me. I lived in the region during this time of wrenching change and great optimism, and after completing law school and business school, I focused my early career primarily on emerging markets, especially in these economies in transition.

After nearly 20 years in the investment business, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to devote the second chapter of my career to public service in roles at the Department of State and OMB.

At State, I focused on commercial advocacy for U.S. companies, economic diplomacy, and the promotion of entrepreneurship. The challenges facing the developing world can seem overwhelming but the opportunity for DFC to be part of the solution is enormous.

If confirmed, I will draw on my investment, managerial, and government experience to help DFC pursue this mission. I will work hard to make sure the agency has the right strategy, resources, structure, processes, to efficiently and effectively source and analyze investment opportunities and to properly measure and monitor those that make it into the portfolio.

I am so grateful to have been born in this country. I would be proud to, again, have the opportunity to work on behalf of the American people and represent the interests of the United States.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nathan follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT NATHAN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for having me here today and for the time you and your staff have spent with me prior to this hearing.

Senator Warner—thank you for that kind introduction and for your friendship over many years. With me here today is my wife Laura and our two children, Asher and Lia. I am grateful for their love and support today and every day. My parents and my brother are also watching this hearing and I want to acknowledge their role in getting me to this moment.

I am honored to be nominated by President Biden to serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation.

Throughout this confirmation process, I have relied on the input, guidance, and support of the current acting, as well as the former leadership of both DFC and its predecessor OPIC. I am deeply grateful to Adam Boehler, Ray Washburne, Elizabeth Littlefield, Robert Mosbacher Jr., David Bohigian, Edward Burrier, and Dev Jagadesan, many of whom are watching today. The value and spirit of these conversations reflect the broad support for this agency. I also want to thank the fantastic group of hard-working professionals at DFC, as well as throughout the interagency, whom I so far have met in preparation for this confirmation process.

This is an exciting and important time for DFC. The agency is less than two years old, but the expectations for it are high. DFC was created with bipartisan support and a consensus that it could be an effective tool of U.S. foreign policy. The needs of the developing world are too great to meet with government resources alone and DFC can be a catalyst for bringing private capital to worthy projects. By bringing together OPIC and DCA through the BUILD Act, setting a new dual mandate (both developmental and strategic), and providing expanded tools and investment targets, Congress has challenged DFC to make a greater impact.

My consultations with members of this committee and staff have been very valuable. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to shape and to continue to grow DFC's capabilities and capacity so that it can properly fulfill the responsibilities it has been given. Collaboration with the DFC's interagency partners will also be crucial.

DFC mobilizes capital for private sector-led growth in the developing world and provides a clear alternative to state-directed investments by authoritarian governments. DFC's product offering gives developing countries a positive choice, reflecting our democratic values, for meeting their infrastructure and economic needs. While investing in private sector companies and projects, DFC can insist on transparency, rule of law, financial sustainability, and high environmental and labor standards. Unlike some of our strategic competitors, we do this with no strings attached.

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After nearly twenty years in the investment business, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to devote the second chapter of my career to public service in roles at the Department of State and OMB. At State, I focused on commercial advocacy for U.S. companies, economic diplomacy, and the promotion of entrepreneurship.

The challenges facing the developing world can seem overwhelming. But the opportunity for DFC to be part of the solution is enormous. If confirmed, I will draw on my investment, managerial, and government experience to help DFC pursue this mission. I will work hard to make sure the agency has the right strategy, resources, structure, and processes to efficiently and effectively source and analyze investment opportunities and to properly measure and monitor those that make it into the portfolio.

I am so grateful to have been born in this country. I would be proud to again have the opportunity to work on behalf of the American people and represent the interests of the United States. Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Ambassador Bass?



**STATEMENT OF THE HON. JOHN R. BASS OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, NOMINATED TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MANAGEMENT)**

Mr. BASS. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to be Under Secretary of State for Management.

I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the opportunity to, again, serve the nation if I am confirmed.

I am joined today by my wife, Holly, a fellow diplomat who has represented our nation in Afghanistan and five other countries, and I am enduringly grateful for her love and support.

My sister, Kristin, is also with us today, and we are joined in spirit by an extended family that includes the one we are blessed with by birth and marriage and the family we have made through shared service and sacrifice overseas.

I would like to begin this morning by honoring, first, the memory of the Marines, Navy corpsman, and soldier who died while protecting the rest of us, working to evacuate fellow Americans and at-risk Afghans from Kabul in late August. Their loved ones have been and remain in our thoughts and prayers every day.

It has been an honor to serve three previous times as a presidential appointee and I welcome this new opportunity, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, to give back to an institution that I love but one that I and many colleagues have not always liked.

I swore my first oath to support and defend the Constitution in 1988, and since then, the world and the issues and challenges at the center of American diplomacy have changed a great deal.

But how we work at State as representatives of our government and as diplomatic practitioners has not kept pace with the times. The reasons for this are complex. They reflect the choices of multiple administrations on both sides of the aisle.

But the result is an institution that relies too heavily on its dedicated professionals to bridge the gap between what State's infrastructure, technology, and practices enable and what our responsibilities to the nation actually require. And as the President, Secretary Blinken, members of this committee, and many outside observers have underscored, it is past time to remedy that.

If confirmed, I will do everything I can to prepare the State Department to tackle the challenges we will face in the coming years, and concurrently with your support and partnership I will do my best to ensure the women and men of the State Department have the guidance and receive the resources they need today to help our fellow citizens protect the country's interests, promote our prosperity, and uphold our values in 195 countries and nearly 200 international organizations worldwide.

Much of the public attention focuses on our headquarters here in the Capitol and the remarkable work of thousands of talented Civil and Foreign Service professionals serving here.

I believe the department's greatest impact, though, occurs well beyond the Beltway. Patriotic Americans and dedicated local staff in our embassies and consulates, colleagues working in 98 offices

in 31 states across our country, they all serve our nation where it matters most, as demonstrated by their unstinting effort during the pandemic to bring home over 100,000 Americans and other residents, even while we were enduring staffing shortages and draw downs ourselves.

If confirmed, I will work to reinforce our focus on the field and that includes doing everything possible to support and care for colleagues and family suffering from anomalous health incidents even as we work to uncover the cause of those incidents, and it also means managing sensibly threats and risks so our people can engage, persuade, and represent the nation in every environment overseas.

Diplomacy is a contact sport and who we dispatch can matter as much as what they do or what they say, and as Secretary Blinken recently underscored, our diversity as a nation in backgrounds, gender, race, religion, and ethnicity is among our greatest competitive advantages.

We sell ourselves short and undercut our service to all Americans if we fail, if we continue to fail, to capitalize on that strength, and I am committed to expanding efforts to attract talented Americans from all walks of life to join the department's team, to enable them to thrive as representatives of the United States, and to support them throughout a career so that our department truly reflects the richness and diversity of America.

We face significant challenges as a nation and as the oldest Cabinet department, and it will take sustained focus and resources for the department to most effectively advance our interests and help middle and working class Americans prosper in the years ahead.

In my prior appointments, I benefited from close coordination with members of this committee and the wider Congress, and, if confirmed, I intend to work closely with you on these compelling priorities.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear today and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bass follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN R. BASS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee: thank you for this opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to be Under Secretary for Management. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the opportunity to again serve the nation, if confirmed.

I'm joined today by my wife Holly, a fellow diplomat who has represented our Nation in Afghanistan and five other countries. I am grateful for her love and support. My sister Kristin is with us today. We are joined in spirit by an extended family that includes the one we are blessed with by birth and marriage, and the family we have made, through shared service and sacrifice overseas.

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I swore my first oath to support and defend the Constitution in 1988. Since then, the world, and the issues and challenges at the center of American diplomacy, have changed a great deal. But how we work at State, as representatives of our government and as diplomatic practitioners, has not kept pace with the times.

The reasons for this are complex. They reflect the choices of multiple administrations on both sides of the aisle. The result is an institution that relies too heavily on its dedicated professionals to bridge the gap between what State's infrastructure, technology and practices enable—and what our responsibilities to the nation actually require. As the President, Secretary Blinken, this committee and many outside observers have observed—it is past time to remedy that.

If confirmed, I will do everything I can to prepare the State Department to tackle the challenges we will face in the coming years. Concurrently, with your support and partnership, I will do my best to ensure the women and men of the Department have the guidance, and receive the resources they need today—to help our fellow citizens, protect the country's interests, promote our prosperity and uphold our values in 195 countries and nearly 200 international organizations worldwide.

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If confirmed, I will work to reinforce our focus on the field. That includes doing everything possible to support and care for colleagues and families suffering from anomalous health incidents, as we work to uncover the cause of these incidents. It also means managing sensibly threats and risk so our people can engage, persuade and represent the nation in every environment overseas.

Diplomacy is a contact sport. Who we dispatch—to help Americans in harm's way, to negotiate with governments and companies, to advance our interests—can matter as much as what they do or say. As Secretary Blinken recently underscored, our diversity as a nation—in backgrounds, gender, race, religion and ethnicity—is among our greatest competitive advantages. We sell ourselves short, and undercut our service to all Americans, if we fail to capitalize on it. I am committed to expanding efforts to attract talented Americans from all walks of life to join the Department's team, enable them to thrive as representatives of the United States and support them throughout their careers, so that we truly reflect America.

We face significant challenges as a nation—and as the oldest cabinet Department. It will take sustained focus and resources for the State Department to most effectively advance our interests and help middle and working-class Americans prosper in the years ahead. In my prior appointments, I benefitted from close coordination with members of this committee and the wider Congress. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with you on these compelling priorities.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you. I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Ambassador Brzezinski?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI OF VIRGINIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an extraordinary honor to be President Biden's nominee to become the next U.S. Ambassador to Poland.

I am accompanied today by my brother, Ian Brzezinski, no stranger to this committee, who served on the Republican staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for a number of years.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to thank the staff of U.S. Embassy Warsaw, U.S. Consulate Krakow, and Consular Agency Poznan for generations of hard work. It is with genuine admiration and respect that I have witnessed their dedication since my first visit to Poland in 1990.

I last appeared before this committee in 2011. I am proud of what I accomplished as U.S. Ambassador to Stockholm. The embassy team advanced Sweden's partnership with NATO, including key counterterrorism goals.

We cemented important partnerships on energy diversification and brokered Volvo's first ever investment in the United States that brought thousands of high-paying manufacturing jobs to South Carolina.

With the Swedes, we embraced the memory of Raoul Wallenberg and the importance of not being indifferent to the Jewish community.

I know Poland well. I am a child of parents cast on America's shores by World War II. My late father, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was born in Warsaw. He lived his first 10 years of life in Przemysl, now located on the border of Poland and Ukraine.

By luck, my grandfather was assigned to be Consul General in Montreal just before Nazi Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Had his family been caught in Warsaw, they likely would have suffered a similar fate of other Polish diplomats under the Nazis—death.

My father did not speak fluent English until he was 15 years old. In our family, the words *Niech żyje Polska*—"Long Live Poland"—and *Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła*—"Still Poland is not defeated" meant something. Shared values and the willingness to defend them.

My mother, the sculptor, Emilie Benes, who is watching today, is a refugee from Czechoslovakia. The child of Czech diplomats, she made it to Berkeley, California, in the middle of World War II, her ship attacked by German U-boats on the way from London to the United States. I am here before you today thanks, truly, to the grace of God.

As a Fulbright Scholar, I was assigned between 1991 and 1993 to research and write about Poland's new Constitutional Tribunal. My book, "The Struggle for Constitutionalism in Poland," tells the successful story of Poland's developing constitutional and rule of law institutions after the collapse of communism.

Respect for enduring constitutional arrangements became a central test of the effective operation and growth of free market democracy. It still is, and, if confirmed, I will continue to promote our shared commitments to uphold fundamental freedoms and the rule of law as essential to democracy and central to the U.S.-Polish relationship.

In particular, I will continue to underscore to Polish authorities the importance of an impartial judiciary, independent media, and respect for the human rights of all, including LGBTQI+ persons and members of other minorities.

The U.S. and Poland have a historic friendship. But we must also agree to share responsibilities for humanity's future and the democratic principles of the West.

If confirmed, first and foremost, I will commit myself to the safety and security of everyone working for Mission Poland and to the safety and security of U.S. citizens living, working, and traveling in Poland.

I will also commit to continue and strengthen our security cooperation with our stalwart ally, Poland, where the enduring rota-

tional presence of some 4,500 U.S. troops defends NATO's Eastern flank. I will deepen and broaden the partnership between Poland and the United States to spearhead economic growth in the region, including through the Three Seas Initiative.

If confirmed, I will work with Poland to support the government and people of a peaceful and whole Ukraine as well as the aspirations of the Belarusian people for a democratic Belarus.

I will partner with Poland to promote investment in clean energy, including renewable energy, hydrogen-based energy, and help to bring zero-emission nuclear energy to Poland.

If confirmed, I will commit myself to deepening the U.S. bilateral cooperation and advancing U.S. policy priorities in Poland.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brzezinski follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

It is an extraordinary honor to be President Biden's nominee to become the next U.S. Ambassador to Poland.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to thank the staff of U.S. Embassy Warsaw, U.S. Consulate Krakow, and Consular Agency Poznan for generations of hard work. It is with genuine admiration and respect that I have witnessed their dedication since my first visit to Poland in 1990.

I last appeared before this committee in 2011. I am proud of what I accomplished as U.S. Ambassador in Stockholm. The Embassy team advanced Sweden's partnership with NATO, including key counterterrorism goals. We cemented important partnerships on energy diversification and brokered Volvo's first-ever investment in the United States that brought thousands of high-paying manufacturing jobs to South Carolina. With the Swedes, we embraced the memory of Raoul Wallenberg and "the importance of not being indifferent" to the Jewish community.

I know Poland well. I am a child of parents cast on America's shores by World War II. My late father, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was born in Warsaw. He lived his first ten years in Przemysl, now located on the border of Poland and Ukraine. By luck, my grandfather was assigned to be Consul General in Montreal just before Nazi Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Had his family been caught in Warsaw, they likely would have suffered a similar fate of other Polish diplomats under the Nazis—death.

My father did not speak fluent English until he was 15 years old. In our family, the words "Niech zyje Polska" ["Long Live Poland"] and "Jeszcze Polska nie zginela" ["still Poland is not defeated"] meant something: Shared values and willingness to defend them.

My mother, the sculptor Emilie Benes, who is watching today, is a refugee from Czechoslovakia. The child of Czech diplomats, she made it to Berkeley, California, in the middle of World War II, her ship attacked by German U-boats on the way from London to the United States.

I am here before you today thanks truly to the grace of God.

As a Fulbright Scholar, I was assigned between 1991 and 1993 to research and write about Poland's new Constitutional Tribunal. My book "The Struggle for Constitutionalism in Poland," tells the successful story of Poland developing constitutional and rule of law institutions after the collapse of Communism. Respect for enduring constitutional arrangements became a central test of the effective operation and growth of free market democracy. It still is, and if confirmed, I will continue to promote our shared commitments to uphold fundamental freedoms and the rule of law as essential to democracy and central to the U.S.-Polish relationship. In particular, I will continue to underscore to Polish authorities the importance of an impartial judiciary, independent media, and respect for the human rights of all, including LGBTQI+ persons and members of other minorities.

The U.S. and Poland have an historic friendship, but we must also agree to share responsibilities for humanity's future and the democratic principles of the West.

If confirmed, first and foremost, I will commit myself to the safety and security of everyone working for Mission Poland and to the safety and security of U.S. citizens living, working, and traveling in Poland.

I will also commit to continue and strengthen our security cooperation with our stalwart Ally Poland, where the enduring rotational presence of some 4,500 U.S. troops defends NATO's Eastern Flank. I will deepen and broaden the partnership between Poland and the United States to spearhead economic growth in the region, including through the Three Seas Initiative. If confirmed, I will work with Poland to support the Government and people of a peaceful and whole Ukraine, as well as the aspirations of the Belarusian people for a democratic Belarus. I will partner with Poland to promote investment in clean energy, including renewable energy, hydrogen-based energy, and help to bring zero-emission nuclear energy to Poland.

If confirmed, I will commit myself to deepening U.S. bilateral cooperation and advancing U.S. policy priorities in Poland.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Mr. Adler?

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL M. ADLER OF FLORIDA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM**

Mr. ADLER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me to become the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium.

I would like to acknowledge my three children, their spouses, my seven grandchildren. They have all given me unwavering love and support in this endeavor to serve my country.

My commitment to public service is driven by my love of family, who motivate me to make our country and the world a better place for them and for the future. Endless gratitude goes to the love of my life, my wife, Judy, for almost 50 years.

Judy has been my partner and has always been devoted and supportive of the numerous initiatives and causes that I have been involved in and led. Judy made it possible for me to pursue all my business and civic endeavors.

I would also like to recognize Judy's parents, Ellen and Fred Selling, who were both Jewish immigrants and fled Germany from Nazi persecution. After moving to the United States, Fred joined the U.S. Army during World War II and served as a translator. He helped to liberate concentration camps in Germany.

I would also like to remember my parents, who taught me by example the importance of public service, social justice, and community service. Bunny and Sam were proud Americans.

My father, Sam, served as a pilot in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II. He was stationed in the South Pacific. My parents set the groundwork for my community involvement.

With the values they instilled in me, I worked hard to become a leader in important institutions in my community, such as Mount Sinai Medical Center and Florida International University, among other organizations.

This opportunity to serve my country in Europe is a testament to America's democracy and it is a result of the values my family has instilled in me and my efforts to make them proud. My and

Judy's parents serve as my inspiration and they would be so proud to see my family embrace this incredible opportunity.

In this role, I hope to inspire my children and my grandchildren to dedicate their lives and make their community and the world a better place.

First and foremost, if confirmed, I will work with Belgium officials at all levels of government to advance American interests, protect the safety and security of American citizens, and promote American and democratic values. Freedom of speech, freedom of press, and freedom of religion are values that both our countries hold dear.

If confirmed, I will also look forward to working with dedicated FSOs of the department, ensuring their safety and security. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Belgium Government to address collective security concerns.

Working together, we can advance our shared law enforcement and counterterrorism priorities at home and abroad, strengthening the transatlantic bond with NATO and the EU and pursue U.S. interests in NATO.

To that end, I will encourage Belgium to fulfill its Wales Defense Pledge commitments to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense by 2024.

If confirmed, I will work to advance our economic interests in Belgium, where more than 900 American companies support 120,000 jobs. In 2020, our combined bilateral trade was approximately \$72.6 billion.

Belgium is the thirteenth largest U.S. exports and we are Belgium's largest trading partner outside the EU. Belgium is home to the Interuniversity Microelectronics Center, or IMEC, which is other digital technologies.

Belgium is also a key global logistics hub. It plays a leading role in vaccine warehousing and distribution to Europe and the world. If confirmed, I will work with our Commerce Department and our embassy economic experts to strengthen an already robust and successful partnership.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work diligently to lead our mission team and to work closely with all agencies to deepen our historic alliance with the Belgian government and Belgian people.

Let me conclude, again, noting how great an honor it would be to serve in this capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Adler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL M. ADLER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me to become the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium.

I would like to acknowledge my three children, their spouses and my seven grandchildren. They have all given me unwavering love and support in this endeavor to serve my country. My commitment to public service is driven by my love of family, who motivate me to make our country and the world a better place for them and for future generations.

Endless gratitude goes to the love of my life, my wife, Judy Adler. For almost 50 years, Judy has been my partner and has always been devoted and supportive of

the numerous initiatives and causes that I have been involved in and led. Judy made it possible for me to pursue all my business and civic aspirations.

I would also like to recognize Judy's parents, Ellen and Fred Selling, who were both Jewish immigrants and fled Germany from Nazi persecution. After moving to the United States, Fred joined the U.S. Army during World War II and served as a translator. He helped to liberate concentration camps in Germany.

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This opportunity to serve my county in Europe is a testament to America's democracy, and it is a result of the values my family has instilled in me and my efforts to make them proud. My and Judy's parents serve as my inspiration, and they would be so proud to see my family embrace this incredible opportunity. In this role, I hope to inspire my children and my grandchildren to dedicate their lives to making their community and the world a better place.

First and foremost, if confirmed, I will work with Belgian officials at all levels of government to advance American interests, protect the safety and security of American citizens, and promote American and democratic values. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of religion are values that both our countries hold dear. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with the dedicated FSOs of the Department and ensuring their safety and security.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Belgian Government to address collective security concerns. Working together, we can advance our shared law enforcement and counterterrorism priorities at home and abroad, strengthen the Transatlantic bond with NATO and the EU, and pursue U.S. interests in NATO. To that end, I will encourage Belgium to fulfill its Wales Defense Investment Pledge commitments to spend two percent of GDP on defense by 2024.

If confirmed, I will work to advance our economic interests in Belgium, where more than 900 American companies support 120,000 jobs. In 2020, our combined bilateral trade was approximately \$72.6 billion. Belgium is the 13th largest market for U.S. exports, and we are Belgium's largest trading partner outside the EU. Belgium is home to the Interuniversity Microelectronics Center, or IMEC, which is a leading research and development center for cutting-edge semiconductor and other digital technologies. Belgium is also a key global logistics hub; it plays a leading role in vaccine warehousing and distribution to Europe and the world. If confirmed, I will work with our Commerce Department and our Embassy economic experts to strengthen an already robust and successful partnership.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work diligently to lead our mission team and to work closely with all agencies to deepen our historic alliance with the Belgian Government and the Belgian people.

Let me conclude by again noting how great an honor it would be to serve in this capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you all for your testimony. We will start a round of five questions.

Before I recognize myself, let me ask questions on behalf of the committee as a whole. These are questions that we have asked every nominee for every position and I would, simply, ask each of you verbally to respond yes or no to the question.

These questions speak to the importance the committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we will be expecting and seeking from you.

First, do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited? We will just go down the line.

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?



[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador Brzezinski, did I hear you say yes?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Thank you.

Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. And, finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you. All of the nominees have answered yes to all those questions. Let me start by recognizing myself.

Ambassador Bass, you made a comment during your opening statement that there is a gulf or an opening between that which you—you all who work for the State Department are expected to achieve and that what you are given the tools to achieve. Talk to me a little bit about what that gulf is and how you intend to bridge it.

Mr. BASS. Thank you, Senator.

It has several dimensions. First is staffing shortages where we have not even hired to attrition in recent years so we have got a deficit. We are asking, therefore, people, particularly overseas, to do more than one job or do more than one can reasonably do in a period of time.

Secondly, our technology is way behind. We, essentially, have an analog organization, in many respects, for a digital age. We have not leveraged data expertise in the ways we should.

Thirdly, I do not think we are developing people professionally across their career to be prepared to take on new challenges, particularly interdisciplinary challenges that involve a greater awareness of technology, whether it is cyber and emerging technologies, global health, climate change, you name it.

And thirdly, I think we continue to have too many processes and regulations in place that impede innovation, creativity, and collaboration, and end up with stovepipes and silos of excellence that hinder our ability to mobilize resources to deal with the most pressing challenges we face.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that explanation of what you believe is the gulf and, especially on the third one I totally agree with you. I have been doing this for 30 years. I believe there is too much of an impediment to the type of flow of information, experience, and ability that does not happen. I hope you will make that one of your priorities.

I mentioned in my opening remarks this is not a post-mortem on Afghanistan, but more so what does that say about the department's ability to be prepared in advance? Not that one can fully see everything that would happen in a circumstance like that, but the ability to have that contingency ability, which, from my own perspective, is not quite one of the attributes of the department. What do you see is necessary to do?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I think we really need to focus on a couple of things intently. First and foremost, we need to rethink how we approach crisis management in the digital age when information is more rapidly available, when many people who might care about folks in harm's way, whether they are our own citizens or local nationals, are getting regular updates personally from them in ways that was not the case, for example, 15 years ago when we were taking people out of Lebanon—southern Lebanon in 2006.

We have to create and utilize a wider range of ways and tools to communicate with Americans in harm's way with other people we are trying to support and use that information to more effectively communicate with those who are concerned about those people, including members of this committee and your colleagues in Congress and your staffs.

The second thing I would say is I think we need to relook our organizational model for crisis management, which is pretty effective for short-duration crises that are limited in scope or geography but which wear pretty quickly when we get into week-long endeavors where we are potentially looking for folks to sustain that effort strictly on a volunteer basis.

I think we have got to improve training and resources available so we have got that cohort ready to go when we need it.

The CHAIRMAN. And on specific, as it relates to Afghanistan, I hope we will create a referral process for other government agencies, U.S. citizens, and residents to alert the State Department of Afghans in need of evacuation. Still, my staff has flagged a number of cases over the last several months, many of which remain unresolved. That lack of response or resolution is disturbing.

Can I get a commitment from you that you will take action on these cases working with others—I understand this will not solely be you—in a timely way?

Mr. BASS. If I am confirmed, absolutely, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Nathan, let me go to you. We talked a little bit about the bit of the inherent tension that was created in the DFC between the development needs that are, clearly, the focal point of the agency and then the strategic needs that we have.

Can you talk to me a little bit about how you see managing that inherent tension?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you for the question and thank you very much for the conversation about this subject yesterday.

The BUILD Act laid out a dual mandate for the corporation, both developmental and strategic, but also directed the corporation to focus on the poorest countries in the world.

While focusing on the poorest countries of the world, mobilizing private capital to worthy projects that can help their development, it is also important to think about the strategic foreign policy concerns of the United States.

I believe that good development is good for our national security and can help meet the challenges posed by our strategic competitors.

The CHAIRMAN. As we face the challenge of China we have countries that have stepped to the forefront of challenging China, including countries like Lithuania, and I will hope that we will find

ways when we can to focus on helping countries like that that are meeting the challenge. It is a test for the West, at the end of the day, and the DFC, I think, can play a role in that.

Finally, Ambassador Brzezinski, you, obviously, have a great deal of history here. But I do hope that I can get a commitment from you that if you are confirmed that the questions of democracy and human rights that I feel in Poland, particularly in the judiciary and the question of free press, are issues that you will press with the Polish government, even as we are steadfast in support of their territorial security and their relationship with us as a strong NATO ally.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. If confirmed, Senator, absolutely, and the two things you state are true at the same time. Poland's borders must be secure and democratic growth and renewal should occur in Poland.

And with regard to your point about media freedom, media freedom is a core democratic element and we have been watching closely what has been happening with TVN24 and its license renewal. The law that threatened it in the Polish parliament, the Sejm, has been put on ice, colloquially speaking as they put it, in Warsaw.

But there is another bite at the apple that the regulators could have in February with TVN7, which is the entertainment channel of the TVN Group, and we are encouraged by Polish President Duda's words that he will veto any law that threatens media freedom because media freedom is a core element of a robust democracy.

Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Bass, I am going to start with you. I think I speak for every member of this committee when I say that the health incidents known as Havana syndrome are at the very top of our list of things that need to be addressed.

This is not a partisan issue by any stretch but is of great concern to all of us in Congress, particularly this committee. Have you had anything to do—first of all, I assume you are read in on most of this stuff as far as what is going on on Havana syndrome?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I have not yet had the opportunity to get the full brief on the classified elements because of my status as a nominee.

Senator RISCH. Right. And I would urge you that the very first thing you do after you raise your right hand and take the oath is get into a SCIF and get a briefing on this. There is a lot of people, there is a lot of different agencies, that are working on this. But we sure need a lot better answers than what we have been getting.

I would urge you, when you make your list of things that you want to accomplish, you put this right at the top because this is of critical importance to all of us.

Mr. BASS. Senator, as a three-time chief of mission, my guiding principle was always the concept of duty of care. The well being and lives of everybody serving overseas in my mission was entrusted to me and I took that responsibility very seriously.

And if I am confirmed for this role, I plan to apply that same principle to the entire workforce, particularly our colleagues who are suffering from whatever is causing these incidents, and I think we owe them our very best ability to care for them even while we try to figure out what is going on. And I am going to make sure that the components of the department that report to me directly, that I am responsible for their performance, understand that this is their top priority.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that.

Moving briefly to the issue of risk, obviously, security measures are very, very important. I am assuming that you—having the background that you have—are familiar with the—complaints is probably too strong a word but the concern of the employees regarding their ability to get out and about because of restrictions from the department. Are you aware of those concerns?

Mr. BASS. Not only aware of them but have experienced them personally at different points in time myself. Yes, Senator.

Senator RISCH. You are probably in a good place to take a review of this and I urge you to give it a review once you get in because we do get that, those of us that travel out and that sort of thing. And I think a good—first of all, we all know you have to have security but you also need a balance, and when you look at the restrictions on our diplomats versus the—our competitors' diplomats there is a wide gap there and we need to catch up to them.

I hope you will do that. I hope you will take a look at that.

Mr. Nathan, I want to talk for a bit about the—about some of the developments. I wrote a letter recently, which I referred to in my opening statement—I assume you heard that—regarding the solar projects and the fact that we are very concerned that we are going to find U.S. taxpayers' money finding their way in the pockets of people that are employing slave labor in China. This is a real concern for us.

Can you have a look at that when you get into the agency and get back to me on that issue?

Mr. NATHAN. Absolutely. Taxpayer money should never be used to support forced labor.

Senator RISCH. I think—I do not think you will get any argument from any member of Congress in that regard. But for some reason, I think this has slipped through the cracks. If you would take a look at it we would really appreciate it.

Mr. Brzezinski, obviously, I think the biggest challenge that the United States faces on a foreign relations field is the challenge from China, and Poland, like every other country, faces that challenge.

Can you give me your thoughts on China's influence in Poland and the direction that is going?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, and thank you and your staff for the Risch report that you did on Chinese malign influence in Europe last year. I not only have studied it closely but in Ambassador School recommend it to every participant to read through, as it provides case studies of the deceptive practices China has been pursuing in Europe to advance its geopolitical role and position.

Senator RISCH. Mr. Chairman, we need this man confirmed immediately.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. With regard—

The CHAIRMAN. Maybe we could talk to Senator Cruz.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BRZEZINSKI [continuing]. With regard to Poland, let me particularly flag the Three Seas Initiative and support of it through the DFC and the importance of that, because if there is a bulwark against broad Chinese expansionism in Central Europe it is that, and I look forward to fulsomely engaging with my embassy team and country team to support the Three Seas Initiative.

But lastly, just anecdotally, reading the Polish press—Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita—cover what Huawei has been doing in Poland, and I have been watching closely the investigation of particular individuals associated with Huawei and look forward to learning more about how we can join with our Polish friends to push back on this challenge.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much. My time is up. But let me just conclude by saying I want to associate myself with the remarks of the chairman regarding human rights issues and the values. Those are—obviously, Poland is a strong, strong ally of ours, will be for a long time, but values matter. They are important to us, and I know you will put that at the top of your ledger also.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all four of you for being willing to serve often, once again, this country abroad. We are deeply appreciative of your commitment to defending the security of this nation.

I know a lot of work goes into preparing for a confirmation hearing like this, but now you will have to get ready to sit and wait because we will move you out of this committee and then you will run into the Republican blockade that exists on ambassadors on the floor of the United States Senate.

I cannot imagine anything more dangerous than not having an ambassador, an incredibly qualified ambassador, in Poland right now as Russia amasses troops on Ukraine's border, as Putin and Lukashenko use migrants to destabilize Poland and Europe. And so I am glad that you are here.

But this is a mounting national security crisis for this country, the fact that we have 85 pending State Department nominees, half of which are before this committee, half of which have cleared the committee and are on the floor.

Ambassador Bass, I wanted to ask you about this because you are an experienced diplomat. You are going to be in charge of overseeing the management of the department.

I just came back from Belfast and London where there is a very complicated, very important negotiation happening around the Northern Ireland Protocol. Could compromise the Good Friday Agreement, something that the United States cares deeply about.

We do not have an ambassador to Dublin. We do not have an ambassador to London. We do not have an ambassador to the EU.

It makes it kind of hard to conduct diplomacy without people in those top posts.

What impact does it have when we have a lack of ambassadors in place in so many key places around the world?

Mr. BASS. Senator, thank you. I think it creates, first and foremost, a degree of uncertainty for host governments and companies and others in that society about whether the person in charge is really speaking on behalf of the nation at the highest levels of our government.

We have got great talented, dedicated professionals serving as charges all around the world. But they are a bit out of position and I think too often people look at them as a temporary solution and, particularly, if they are trying to advance our interests in ways that are uncomfortable or create a clash for the local government.

There is a tendency to want to wait them out. So definitely has an impact on our ability to be effective overseas.

Senator MURPHY. These charges are excellent. But make no mistake, there are countries in which charges cannot get ambassador-level meetings. There is a different level of public diplomacy that can be conducted by a charge than an ambassador. There is just a fundamental difference, no matter how qualified and experienced many of these charges are.

A second question for you, Ambassador Bass, let me first just associate myself with the remarks of the ranking member on this question of pushing our diplomats out beyond the wire.

Both he and I have legislation—complementary legislation—that we hope you will take a look at that could reset the incentives to allow our diplomats to be out there representing America beyond the walls of the embassy.

But I wanted to ask you a specific question around vaccinations for Americans abroad. We have vaccinated our diplomatic employees but we have a lot of Americans living abroad in countries where the host country is not actually vaccinating noncitizens so our citizens living abroad have only the choice to come back to the United States in order to get vaccinated.

Can you commit to being in a conversation with this committee about how we may be able to find at least limited means in certain specific countries to be able to provide access to vaccinations for Americans living abroad?

I know this is a big project and may be beyond the scope of the State Department if we talk about every American living abroad. But there may be a way to target this to those who have no other option than the American government.

Mr. BASS. Senator, I would welcome the opportunity, if confirmed, to work closely with you on this to find ways to ensure that Americans are getting, at a minimum, equal access to vaccines on local economies, from local governments, particularly in the vast majority of cases where our medical professionals, because they are not licensed in those countries, are unable to do that directly. Happy to follow up with you.

Senator MURPHY. And, Mr. Nathan, thanks for our time together. Just a quick word from you on the opportunities to fund energy projects abroad.

We have expanded out the mandate of DFC to allow for energy-financing projects to be done in nondeveloping nations. But as we talk about China and Russia, this is a particular opportunity for the DFC to go out and build renewable energy capability in countries that are desperate to find sources other than petro dictator regimes like Russia.

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you for the time that we spent together and thank you for that question.

Under the European Energy Security and Diversification Act, the corporation is authorized to operate in Europe for energy-related projects and that would be a priority of mine.

Senator MURPHY. Great. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of you for your willingness to serve and for your sacrifice.

Let me start with you, Mr. Nathan. The United States needs a long-term development finance strategy for the Pacific. DFC has been given a set of new tools to meet the needs of our partners in the Pacific, and I get that not every worthy project will pencil out but we can collaborate with our partners in the Pacific that are also financing projects in the region to do more to support economic growth with less risk to the taxpayer.

Can you talk about where the opportunities are for DFC to use newer financing products, use newer techniques like technical assistance, feasibility studies, to expand our development work in the Pacific?

Mr. NATHAN. Yes. Thanks for the question and for the conversation we had about this subject in preparation for the hearing.

The BUILD Act gave the DFC new tools and expanded authorities. As you mentioned, technical assistance is one of them in order to prepare countries which may not have the enabling environment to accept investment.

We also were given the equity investment tool, which gives much more flexibility and the possibility of going out on the risk spectrum for making investments. The BUILD Act has given DFC tools to make important and impactful investments in the region and elsewhere.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you. Can you talk a little bit about why it is important that DFC step up its commitment on climate-focused development as part of the mission, particularly in the Pacific?

Mr. NATHAN. First and foremost, the climate crisis impacts the developing world and the people who live there greatly, potentially, more than anywhere else in the globe. It is important to find projects that are climate linked, which could include smart agriculture, water systems, in addition to power generation, so that these countries are prepared for dealing with the climate crisis.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Ambassador Brzezinski, we have seen backsliding with the Polish government, particularly on press freedom. Reporters Without Borders has cautioned that the government is pushing for greater

state control of the media by censoring private outlets or forcing to close those who will not comply.

Can you talk about what you will do to elevate press freedom?  
Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you.

First of all, we will speak directly with the Polish government regarding the importance of press freedom and human rights, generally. I mean, I come as an ambassador with a very clear message, America embraces equality, and that will be something that U.S. Embassy Warsaw will absolutely project and has been over the many generations of U.S. ambassadors that have been there before me.

I have been watching with concern what you report, Senator, about democratic backsliding. It is important to stress that Poland's role as a NATO ally is partly about its keeping its commitments, not just militarily but, as Senator Menendez said earlier, about its commitments on values.

There are international commitments for Poland to keep as a NATO member, as an EU member, and as an upcoming chair of the OSCE. And so we will be watching that closely.

And then lastly, there is the self-interest associated with the business angle. Business is attracted to places characterized by legal certainty. Places that are more legally certain attract more business, and that is something that is relevant to both Americans and Poles.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Ambassador Bass, a lot of routine consular services were either cancelled or moved online, and you briefly mentioned this earlier during the hearing but I would like you to flesh out where you think some of the changes that were made that were temporary ought to be made permanent and what other kinds of technologies and processes ought to be explored in order to move the State Department and consular services in particular into the information age.

Mr. BASS. Thanks, Senator.

You know, from my perspective, one of the most important things we do is provide those services to American citizens in issuing passports and facilitating business travel and tourism to the states through visa services.

We have gotten, I think, more agile in identifying where we have excess supply, if you will, capacity to support high-demand embassies. We are now doing quite a bit more remote adjudication.

We are continuing to explore ways to reduce the range of people for whom an in-person appearance is required so that we are only really focusing on interviewing those people who are particularly high risks or for other reasons come to mind like that. And we are looking at—

Senator SCHATZ. Are these permanent changes that are—or do you anticipate these being permanent changes? Are these precipitated in part by the pandemic or was this already underway?

Give me a sense for where we are and, I guess, give me some reassurance that we are not going to snap back to the old way where everyone has to stand in line and wait to get a stamp.



Mr. BASS. These are changes that have come about as adaptations to the limitations due to the pandemic, and we are currently in the process of looking at which of those we can apply as best practices and standardizing them, going forward, and if I am confirmed, very much intent on doing as much of that as we can.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to each of you on your nominations and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you.

Ambassador Bass, I would like to begin with you, and very much appreciated your thoughtful responses on how to make the State Department work better and be worthy of the dedicated personnel who work there.

I was also pleased to hear your mention of AHIs and your commitment to ensuring that people who are affected are taken care of. I know the State Department has made some significant progress in addressing that. That is very much appreciated.

One of the things that I understand the State Department does for new ambassadors is to have briefings and as part of that Ambassador School there is a briefing on AHIs.

Can I ask you, Ambassador Brzezinski, and you, Mr. Adler, if you will attend those briefings and ensure that you are up to date on how the State Department is dealing with Havana syndrome, or AHIs?

Mr. ADLER. Absolutely.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Absolutely.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Brzezinski, you were quite eloquent in talking about Poland's history and the partnership that the United States has had with Poland, and I appreciated that and I think that is why I am so disappointed to see what is happening in Poland now.

And despite assurances that we have been given on things like media freedom, I still have real questions about how Poland is approaching some of these issues, on TVN24, for example.

While they have renewed their license, the Polish regulator is still—my understanding is still contemplating asking the Constitutional Tribunal to review foreign ownership in media and so that would put us back at square one.

I hope that you will be very direct with the leadership of Poland about the importance of media freedom, of values, and why that matters, and their engagement in the EU and in NATO really depends on their continued commitment to the values that they embraced but now seem to be backsliding on.

Can I ask you how you will approach that?

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

And yes, it is almost ironic that we find ourselves in our relationship with Poland in the situation that you described, Senator, and when you think about the genesis of post-communist Poland out of Solidarity, what was the newspaper that supported the Solidarity movement? Gazeta Wyborcza, which, of course, stands for Election Gazette, one of the free newspapers that emerged out of the Solidarity movement.

The movement was, in part, driven—its essence was about free media and lack of infringement on media freedom and so forth. And so we will be watching closely what the regulator, KRRiR—KRRiR is what it is called, its acronym—as February approaches, not too far away, when it comes to TVN7, the entertainment dimension or the entertainment piece of the TVN Group and its license renewal.

And we will also be watching for the status of the media law that was put on ice and, again, we were encouraged by President Duda's words that he will veto any law infringing media freedom.

But this is something that we will work on with other friends of Poland's as well to make a unified and common message about values because, indeed, that is part of the international commitments that Poland agreed to when it joined NATO and the EU, and it would be highly ironic of Poland, as chair of the OSCE, and it is the next chair after Sweden—

Senator SHAHEEN. Right.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI.—to infringe media freedom while being the chair of the OSCE. We will be watching closely, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Having said that, I do very much appreciate Poland's willingness to support the opposition figures from Belarus who have moved into Poland looking for a safe haven and, at the same time, I think that has been very important in standing up to Lukashenko and what he is doing in Belarus.

They have not been as helpful, I think, with respect to the migrants who have been used as, really, a weapon by Lukashenko and Putin against the West and against Poland.

Again, what can we do to continue to support Poland in their efforts to house opposition figures and yet make it clear that the treatment of migrants is not helpful in the overall goals that they are trying to achieve?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. It is a great question, and it is important to note that there are almost 1 million Ukrainian refugees who have found their home now in Poland and are assimilating and thriving quite well as an immigrant community in Poland having to flee what is happening in Ukraine, especially around cities like Bratslav and others.

And I completely join you, Senator, in saluting Poland's support of the opposition leaders like Svetlana Tikhanovskaya who are standing up against the Lukashenko regime.

And to just take a step back and think, and just I ask myself who would do what Lukashenko is doing, luring the poorest people of the world to Belarus to march through those dark forests, cold forests near Bialystok and Bialowieza, to be projected across the border? It is stunningly cruel, and we will work together with our friends in Poland and Europe to address that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to turn my question to Mr. Nathan. Good morning, Mr. Nathan. Congratulations. It is good to see you here in person.

You know, when we spoke in October, I said that the Development Finance Corporation would play a critical role in advancing

the strategic interest of the United States and this is because the DFC has the mandate and the resources to address critical national security challenges while they catalyze investment and help emerging markets.

As ambassador to Japan, I signed the MOU as representative of the United States to partner with both Japan and Australia to drive economic growth in emerging markets and to provide an alternative to state-directed initiatives.

The DFC should continue to focus on addressing critical national security challenges posed by malign actors such as China and Russia. As part of that effort, the DFC needs to be able to partner with middle and high income countries to counter China.

Mr. Nathan, if you are confirmed, would it help if Congress provided the DFC with more flexible authorities to invest in middle and high income countries which would offer the DFC more tools to enhance national security?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you very much for the question, Senator, and thank you also for the great conversation we had a few months ago. I really appreciate it.

The BUILD Act gave the corporation expanded authorities and expanded tools and, if confirmed, I look forward to helping the corporation take full advantage of those tools to do as you say, to help counter the malign influence of state-directed investments by authoritarian governments. That is a very important objective as laid out in the BUILD Act.

In terms of expanding the operating authorities for the DFC, the European Energy Security and Diversification Act has done that in Europe for energy-related projects, and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to see if there is further expansion that would make sense.

Senator HAGERTY. If you are confirmed, I look forward to working with you as well to see if you need any further flexibility.

You mentioned Europe and energy. I would like to go to another quick question. This is about energy in developing countries. Most developing countries need fossil fuels to keep their economies going, meaning that many cannot yet rely on green energy.

If there is a project that would enhance development to help us compete with China and it reduces emissions but it does involve investment in fossil fuel energy, would you throw it aside just because it involves fossil fuel energy and leave them stuck with their legacy energy sources?

Mr. NATHAN. No, I would not. The DFC is not restricted in terms of what kind of technology choice it makes for energy projects. Access to reliable and sustainable energy is critical for development. In the last year, in 2021, there have been two projects—in Sierra Leone and in Iraqi Kurdistan—that the DFC funded that were gas projects.

Senator HAGERTY. Got it. I—

Mr. NATHAN. These were highly developmental.

Senator HAGERTY. Good. I just want to see us not be theologians about this and be practical and pragmatic about helping these countries because it is possible to reduce their emissions while still getting them to a cleaner point.

Ambassador Bass, I would like to turn my question to you. Secretary Blinken put you in charge of the evacuation effort in Afghanistan to help get American citizens and permanent residents, citizens of allied nations, SIV applicants, and Afghans at risk out. Yet, that evacuation resulted in the death of 13 Americans, including Staff Sergeant Ryan Knauss in my home state of Tennessee. I have a couple of basic questions to ask you about what happened in Afghanistan.

First, Ambassador Bass, do you consider the way that the United States withdrew from Afghanistan a success?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I think those of us on the ground did the best we could with what we had to work with in the time constraints we had. The fact that we are still working to get people out signals we did not have 100 percent success in that period.

But I can assure you that there are thousands of career professionals who have invested parts of their lives in Afghanistan who continue to work in various ways to support the effort in the years ahead.

Senator HAGERTY. I understand. My staff are involved in that, too. How would you grade your own performance as the coordinator for Afghan relocation efforts?

Mr. BASS. As I noted, I did the best I could with what we had to work with on the ground. I am proud of the people we were able to save but I think every day about the people, many of whom I know personally, who are still inside Afghanistan we were not able to reach.

Senator HAGERTY. I would just like to highlight the fact that to this day, though the U.S. Foreign Secretary has resigned to take responsibility for Afghanistan, though the Dutch foreign minister has resigned to take responsibility for Afghanistan, no one yet in this administration has been held accountable for the 2021 withdrawal that resulted in deaths and mayhem and embarrassment to the United States.

General Mark Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, even conceded that Biden's withdrawal from Afghanistan was, and I quote, "a strategic failure."

Ambassador Bass, I understand you were operating under tough circumstances. Indeed, I do. Ultimately, you were responsible for managing the on-the-ground evacuation effort in Afghanistan at the Kabul airport. Instead of being held accountable for your part in the failures of the Afghanistan withdrawal, the Biden administration now wants to promote you.

If confirmed, you will have even more responsibilities and oversee all aspects of management at the State Department. The fact that you are here today highlights the culture and lack of accountability at the State Department.

As the former U.S. ambassador to Japan, I understand firsthand that the State Department lacks a rigorous process to ensure that accountability is at the center of the State Department. This needs to change and it needs to change now.

As the ranking member on the Subcommittee on State Department Management, I am committed to fixing this enduring problem at the State Department in addition to a number of other structural issues.

Ambassador Bass, do you agree that Congress should take a leading role in reforming and modernizing the State Department, even including new legislation?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I, if confirmed, would very much look forward to working with you on key parts of our modernization agenda and on ensuring that we are always respectful of the principle of oversight and we are operating and consistent with that principle.

Senator HAGERTY. That is exactly the commitment I am looking for, that you will commit to work with us and continue to testify in front of the subcommittee, if you are confirmed. I appreciate that commitment.

Mr. BASS. You have it.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the senator has expired.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to all of you on your nominations. I have had a chance over the years to meet all of you in some capacity or another and I am confident you will all serve our country well in the positions for which you have been nominated and look forward to supporting those nominations.

Ambassador Bass, I think the last time I saw you was in Afghanistan. It was a number of years ago. Thank you for your service there, Turkey, Georgia, other countries, and I am pleased to see you nominated for this position.

I think you would agree, based on your experience, that if we are going to continue to retain and recruit talented Foreign Service officers we need to do everything we can to support their families as they move around the world in service to the country. Would you agree with that basic premise?

Mr. BASS. Absolutely, Senator, and I really appreciate your sustained commitment to supporting our families.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you. I just want to ask you a couple questions in that regard, because Senator Sullivan and I teamed up a number of years ago to borne the Foreign Service Caucus. The idea was to have a group of senators, bipartisan group, supporting the mission and the families.

And we then introduced the Foreign Service Families Act, and I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member of this committee for supporting that effort, which is now part of a substitute amendment in the NDAA—the National Defense Authorization bill—which we all hope to pass in the coming days.

But we are going to go to conference with the House so I just want to ask you a couple questions. I was overseas visiting one of our embassies recently and a constituent from Maryland came up and told me that their son, their child, could not get into the University of Maryland because of the residency length requirements.

A number of years ago, in order to address that issue with military families who also move around the world Congress passed legislation to make sure that students—kids in military families would be able to get that in-state tuition. Do you agree that that is something that we should extend to Foreign Service families?

Mr. BASS. I do, Senator.

Senator Van Hollen: There is also, as part of that coverage for military families, they are allowed to terminate some of their, for example, cell phone contracts if they are deployed, essentially, on short notice. Do you agree that we should extend that same benefit to Foreign Service families?

Mr. BASS. I think those kinds of practical arrangements would make all the challenges that our families face in moving frequently that much more bearable, so yes.

Senator Van Hollen: And another finding that was reached as part of the State Department Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review—this was a number of years ago now—was it is important to seek opportunities for the spouses of Foreign Service officers because we have many families with two working spouses.

And would you agree that it is important for every mission to look for every opportunity to provide employment to the spouse where appropriate?

Mr. BASS. Absolutely, and not only to look for opportunities within the mission but to ensure that work agreements—bilateral work agreements that are in place, whether they are formal or informal, are being adhered to and that we are creating as many opportunities as we can on the local economy for people as well.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you. Again, we hope to get this over the finish line, a number of—a little ways still to go.

I do also want to associate myself with the comments of the ranking member and Senator Murphy about allowing our diplomats to get outside the fortress. Obviously, security is important. We recognize that. But it is also very important that Foreign Service officers get to know the country and the people that they are sent on our behalf to represent.

I hope you will work with us on that front, too. I think that is a common consensus among most diplomats and Foreign Service officers.

If I could turn, Mr. Nathan, to you. Congratulations on the nomination, and I chair the Africa Subcommittee. Senator Rounds is the ranking member. We are very focused on trying to increase U.S. investment and development in Africa, both to support African economies and also to help facilitate Maryland—U.S. business investment and jobs here in the United States.

Can you just briefly talk about your strategy with respect to Africa—you mentioned a couple of investments in Sierra Leone, other investments—and anything in particular you are doing on the digital front?

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

If I am confirmed, I definitely will be interested in focusing on Africa. The agency in the last year has made investments from vaccine manufacturing in South Africa and Senegal to, as you mentioned, energy investments in the full range of both communications technology, water, sanitation, health-related investments.

Africa is an area of focus for the DFC and I believe in 2021 was the area of the largest investment commitment.

Senator Van Hollen: All right.

I would just in closing, Mr. Chairman, say that China has five times more investment right now in Africa than we do. We have

a lot of reasons we want to be there and invest. But we have a long way to go to do what I think we should be doing to fully engage.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, and thank you for your leadership on the—our Foreign Service families. Appreciate it.

Senator Barrasso?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Bass, I want to, first, follow up on some comments by Senator Hagerty. In August, President Biden oversaw a tragic mismanaged withdrawal from Afghanistan. The withdrawal is an epic failure—poor planning, zero strategy.

Instead, this administration had cobbled together a last-minute disorganized plan. People raced to the airport, Americans and allies left behind, and 13 soldiers lost their lives, including Riley McCollum of Wyoming. Tragic. Unnecessary.

You were the coordinator for Afghan relocation efforts. You headed up the State Department's efforts to evacuate American citizens and Afghans. You know of the failures of the withdrawal.

As Senator Hagerty said, nobody has been held accountable. Who at the State Department should be held accountable for the strategic failures and the disorganized plan?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I had a narrow view, if you will, of the evacuation itself. I could see from the perimeter of the airport to the horizon and I can tell you about the heroic work of so many on the ground.

From my perspective, I think it requires a bit more time and distance to understand the whole effort. I was not involved in the effort before August 17th so I cannot speak to the amount of planning that occurred or did not occur.

But I agree with you that it is important for us to undertake a robust lessons learned exercise so that we are better positioned in the future, and as I indicated earlier, I think one of the things we need to do is relook at our crisis management structure and organization and capabilities so we are better prepared for complex crises in the future.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

Mr. Nathan, Senator Van Hollen asked about the African Subcommittee and you said you were interested in focusing on Africa. One of the issues that you mentioned was energy.

Senator Van Hollen mentioned the fact that China is investing five times more in Africa than we are and I am going to focus on that energy component that you just said of which you are interested because I know what China is doing in Africa.

The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation needs to provide financing for energy projects that are most suitable to the needs of developing countries, and I see you were kind of, like, oh my God, this is where he has gone because you know what a bad job is happening right now.

In April, this administration announced the DFC is going to halt all fossil fuel investments by 2030 to achieve a net-zero carbon emissions portfolio by 2040. China is not going to do that.

Also announced that the DFC is going to make one-third of its entire investment commitments to be focused on climate change starting in just two years. Your limitation on CO2 emissions for

new projects is equivalent to one 400-megawatt combined cycle gas plant a year, meaning over the entirety of the life of the future of the world you are only committed to eight natural gas power plants globally, forever. Eight natural gas power plants is not going to end energy poverty in developing countries.

Worldwide, 759 million people are living without electricity. Stable, affordable, reliable electricity is the best way to help developing countries climb out of poverty. China knows it. We know it. This administration needs to understand it.

Traditional energy projects are still the most affordable and still the most reliable. No modern economy will run on only variable renewable power. You are a smart man. You have to understand this.

A country needs continuous abundant energy to run a manufacturing plant, a data center, or a hospital. The things you are talking about doing require lots of energy. Abandoning important energy projects slowly—this is going to slow our effort to reduce poverty and it is going to make China more powerful.

You do not have to take my word for it. Listen to the leaders of another country. Let us talk about Uganda. October 24th, this year, the president of Uganda wrote an opinion editorial in the Wall Street Journal, “Solar and Wind Force Poverty on Africa.” You are forcing poverty on Africa, the policies of this administration.

I ask, Mr. Chairman, this article be submitted for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

Senator BARRASSO. The president of Uganda has said Africa cannot sacrifice its future prosperity for Western climate goals. I could go on and on about this.

I would just say, if confirmed, when you ensure the International Development Finance Corporation promotes an all-of-the-above energy policy or are you going to be handcuffed to a policy that says we are going to let China take over with energy in Africa because we have our heads stuck in the sand?

Mr. NATHAN. Senator, I agree with you that access to reliable sustainable electricity is a critical component of development. I look forward to working with you and the committee to find ways to do that. I believe that it will have great development impact to bring electricity and clean power to the people of the developing world.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time is expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Let me thank all four of you for your willingness to serve.

Ambassador Bass, I am going to follow up on Senator Hagerty’s point. He and I are chair and ranking member on the State Department Subcommittee. And yes, there are lessons to be learned from Afghanistan, lessons learned over four administrations that led to the results that we saw this past month or two.

But one thing is clear. When we look at the training opportunities for State Department personnel, there is major areas of concern in regards to the number of personnel that are available in



order to go through training, the length of the training, the type of the training, et cetera.

We held a hearing in our subcommittee and we were disappointed that we were not able to have a representative from GTM present at that hearing, and I guess my request to you, if confirmed, do you agree to work with our subcommittee and to make sure that representatives of the agencies that are under your responsibility are available to us in order to develop a strategy as to how we can deal with, as we see it, the shortages in training opportunities for State Department personnel?

Mr. BASS. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that. We want to work together on this, the two of us. We recognize that there is need to take a look at the State Department. It has not been done for a while, and we look forward to, if you are confirmed, working with you to see how we can work Congress with you to provide that type of experience so that we have the people that have the proper training in the key positions rather than as it has been addressed too many times today that is not the case.

Mr. Brzezinski, I want to follow up a little bit on the Poland issue. I was at the Three Seas conference in Bulgaria. I had a chance to have a good conversation with President Duda on several issues.

But I really do think Poland is at a crossroads today. The countries that are under the dominance of the former Soviet Union made great strides, including Poland, in becoming a member of NATO and EU.

But we see the backsliding today, the prime example being Hungary but Poland also is not too far behind in some of the actions that they have taken in regards to the protection of democratic institutions.

I appreciate the fact that you say that it will be high on your list of conversations that you are going to have with the Polish government. But I think it has to be backed up by more than just conversations.

Their observations of support for democratic institutions do not bode well with internationally recognized standards. I would hope that we will be pretty definitive about Poland's future very much linked to its democratic commitments.

And you mentioned the OSCE chair in office. I think that is a really great example that we can use that where Poland should want to display its firm commitments to the OSCE principles when it has the chair in office.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for hosting the hearing you did a few weeks ago with the Helsinki Commission on Poland. That resonated broadly, including in Poland and was covered widely including the statements by the witnesses.

Your point could not be more important, and I just cannot stress enough that Poland's role as a NATO ally and a NATO member and an EU member are linked to the commitments about democratic values and democratic practice.

And if there is a U.S. foreign policy that is characterized by bipartisan consultation and engagement and agreement, it is U.S. policy towards Poland over the decades, and I can just invoke Rich-

ard Lugar and Senator Hank Brown and others who were titans in bringing a fulsome bipartisan approach to the future of Poland.

And your point about democratic backsliding is heard loud and clear, and I look forward to engaging this committee and, hopefully, to welcoming you and members of this committee and members of the Senate to Poland to consult and engage directly with the Poles on this critically important issue.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that.

Mr. Adler, I just really want to put on the record and maybe get a very quick response, Belgium—there are some issues that we have concern. Probably the most is its use of technology and relationship with China companies. We have talked a little bit about China and the impact China is having in regards to American national security interests.

But I would like to get your thoughts as to how you see your role, if confirmed, in dealing with the penetration of China in technology in Belgium.

Mr. ADLER. Thank you, Senator. It is a very important issue.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, IMEC is a major factor in semiconductors. But let me go to the point that you raise. I think what is most important is that we have to respect that Belgium has trade relations that are appropriate.

But at the same time, you just cannot accept trade and investment. What you need to do is make sure that you evaluate, you investigate, you know who you are doing business with and what they are doing. I will have that as an important part of the communications to the Belgium government.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, for this hearing, and thank you to all of today's four nominees for your willingness to serve, to continue to serve.

I have worked with all four of you at different stages in the course of my career here in the Senate and I am greatly encouraged that our President nominated four well-qualified and experienced professionals for these important roles.

Let me turn, if I could, first, to Mr. Nathan, nominee to lead the Development Finance Corporation. Thank you for our conversation about the challenges and opportunities ahead.

I believe you have a perfect background for leading the Development Finance Corporation. I look forward to working with you if you are confirmed.

As someone who has invested in and advised investors in multiple contexts and different projects across different business sectors and geographies, could you just concisely explain why the DFC's equity authority can help drive the transformative development outcomes that many of us who helped craft and support the BUILD Act had in mind when the DFC was created?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you, Senator, and thanks for the conversation we had in your office yesterday.

Equity authority is an important tool that the BUILD Act gave DFC. It allows—it would allow DFC to go further out on the risk spectrum, open up the aperture of potential projects focused on the

poorest countries where the operating environment can be more difficult. It gives us a seat at the table.

One of the intentions, I understand, behind giving DFC equity authority was to put it on equal footing with other development finance institutions, our allies, and also with multilateral development banks.

Senator COONS. That is exactly right, and I look forward to working with you to remove some of the obstacles that prevent the DFC from using that authority the way it was intended.

We are still in the middle of a pandemic globally. One of the areas that I am hopeful the DFC can make a significant difference is in vaccine production. There has already been some investment, as you referenced, some exploration at least in Senegal and South Africa.

How could the DFC support scaling up vaccine production in the developing world in places like Latin America, Southeast Asia, as well as Africa that could both help us get out of this pandemic and prepare for the next?

Mr. NATHAN. This is an important issue, as you say, not only for the current situation we are in but also preparing the globe for any potential further pandemics. DFC has made investments in the last year in India—a substantial investment—for diversifying vaccine manufacturing capacity, South Africa and Senegal. It is a pattern that, if confirmed, I would be very interested in repeating throughout the developing world.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I look forward to working with you.

If I might, Ambassador Bass, just briefly tell me, if you would, how you would prioritize making sure that our Foreign Service reflects the whole diversity of the United States.

I think it is one of our greatest strengths. How will you improve issues like promotion, attrition, and prioritize diversity in hiring and promotion?

Mr. BASS. Thanks, Senator. It absolutely is one of the key—in many respects, the key challenge we have in front of us today. I think we need to look at the whole effort. We need to question our assumptions about how we hire people, how we evaluate talent and select them.

As the Secretary noted a couple of weeks ago, it is no longer the case that the talented Americans who want a career that involves a significant chunk of their professional lives overseas that their only option or one of a few options is the State Department, and I think we still have a selection process that is geared too much to that assumption.

I think we need to use, creatively, all of the hiring authorities we currently have to broaden that pool that is coming in. I think we need to do a much better job of proactively supporting individuals from underrepresented communities as they take on this career.

I think we need to do a better job of professional development throughout and I think we need to prioritize selecting for advancement people who are not only good diplomats externally facing but who are promoting inclusive leadership and team building and collaboration within the organization.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I see I am out of time. I look forward to working with Ambassador Brzezinski and Mr. Adler in your roles. I am hopeful my colleagues will work quickly to confirm both of you.

I recently led a bipartisan delegation in countries where we do not have an ambassador. It weakens our ability whether to help the Poles stand up to the conduct of Belarus to it is to help our close partners and allies, Belgium, make good decisions in terms of supply chains and investment in partnership. I look forward to working with the chair and ranking member on getting these good folks confirmed.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome. Congratulations to each of the nominees.

Mr. Brzezinski, as I am sure you know, the Senate is going to be debating today sanctions on Vladimir Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline. This committee has long opposed that pipeline with an overwhelming bipartisan majority but that bipartisan commitment has been fractured, but perhaps it has not yet cracked. And I, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, are currently in an intense granular negotiation over how best to proceed.

I have imposed holds on a number of nominees at both the State Department and the Treasury Department in an effort to force the Biden administration to comply with the law and stop the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

My colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle disagree with the use of that leverage to try to stop this disastrous pipeline from going online and, indeed, it appears likely that we are going to be voting both on Senator Risch's sanctions legislation, which I emphatically support, but also what is functionally a side by side from Chairman Menendez that would impose sanctions on Russia if and only if Russia invaded Ukraine.

The reason that is suddenly so important is when Nord Stream 2 goes online, the odds of Russian tanks rolling into Ukraine will have increased dramatically, and my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle know that. They understand that.

It is anticipated that most, if not all, Democrats will vote for these sanctions on Russia after the fact if Russia, in fact, invades Ukraine. Among the sanctions they will vote for are sanctions on Nord Stream 2 after the fact if Russia invades Ukraine.

It strikes me that if it is not in America's interest, if it is not in Europe's interest, if it is not in the world's interest for Russia to invade Ukraine, the way to stop it and the time to stop it is before the fact rather than after the fact by voting for the sanctions that both Democrats and Republicans have supported repeatedly, the sanctions that had worked, that had stopped Nord Stream 2 until President Biden surrendered those bipartisan sanctions in a massively unjustified gift to Vladimir Putin that has now put a target on Ukraine.

The reason Chairman Menendez is introducing these sanctions is because the chairman understands the risk of Ukraine being invaded has increased and increased dramatically because of Biden's surrender to Putin.

But, of course, our Ukrainian allies are not the only ones who are endangered by Nord Stream 2 and by Russian aggression. When the Biden administration struck its deal with Angela Merkel in July, Poland and Ukraine together issued a joint statement saying that the deal, quote, “cannot be considered sufficient to effectively limit the threats created by Nord Stream,” and that calls on the United States and Germany to address the security crisis in the region and that commits that Ukraine and Poland will work together with their allies and partners to oppose Nord Stream 2 until solutions are developed to address the security crisis created by Nord Stream 2.

They further wrote, quote, “This decision has created a political, military, and energy threat for Ukraine and Central Europe while increasing Russia’s potential to destabilize the security situation in Europe, perpetuating divisions among NATO and European Union member states.”

Mr. Brzezinski, if you are confirmed, you will be our country’s ambassador to Poland at a time when they feel that the decisions from President Biden have put their own national security at grave risk and you will be faced with the challenges of understanding and addressing those very real concerns.

First, I would like to ask you, how do you understand the Polish position to be on Nord Stream 2 and do you agree with that position?

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

Energy has been used as a weapon now for years by Vladimir Putin, particularly to try to weaken and intimidate Russia’s neighbors immediately to the west. It is an incredibly important question, and when I appeared before this committee in 2011 in advance of going to Sweden, I made clear that I was against the pipeline at that time. I think it is a bad idea, and I note also that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have said the same thing.

The Polish position, as you intimated, is clear. They are against the pipeline and they are worried about what is happening in the East. Secretary Blinken recently expressed deep appreciation for Poland’s vocal support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity in his phone call with Polish Foreign Minister Rau.

He noted that the United States, Poland, and other allies and partners are united in imposing significant costs on Moscow for its military aggression and malign activities.

Senator CRUZ. Would it be better to prevent that aggression before the fact or after an invasion occurred?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Absolutely, clearly, before the fact and I think it is important that Secretary Blinken is in Latvia today and yesterday to consult with NATO allies regarding what is happening in the East and what to do next, and then he will go to Stockholm to meet with OSCE partners, in part, on the same topics.

I can tell you, if confirmed, Senator, as Ambassador to Poland that I will be unwavering and deeply committed in support of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and I am going to work with Poland, our ally, and other partners to address Russia’s destabilizing activities in the region.

What Lukashenko has done on the border of eastern Ukraine in those forests in Bialowieza is outrageous, and I will keep you and this committee apprised and consult with this committee and engage with this committee accordingly.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Very briefly.

Mr. Brzezinski, I want to—I ran out of time and I wanted to touch on one other subject that I think will be helpful for other nominees, as we go forward.

We had a situation where a person who was nominated to be ambassador to the U.N. had given a speech that was regarding China and it was significantly softer than it should have been.

She deeply regretted that. She recanted it here at the hearing. I supported her. I felt it was one step that that she took that did not color everything else that she did, and I still stand by that.

In 2019, you gave a speech at the China Development Forum in Beijing, which I now understand you have some reservations about also, and I wanted to give you the opportunity to clear the record.

But, more importantly, I think it is important that people such as yourself who have a history of dealing so well in foreign relations matters resist in giving these kinds of speeches, and they are unfortunate and then when people come here they have to back-track on it.

I wanted to give you a chance to clear the record on that, if you would, please.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, for that important question and, again, thank you for the case studies that you and your leadership and your staff pulled together in the Risch report on China's malign activities in Europe that you did last year.

I wish I had read that report before I did that speech. That speech was a family narrative that goes back to my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship and I meant to invoke and draw perspectives and observations from that family narrative.

It was also about hope, misplaced hope, about diplomacy, having—being the answer to the problems that we have with China.

Your report edified me. As I said, I have shared with my fellow students in Ambassador School how important it is and now I feel, personally, it should be required reading. But more—I would also offer this, Senator. I would be happy to continue this conversation in a classified session to offer examples of what I did as ambassador in Stockholm between 2011 and 2015 with regard to the challenges and the threats your report so clearly edifies because I think that you will see that I walk the walk, sir, and will continue to walk the walk, if confirmed, and get a chance to go to Poland and, of course, walking the walk most—among most important policy steps one can take is with the Three Seas Initiative and our support of that through the DFC because that will be an important institution, among others, in terms of pushing back on China's malign influence in Europe.

But, absolutely, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech and to take more into account what had happened in Hong Kong, what had happened vis-a-vis Taiwan and elsewhere.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me just close out this session with a couple of observations for the record because I would be remiss if I did not.

The situation in Afghanistan preceded with the previous administration under President Trump making decisions that, ultimately, led to what I think was an irreversible course.

When you enter into a surrender agreement in which you, ultimately, say to the Taliban, we are going to get out on a date certain, something that my Republican colleagues have railed against in every iteration it has ever taken place, when you reduce the troop level before the new administration comes in to a troop level that cannot sustain security, when you, ultimately, release thousands of Taliban prisoners and give them to the Taliban to augment their fighting capacity, and, for the most part, you say nothing during that time period, it is really hard to understand the lack of concern then and the concern now.

We all agree that we have to find ways to be better about when we have to deal with an emergency. But as much as none of us liked the end result, that result was in the making and there were no voices at that time suggesting that, in fact, that was not a good crisis to move.

Finally, on the question of Nord Stream, it is clear that I have supported sanctions against Nord Stream. I would have liked to have seen sanctions posed on Nord Stream during the totality of the hundreds of miles that were being laid under the Trump administration for which there were no sanctions until the final day of President Trump being in office.

The belief that somehow Nord Stream alone is going to stop the Russians and Putin from, potentially, invading Ukraine is beyond belief. That is why the amendment that I will offer, assuming we move ahead, is the mother of all sanctions on Russia, swift and a whole host of other elements, which, clearly, get to the heart of Putin, his pocket, and his cronies.

And in that regard, to send that clear message now before the Russians make any calibration in terms of taking any offensive action against Ukraine is critically important. It is not an after the fact reality. It is before the fact of what takes place so that the Russians will understand clearly and unequivocally what the consequences will be to them. To me, that is far more powerful.

Now, with that, I was about to close this hearing but I see Senator Markey is coming in and if he wants to get in his questions really quick, we will so observe it.

Senator Markey?

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

Wednesday morning in the United States Senate is like the old TV show "Supermarket Sweepstakes." They scheduled four separate hearings simultaneously, all beginning at the same time.

And so I apologize to you, and, Mr. Chairman, I will not take any extended time except to just recommend Scott Nathan as just an exemplary public servant, someone who will make a huge difference. His background in finance, his experience in the public sector, just makes him the perfect person to take on this huge responsibility that the United States has to play in this coming generation.

I did not want to take up any unusual amount of time, Mr. Chairman, other than I just wanted to make that point and to thank everyone else who is here for all of your great willingness to commit to serving our country.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey.

The record of this hearing will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, December 2nd. I would ask our colleagues that questions for the record be submitted no later than that time.

I would urge the nominees to answer the questions expeditiously and fully. Sometimes when nominees are skimpy in their answers or are not substantive in their answers it causes members to not agree to move the nominee forward at a business meeting.

That does not mean we need a treatise. But by the same token, it means be responsive and to do it as quickly as possible. And if that happens, we hope to get your nominations before a business meeting with the cooperation of the ranking member.

With the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:59 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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## Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

### *Equity Investments Fix*

*Question.* The current method DFC Equity Investments are scored for budget purposes assumes a 100 percent loss on all investments, and, therefore, requires a one-to-one dollar offset for those investments. This budget method negatively affects the ability of DFC to fully utilize one of the most promising new tools established in the BUILD Act and consumes scarce foreign assistance resources. Resolving this antiquated budgeting method will require this administration, including you, to provide the leadership to work with Congress to resolve this problem or other programs will be put at risk of a funding shortfall.

- Will you commit to engaging with the Office of Management and Budget, the National Economic Council and the National Security Council on the need to apply a more accurate budgeting method to the DFC's development financing programs?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I would engage with interagency partners including the Office of Management and Budget, the National Economic Council, and the National Security Council in support of present value scoring for equity. Equity investments are an important part of DFC's financial toolkit.

*Question.* How many equity deals has DFC done in the past fiscal year? How many are in the pipeline for FY 2022? How has DFC implemented its approach to equity?

*Answer.* As the nominee, I do not have access to DFC's pipeline. I have asked existing DFC personnel to respond to these questions regarding equity.

### *DFC Response*

In FY 2021, DFC supported twelve projects (10 investment funds and 2 direct equity) valued at \$239 million. In FY 2020, DFC supported six projects (5 investment funds and 1 direct equity) valued at \$120 million. For FY 2022, there are 29 projects (20 investment funds and 9 direct equity) being considered, valued at \$645 million in total.

DFC's approach focuses on addressing the shortfall in equity capital required to address major gaps in critical infrastructure and to support economic growth and job creation in emerging markets. DFC invests in projects that support the development of infrastructure, technology, financial services, and global health, as well as



general economic development. DFC will continue to refine this approach based on its investment experience and developmental outcomes.

#### *2X Women's Initiative.*

*Question.* As the United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) supports efforts around the world so that global prosperity and security is increased, it must ensure that it does not neglect critical populations. If programs aim to use taxpayer dollars in the most efficient way, programs must follow the evidence and ensure that the needs, challenges, insights, and power dynamics of all genders are included in all DFC projects.

- How do you plan to ensure that the DFC fully meets its mandate in the BUILD Act [Sec. 1451 (f)] to “prioritize the reduction of gender gaps and maximize development impact by working to improve women’s economic opportunities” throughout the DFC’s entire portfolio?

*Answer.* I believe that gender investments need to be viewed holistically to address the unique challenges women face globally in accessing financing and unlocking the investment opportunity that results from valuing women as entrepreneurs, leaders, employees, and customers. In my briefings as nominee, I have learned that DFC has hired additional gender experts, who are working to develop a gender strategy and ensure that in supporting transactions proper analysis is considered on how the projects impact women and girls. It is my understanding that DFC has integrated questions into its screening and monitoring questionnaires to assess the gender diversity of each supported project’s ownership, leadership, employees, and customers both at the time of origination and during the life of the DFC investment.

*Question.* Will you commit to disclosing:

- Project-level information on the amount of WEE investment the DFC has made for each project; and
- What amount was mobilized by the private sector; and what the results and learnings are so we can better understand the value of these investments and replicate those investments that have the most impact?

*Answer.* I am committed to increasing public disclosure of project-level data. To accomplish this, I commit to seek resources to further invest in the Corporation’s technological capabilities and re-evaluate current processes to enable greater transparency. I also commit to thoughtfully consider collecting and disclosing additional project-level data from our private sector partners, as well as disclose lessons learned from investments, in a way that does not significantly increase their reporting burden or compromise the trust they put in DFC to protect their confidential business information from competitors.

#### *Advancing Human and Worker Rights*

*Question.* The BUILD Act includes provisions on ensuring that DFC does no harm in terms of human and worker rights, and that the agency’s activities enhance rights-based development.

- What steps will you take to implement this rights mandate?

*Answer.* I am aware of the BUILD Act provisions related to human and worker rights. It is my understanding that DFC reviews all projects for potential impacts to human and worker rights. During such reviews, DFC social impact experts identify potential risks and require commensurate mitigation and management measures for negative impacts to a project’s workforce and/or affected groups or people. The social impact assessment ensures that projects being considered for DFC support and active projects meet Congressionally mandated requirements for respecting human rights, including the rights of workers. If confirmed, I would commit to following this procedure and will continue DFC’s work with other development partners to maintain DFC’s position as a global leader in social policies and procedures.

#### *Office of Accountability*

*Question.* The establishment of the Office of Accountability was an important step for ensuring that the DFC is equipped to address and remediate grievances from communities experiencing unintended social and environmental harms as a result of DFC-financed projects. When harm occurs as a result of DFC’s activities, the Office of Accountability should facilitate the provision of remedy so that affected communities can restore their livelihoods.

- How will the DFC ensure that resources are available to provide remedy?

Answer. An effective, resourced, independent accountability mechanism is critical to ensuring that DFC creates space for feedback on the social and environmental impacts of its projects, and it offers a fair, transparent, and constructive voice for sometimes under-represented or marginalized communities. This consideration is what distinguishes DFC's approach from other investment models that do not value human rights and the protection of the environment. If confirmed, I would support an assessment of the Office of Accountability's current resources to best position it to successfully fulfill its mandate and provide a space for fair and equal representation of all stakeholders involved in DFC's projects.

*Question.* Will the DFC require clients to obtain project finance bonds, insurance, or trust funds in escrow to ensure that reserve funds are available to address adverse environmental and social impacts?

Answer. It is my understanding that DFC's environmental and social policies are aligned with the International Finance Corporation's Performance Standards and the World Bank Group's Environmental, Health and Safety Sector Specific Guidelines ("EHS Guidelines"). If confirmed, I pledge to explore this issue with DFC staff and consult with you on the issue.

#### *Digital Development*

*Question.* COVID-19 has propelled the world into a digital frame which will only deepen for both economic activity and government operations. The digital divide between developing and developed countries is wide and a barrier to progress in low- and lower-middle-income countries. Digital development is referenced in the DFC strategic plan Roadmap for Impact, but the DFC has done little in the digital arena.

- Do you agree that investing in digital technologies and capabilities should be a DFC priority, and how you envision making this happen?

Answer. Yes, I agree that digital technology and capabilities are critical for economic growth and competitiveness, and important for advancing most development sectors including education, financial inclusion, and health among others. If confirmed, I would consult with DFC and interagency experts to determine how the Corporation can best position itself to have a significant development impact in this market.

#### *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Calculations*

*Question.* The DFC accounting for greenhouse gas emissions from projects does not always fully account for lifetime or lifecycle emissions associated with a given project.

- Will you commit to reviewing the GHG emission evaluation methods and consulting with my office on any decisions to revise the accounting process and criteria?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the greenhouse gas emission evaluation methods and will consult with your office on decisions to revise the accounting process and criteria.

#### *Sunshine Act*

*Question.* The DFC has previously declared that the Sunshine Act does not apply to it, which has resulted in a lack of transparency around DFC's decision-making process.

- If confirmed, would you commit to adhering to the Sunshine Act, including posting all board meetings in the Federal Register?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the greenhouse gas emission evaluation methods and will consult with your office on decisions to revise the accounting process and criteria.

#### *Joint Investment for Peace Initiative*

*Question.* The DFC's participation in the Joint Investment for Peace Initiative, as called for in the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act of 2020, is an important and positive step in building up the Palestinian private sector as well as ties between Israeli and Palestinian people and businesses. This is absolutely critical to maintaining space for a negotiated two-state solution.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to prioritize investment in Palestinian small and medium-sized enterprises? What metrics will you use in making those investments?

Answer. As I understand it, the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA) provides resources and direction to DFC and USAID to support private sector-led

development especially in the Palestinian Territories. If confirmed, I would work to help DFC fulfill its mandate under MEPPA and look for opportunities to support development projects in the Territories, including alongside key partners. I anticipate that the Corporation will continue to evaluate prospective transactions based on their developmental and strategic impact, commercial viability and the additionality of a possible DFC investment.

*Countering Chinese Influence in the Middle East*

*Question.* China continues to invest in private sector infrastructure across the Middle East and North Africa, potentially in close proximity to U.S. diplomatic and military facilities.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to provide countries in the Middle East and North Africa with an alternative method of financing that does not involve Chinese investment in critical infrastructure? How will those steps be balanced with the DFC's legislative mandate to invest almost exclusively in countries defined by the World Bank as lower-middle or low income?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to devote time and resources to source commercially viable projects in the Middle East and North Africa and will apply the lens of strategic competition to project evaluation. The BUILD Act prioritizes support in lower-middle and low-income countries, while also mandating a role for the DFC in upper-middle income countries consistent with the legislative framework.

*Sustainable Water and Energy Investment in the Middle East*

*Question.* Most of the countries in the Middle East and North Africa face looming and long-term water shortages. At the same time, there is the growing potential for energy cooperation in the region to help address this problem, including with sustainable energy, while also providing energy to both domestic and international markets. The recent agreement between Israel, Jordan and the UAE to exchange solar-powered electricity for desalinated water is one such example, although it did not involve the DFC.

- If confirmed, what further steps will you take to invest in sustainable energy generation and infrastructure, and in the water sector, in the Middle East and North Africa? How will you balance those steps with the DFC's legislative mandate to invest almost exclusively in countries defined by the World Bank as lower-middle or low income?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to explore how the DFC can have an impact on driving access to clean electricity and clean water in the Middle East and North Africa and to source transactions that meet this objective. DFC's Roadmap for Impact currently prioritizes investments in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), as well as investments in energy.

The BUILD Act prioritizes support in lower-middle and low-income countries, while also mandating a role for the DFC in upper-middle income countries consistent with the legislative framework.

*Iraq*

*Question.* Iraq remains largely dependent on Iranian electricity, and U.S. sanctions waivers, despite having ample gas reserves, much of which it flares off as a by-product of oil extraction. In August, 2020, the DFC signed an MOU with the Iraqi Government aimed at strengthening the Iraqi private sector with an investment of \$1 billion over four years.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to counter Iranian influence by investing in Iraq's energy sector to allow it to produce electricity domestically and wean the country off Iranian electricity?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would direct DFC to explore and consider opportunities for investment in Iraq's domestic energy market, which could include investments in power generation. DFC will also counter Iranian influence in Iraq by providing capital to support the development, diversification, and global integration of Iraq's private sector. DFC hopes to identify opportunities for scaling investment in Iraq. It is my understanding that DFC recently hosted a virtual Town Hall with Iraqi companies to educate them about DFC's investment tools and to identify potential new Iraqi projects.

- What is the status of the DFC's investments as outlined in the August 2020 MOU? If confirmed, will you commit to fully implementing that MOU and the investment therein?

Answer. While I do not have access to the status of DFC's investments as outlined in the 2020 MOU, if confirmed, I will look into this matter and consult with Congress on it. I have asked DFC to provide additional information below.

*DFC Response on Status of DFC's Investments as Outlined in the August 2020 MOU*

*Question.* The August 2020 MOU continues to serve as a practical roadmap to facilitate private investment in Iraq. The Government of Iraq is making progress to improve the business climate, and the DFC is actively seeking opportunities for investment. In 2021, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad hosted a virtual town hall for the DFC to brief members of the Iraqi business community on the DFC's products and priorities. The DFC also agreed to invest \$250 million in a natural gas processing facility that will deliver gas to power plants in Iraqi Kurdistan. Additional projects are in various stages of the DFC's screening process, including those that would provide financing to SMEs and other energy-related projects.

- Currently, Iraq is defined by the World Bank as an upper-middle income country. How will you balance those steps with the DFC's legislative mandate to invest almost exclusively in countries defined by the World Bank as lower-middle or low income?

Answer. The BUILD Act laid out a dual mandate for DFC, both developmental and strategic. While focusing on the poorest countries of the world, the BUILD Act also calls for DFC to mobilize capital in UMICs, particularly where it affects the poorest segments of the population. I believe that good development is good for U.S. national security and can help meet the challenges posed by our strategic competitors. In addition, DFC's Roadmap for Impact specifically targets 60 percent of DFC's investments in LICs, LMICs, and fragile states.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Climate*

*Question.* Do you believe that climate is the most important issue facing the United States?

Answer. No. Climate change is one of several pressing issues currently confronting the United States.

*Question.* Do you believe that the DFC should primarily be funding climate-related projects?

Answer. No. DFC should primarily focus on advancing its development and strategic missions as set forth in the BUILD Act. DFC should prioritize projects with the greatest developmental and strategic impacts, across sectors and geographies.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advise any official senior to you to sacrifice other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not allow the DFC to be used as a tool to trade away other U.S. interests to China on climate change?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Former Secretary Kerry has said that climate change is a "standalone issue" in U.S.-China relations. But he subsequently said that "life is full of tough choices in the relationship between nations" and that our priority "first and foremost" must be to save this planet. He made these comments in response to an interview question between trade-offs related to climate and human rights. Since then, he has stated that human rights issues in China are "not in his lane."

- What are your views on these comments?

Answer. Human rights are an absolute priority and should not be compromised. I look forward to working with you and your team to address this key priority during my time at DFC.

*Question.* What would your approach be if you were faced with a project related to climate but could cause human rights concerns?

Answer. DFC's policies and procedures should reflect a prioritization of human rights. All DFC projects must adhere to DFC's policies and procedures. Projects that are not able to do so should not be supported by the Corporation.

*Question.* The Secretary of State is responsible for the conduct of foreign policy and exercises authority over the provision of U.S. foreign assistance, including by virtue of his seat on the Board of the DFC.

- What degree of influence, if any, should Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry exercise over the DFC and the projects it chooses to support?

*Answer.* DFC's corporate governance is established in the BUILD Act and implemented through the Board-adopted bylaws. The Secretary of State or his designee is the Chair of the Board of Directors. If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to follow the governance structure and priorities enumerated in the BUILD Act.

*Question.* Do you believe it would be appropriate for Special Envoy Kerry to exercise that influence directly, or via the Secretary of State (by virtue of his position on the Board of the DFC)?

*Answer.* DFC's corporate governance is established in the BUILD Act and codified in its management directives. If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to follow the governance structure enumerated in the BUILD Act.

#### *Supply Chains*

*Question.* Do you believe that the DFC should support projects that source solar panels from China, despite the knowledge we have about forced labor in China's solar technology supply chains?

*Answer.* Taxpayer funds should never be used to support projects which utilize forced labor. If confirmed, I would direct the Corporation to advance efforts to finance transactions that will help establish alternative supply chains for the solar sector.

*Question.* Do you believe that investing in any projects with supply chain ties to China undermines the strategic competition mandate of the DFC? If not, please explain how doing so supports U.S. national security interests.

*Answer.* DFC should exclude projects that procure goods that undermine U.S. national security interests. Certain PRC-produced goods have no place in the supply chains of DFC-supported projects. For example, under section 889 of the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, DFC is prohibited from supporting projects that procure certain telecommunications equipment from the PRC. DFC should not walk away from involvement in transactions where U.S. involvement enhances our strategic position relative to China.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will prioritize—expeditiously—ensuring that DFC supply chains do not touch forced labor in any way, shape, or form? If confirmed, what will you do in your first 100 days on the job to achieve this objective?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review DFC's policies and procedures on this issue and work with DFC staff and the interagency to make adjustments, as appropriate. I will ensure that DFC's approach is communicated widely to staff and project applicants, and make sure that there are mechanisms in place to enforce compliance.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ending DFC support for procurements involving Chinese companies, including in the solar industry?

*Answer.* I am committed to advancing DFC's efforts to diversify supply chains, including in the solar sector. If confirmed, I will work to make sure that DFC's approach most effectively supports U.S. national security, and I will evaluate all options for achieving this goal.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to diversify DFC investments in the Indo-Pacific, which are currently heavily focused on India with limited exposure in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* DFC should look to diversify its portfolio in the Indo-Pacific region including expanding exposure in Southeast Asia. DFC needs to further strengthen relationships with partner development finance institutions in the region and expand its current business development in the region to identify potential new projects. I will look to closely coordinate with USAID missions and other U.S. Embassy personnel in the Indo-Pacific region. I will also look to build on the lessons learned from DFC's four forward deployed officers in Mumbai, Bangkok, Jakarta, and Singapore.

*Question.* Will you prioritize the identification of areas in Thailand where the DFC can still make investments, despite the partial rescinding of Thailand's benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that DFC does not currently consider investments in Thailand due to USTR's determination with respect to workers' rights. If con-

firmed, I will closely monitor the current situation, and if it changes, will consult with USTR and other relevant Departments and agencies so that DFC can source transactions in Thailand.

*Question.* Please describe objectives you would pursue with respect to DFC investment in projects in the following countries:

- Philippines

*Answer.* As one of the region's fastest growing economies and strategically important countries, the Philippines market should be a promising market for DFC. If confirmed, I would look forward to closely working with the interagency and with DFC's experienced staff to identify opportunities for DFC engagement.

- Thailand

*Answer.* It is my understanding that DFC does not currently consider investments in Thailand due to USTR's determination with respect to workers' rights. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the current situation, and if it changes, will consult with USTR and other relevant Departments and agencies so that DFC can source transactions in Thailand.

- Indonesia

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to identify additional opportunities for investments in Indonesia. I would welcome the chance to engage with DFC and interagency experts, both in Washington and Indonesia, to explore these potential opportunities.

- Vietnam

*Answer.* I understand that DFC is currently active in multiple sectors in Vietnam. If confirmed, I would engage with our Southeast Asia team both in Washington and in the region to explore additional opportunities in Vietnam.

- Sri Lanka

*Answer.* I understand that DFC is growing its portfolio in Sri Lanka, particularly in SME and MSME support for women- and minority-owned business, which will be critical to growing its economy that was hit hard by the COVID crisis. If confirmed, I will work with DFC's Indo-Pacific team and our Embassy in Sri Lanka to identify developmental and impactful opportunities in Sri Lanka.

- Eligible Pacific Island Nations

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with regional partners, including Australia and Japan, and the interagency to expand our engagement in the region. It is my understanding DFC is participating in the White House Small and Less Populated Island Economies (SALPIE) initiative and I look forward to participating in this initiative, if confirmed.

*Question.* Under your tenure, will the DFC make investments in Burma while the military junta is still in control of the government?

*Answer.* No, not under current conditions. If confirmed, I would remain engaged with interagency partners and Congress to ensure that DFC's posture in Burma aligns with current U.S. foreign policy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you improve coordination with other DFIs (especially in Europe and Japan), including on concrete projects where there are opportunities for co-financing?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that this was a goal of the BUILD Act, and I believe that partnerships, both with bilateral development finance institutions (DFIs) as well as multilateral DFIs and other like-minded institutions, are important contributing factors to future DFC success. My understanding is that DFC has partnered this year with other DFIs on vaccine manufacturing investments in Africa. If confirmed, I would continue this work and, more broadly, work to strengthen relationships leading to more sharing of potential project opportunities and further collaborating on due diligence processes.

*Question.* What barriers do you foresee for working with other DFIs in the field

*Answer.* My understanding is that DFC shares a close relationship with DFIs from like-minded countries and is actively participating in co-financing transactions with other DFIs. If confirmed, I would continue to prioritize this collaboration. My understanding is that the challenges to this collaboration include: (1) different due diligence requirements, standards, and processes; (2) different budgetary and approval processes; and (3) different priority sectors and geographies. Nonetheless, DFC has established the position of Director for Collaborative Partnerships within the Office of the Chief Development Officer, whose role is to focus the Corporation

on mitigating and, if possible, overcoming some of these challenges so that we can get more out of these strategic partnerships.

*Question.* What are some ways these barriers can be overcome or mitigated?

*Answer.* My understanding is that DFC can continue to work with other DFIs to map out areas of priority investments, to better understand one another's tools and available resources, and to collaborate on sourcing and potentially share transactions in the pipeline. In addition, DFC can work to identify specific areas of collaboration with like-minded DFIs, particularly as the Corporation works as part of a whole of government approach to develop alternatives around the world to PRC's Belt and Road Initiative.

### *Energy*

*Question.* The DFC was created by Congress, and we are committed to ensuring that Congressional intent is recognized and upheld. When we created the DFC, it was with the explicit intent that the corporation would pursue an "all of the above strategy" to reduce energy poverty. Multiple Indo-Pacific and African countries have told the committee that they need natural gas to make the transition to cleaner energy sources. Thus far, the Biden administration has signaled that natural gas cooperation with developing countries will not be a priority area, and the DFC has imposed a carbon cap on itself that will prevent it from involvement in natural gas projects in the future.

- Do you believe in the "all of the above" approach to reducing energy poverty? If not, why not?

*Answer.* My understanding is that DFC has not imposed restrictions on specific technologies or energy sources for power projects. If confirmed, I would continue this practice. While the Biden administration has prioritized low or zero emissions technologies, in certain developing markets there may be energy security or energy access considerations that warrant pursuing other technologies.

*Question.* Do you believe that the DFC should be involved in bankable natural gas projects to advance development and address the power needs of the developing world?

*Answer.* DFC has preserved the ability to engage in highly strategic or highly developmental natural gas projects that would enhance energy security and access in the poorest countries, as well as projects that advance U.S. national security interests. Where a natural gas project meets a highly developmental or highly strategic need, is bankable, and helps address energy poverty and energy security needs in a country, I would support DFC exploring supporting such transactions and would work to do so, if confirmed.

*Question.* If so, what will you do inside the administration if confirmed to make this a greater priority?

*Answer.* DFC has preserved the ability to engage in highly strategic or highly developmental natural gas projects that would enhance energy security and access in the poorest countries, as well as projects that advance U.S. national security interests. Where a natural gas project meets a highly developmental or highly strategic need, is bankable, and helps address energy poverty and energy security needs in a country, I would support DFC exploring supporting such transactions and would work to do so, if confirmed.

*Question.* If not, why do you disagree?

*Answer.* DFC has preserved the ability to engage in highly strategic or highly developmental natural gas projects that would enhance energy security and access in the poorest countries, as well as projects that advance U.S. national security interests. Where a natural gas project meets a highly developmental or highly strategic need, is bankable, and helps address energy poverty and energy security needs in a country, I would support DFC exploring supporting such transactions and would work to do so, if confirmed.

*Question.* You have been criticized for being a leader of the League of Conservation Voters while simultaneously leading the Baupost Group, which is heavily invested in BP. How do you reconcile the two?

*Answer.* While I was at Baupost Group during the time the firm purchased shares in BP, I was not directly involved in that investment decision. Like other investment firms regulated by the SEC, Baupost's fiduciary obligation is to serve its investors. My engagement with LCV represented an engagement in my personal capacity unrelated to my role at Baupost.

*Question.* If confirmed, what sectors of strategic significance to the United States would you focus on for DFC investments? Why should these be our priorities?

*Answer.* Before specifically articulating all of the priorities I would want to pursue, if confirmed, I would want to continue briefings and consultations including with Congress and other key stakeholders. DFC should play a leading role in the President's Build Back Better World initiative. The initiative, in partnership with our G7 allies, aims to fill the critical infrastructure gap in low- and lower-middle income countries.

DFC should also focus on vaccine manufacturing and other projects that promote pandemic preparedness. DFC can play a constructive role in helping to address market distortions created by strategic competitors and can present an attractive alternative that reflects U.S. values.

*Question.* Last year, DFC modernized its Environmental and Social Policy and Procedures (ESPP) to enable the support of nuclear power projects. This change enables greater access to reliable nuclear energy to help our allies and partners meet their development, energy security, and clean energy goals. In April, DFC committed to "Net Zero by 2040" and to increase its climate-focused investments, what role do you see for nuclear energy investments to meet these ambitious pledges?

*Answer.* Nuclear energy investments can play a critical role. Given global energy security challenges and the climate crisis, nuclear power should be considered as part of the energy mix.

#### *Inter-agency Cooperation*

*Question.* The DFC is one of many economic tools that the U.S. government can bring to bear to advance national security, foreign policy, and development objectives. Other tools include foreign assistance from the State Department, assistance and capacity-building by USAID, commercial advocacy and other tools in the Department of Commerce, certain Treasury Department programs, support for U.S. exports for infrastructure projects through the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and the Export-Import Bank. It is of significant importance that the interagency coordinate the use of these tools, including when the U.S. Government is made aware of projects. Will you commit to robust participation by the DFC in relevant inter-agency processes, especially on infrastructure, energy, or digital projects that would advance U.S. national security and foreign policy interests?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe interagency coordination is key to DFC's success.

*Question.* Will you commit to cooperating with the Department of State and other relevant agencies on the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network, including the Transaction Advisory Fund?

*Answer.* Yes.

#### FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

#### *Dual Mandate*

*Question.* DFC has a dual mandate: (1) to promote economic growth by unlocking and catalyzing private sector investment in low- to lower-middle income countries; and (2) to promote economic freedom, including by making investments in key sectors and countries that are important to the national security interests of the United States and are otherwise susceptible to the malign development model of strategic competitors, such as Russia and China

- How do you intend to align and balance these two mandates?

*Answer.* The BUILD Act laid out a dual mandate for DFC, both development and strategic. It will be important to balance these initiatives. Consultation will be key. I look forward to working with Congress on this as we seek to advance these two important goals.

*Question.* In your view, in which regions, countries, and sectors should the DFC prioritize investments?

*Answer.* Before specifically articulating all of the priorities I would want to pursue, if confirmed, I would want to continue briefings and consultations including with Congress and other key stakeholders. My initial impression is that DFC could look for opportunities to expand support for projects in Southeast Asia, Western Hemisphere, and sub-Saharan Africa. DFC should play a leading role in the President's Build Back Better World initiative. The initiative, in partnership with our G7 partners, aims to fill the critical infrastructure gap in low- and lower-middle income countries.



DFC should also focus on vaccine manufacturing and other projects that promote pandemic preparedness. DFC can play a constructive role in helping to address market distortions created by strategic competitors and can present an attractive alternative that reflects U.S. values.

*Question.* Under what circumstances, if any, should the DFC invest in high-income countries?

*Answer.* DFC is not authorized to operate in high-income countries (HICs) under the BUILD Act, except that the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019 grants explicit authority to DFC to provide support for energy and related infrastructure projects in Europe—including in HICs. If confirmed, I will direct the agency to comply with these statutory requirements.

*Question.* Under what circumstances, if any, should the DFC invest in sectors that are dominated by China?

*Answer.* If possible, the United States should compete even in sectors dominated by China. The U.S. can provide an alternative model for development, based on high standards, transparency, private sector orientation, and free of corruption. We ultimately prevail on the strength of U.S. values by supporting private sector projects that uphold high social and environmental standards, reinforce good governance, avoid unsustainable debt levels, and contribute to sustainable and broad-based economic growth in the areas we work.

#### *Values*

*Question.* If confirmed, will you uphold all U.S. laws prohibiting the use of U.S. foreign assistance, to include development finance, to support the performance or promotion of abortion and forced sterilization overseas or to advocate for or against the legalization of abortion? What methods will you put in place to ensure compliance?

*Answer.* Yes. It is my understanding that for healthcare-related projects and hospitals, in order to comply with US statute, DFC includes in its financing documents an express prohibition on use of DFC funds in accordance with U.S. law. If confirmed, I would direct that this practice continue and DFC continue to follow all related U.S. laws in its development finance activities.

#### *Equity Scoring*

*Question.* The current method by which OMG scores DFC equity investments for budget purposes assumes a total loss on all investments, and, therefore, requires a one-to-one dollar offset for those investments. This method of budgeting negatively affects the ability of DFC to fully utilize one of the most promising new tools in the BUILD Act.

- Do you commit to working with Congress and the administration to resolve this issue by working to secure a fairer budget scoring method for DFC equity investments?

*Answer.* Yes. As Congress recognized, equity is a key tool to drive development and strategic impact. If confirmed, I would make engaging with Congress and the administration regarding equity scoring a top priority.

#### *Global Health and Biosecurity*

*Question.* Do you think it is appropriate for the DFC to finance certain health technologies and gain-of-function research that may serve a dual-use purpose?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct that all projects under consideration for DFC support continue to be evaluated for biosecurity risks, and take steps to enhance biorisk management in DFC investments.

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#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* I was pleased to see the DFC's announcement this summer (July 1) that it will mobilize at least \$12 billion by 2025 as part of its new commitment to invest in businesses that advance gender equity in emerging markets as part of its 2X Women's Initiative.

- If confirmed, how will you work to prioritize not only projects that are specifically directed to advance gender equality—which is important—but also gender lens decision-making as part of all of the DFC's investments?

Answer. It is my understanding that DFC has integrated questions into its screening and monitoring questionnaires to assess the gender diversity of each applicant's and each investee's ownership, leadership, employees, and customers both at the time of origination and during the life of the DFC investment. If confirmed, I would support this wider, gender-lens approach at DFC. Gender investments need to be viewed holistically to address the unique challenges women entrepreneurs face globally in accessing financing.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* The DFC has been tasked with financing companies working hard to address the pandemic. Projects in the program include critical manufacturing, shoring up America's supply chain to better respond to this and future public health emergencies. The importance of this mission is clear, as we have all observed the fragility and foreign dependence of the medical supply chain that Americans depend on. How do you propose to improve the program should it be extended into your tenure? *Answer:* It's my understanding that the Executive Order that established DFC's role in the DPA loan program is set to expire early in 2022. If confirmed, I will work with Corporation staff, as well as the interagency and Congress, to determine what actions are appropriate for DFC to take. This includes if the DPA loan program might be extended, and the Corporation is asked to continue its current role or in supporting the transition of a successor loan program to another agency. To that end, I would look to streamline the interagency review and loan disbursement monitoring processes, and direct that DFC works closely with the White House and Department of Defense, so the DPA loan program continues to support the administration's COVID-19 and pandemic preparedness responses. As part of that effort, however, I would want to make certain that DFC does not divert resources or attention from its principal mission and purposes as laid out by the BUILD Act.

*Question.* The DFC plays an active role in expanding critical healthcare access to the developing world. I applaud the administration for setting a goal to vaccinate 70 percent of the world by next September. However, in order to achieve that, we need to be producing and delivering hundreds of millions of vaccines every single month for the next nine months. How can the DFC advance the goal to vaccinate 70 percent of the world by next September? *Answer:* DFC has undertaken a multifaceted response focused on helping developing countries by expanding manufacturing for vaccines, strengthening health systems, providing liquidity for small- and medium-sized businesses, and providing technical assistance and expertise to businesses responding to critical challenges, including in water and sanitation. By focusing on health-systems projects that are viable on their own commercial merits, the Corporation can help create a global health ecosystem that is self-sustaining and will outlast the immediate crisis. DFC has taken steps such as supporting several projects to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including financing vaccine production in both South Asia and on the African continent, and by providing political risk insurance for some countries participating in the GAVI alliance. These investments are critical to support COVID-19 production but also to build capacity for production of critical medical commodities in the future. If confirmed, I would direct DFC to prioritize investments in global health and health security.

*Question.* Climate change remains the premier global challenge of our generation. President Biden continues to take effective steps to combat this global crisis, and the DFC has the ability to play a prominent role in contributing to these actions. Earlier this year, the DFC announced that 33 percent of its new investments will be applied to net zero carbon investments, along with the creation of the novel position of Chief Climate Officer. Though a step in the right direction, more can be done. What further steps can the DFC take to avoid climate harming actions through its investments?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that mitigating the effects of the climate crisis is one of DFC's goals. This will be an important consideration in balancing investments across the portfolio. I believe this can be done in a manner than advances, rather than competes with, DFC's overall strategic and developmental goals.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*State Department Modernization*

*Question.* As you are aware, in October, Secretary Blinken delivered a speech at the Foreign Service Institute to discuss how he intends to modernize the department—building capacity in critical new areas like cyber and technology, climate, and global health; elevating new voices; building and retaining a more diverse workforce; modernizing the Department’s technology and analytical capabilities; and reinvigorating in-person diplomacy and public engagement.

- How do you intend to prioritize and implement these measures?

Answer. As you have noted, Secretary Blinken has laid out an ambitious five-part modernization agenda. If confirmed, my job will be to support the bureaus and offices responsible for executing individual elements within that agenda—ensuring they have the direction, support and resources required to succeed.

In seeking to achieve these ambitious objectives, I would prioritize among the many initiatives based on guidance from the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries; consultations with other senior Department officials; priorities identified by our current workforce; availability of funding; and an assessment of potential constraints posed by existing law and regulation. I would seek to respond rapidly to the needs of the workforce, prioritizing initially initiatives for which the Department already has the necessary authorities to implement changes and funding either is available or not an obstacle.

For those initiatives requiring new authorities and/or significant additional resources, I would plan, in partnership with the Department’s leadership, to work with you and other members of the committee on possible solutions.

*Question.* What is your vision for State Department modernization?

Answer. I share the Secretary’s diagnosis of the challenges confronting the State Department today and fully support his vision for modernizing the institution and its organizational culture. Too many of our dedicated professionals love what they do, and remain in government service, despite—not because of—the ways in which the State Department organizes itself and conducts its business.

I believe our most pressing priority is to reassess, and change as warranted, the ways in which we recruit, retain and promote our workforce to ensure they reflect the expectations of contemporary American society, prospective employees and our current team. This is essential to building the diverse, dynamic and empowered workforce we need to sustain the United States’ influence and competitive advantages in today’s world and to address the complex, interdisciplinary challenges that will confront us in the coming decades.

We need to improve the environment in which our dedicated team works, whether domestically or overseas. That entails improving and adapting our physical infrastructure, our information technology and digital communications, our talent management and overall conditions of work. It also entails identifying ways to better manage risk in the many threat environments in which we operate. We also need to improve the Department’s agility—its ability to more rapidly and effectively shift its people and other resources to tackle the highest-priority issues and countries.

If confirmed, I also would concentrate on strengthening a “field-first” orientation within the Department’s organizational culture and business processes, to counteract the tendency to concentrate resources and decision-making authority within the headquarters in Washington.

In all of these initiatives, I intend to consult with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to ensure any changes provide the best possible impact for the nation and for our fellow citizens.

*Question.* What are your top priorities for assuring that the Department has the organization, tools, and resources it needs?

Answer. In seeking to implement the Secretary’s modernization agenda, if confirmed, I would prioritize among the many initiatives based on guidance from the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries; consultations with other senior Department officials; priorities identified by our current workforce; availability of funding; and an assessment of potential constraints posed by existing law and regulation. I would also be mindful of the importance of balancing resource allocation to address compelling urgent priorities and to invest in strengthening the institution and building capacity and organizational resilience for future challenges.

I would intend to prioritize improving our capacity to allocate any additional human resources to both strengthen the Department’s capacity to address imme-

diate policy priorities and to build a ‘float’ of positions that enables us to offer our workforce a wide range of professional development opportunities.

#### *Diversity*

*Question.* I have long said that diversity in the Foreign and Civil Services is not only one of the best ways of representing the United States and our values abroad, but also a national security imperative. Yet the Department continues to struggle to both recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

- How do you plan to hire, retain, and promote a diverse foreign and civil service?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work to ensure the Department does everything possible to recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the richness and diversity of America. I would begin by ensuring the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and her staff have the resources they need to evaluate, and then address, current impediments to retaining and promoting a diverse team. I would support fully ongoing efforts to integrate diversity and inclusion practices strategically into all Department policies, reflecting the Secretary’s and administration’s priorities. Even as the State Department maintains fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, I believe we need to review our talent evaluation and selection process, given the unparalleled competition we face for the services of individuals who wish to pursue a career in which they spend a significant portion of their professional lives overseas.

I am committed to listening to the workforce and to better addressing its needs, including by using the full range of workplace flexibilities and encouraging a culture of inclusion for all of our employees. We need to invest in professional development and career-long learning across the workforce; strengthen mentoring programs that help individuals succeed and advance; provide actionable feedback on performance; chart career progression; provide more interagency and other detail opportunities; and create viable pathways for those in the Civil Service and Foreign Service as they aspire to advance their careers.

#### *New Cyber Bureau*

*Question.* Secretary Blinken recently announced the creation of a new cyber bureau and technology special envoy. As with any organizational change, the success of these new structures will depend on implementation.

- What steps will you take to ensure that the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy and the Special Envoy for Critical and Emerging Technology will be successful in achieving their missions?

*Answer.* The planned Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy, and the office of the Special Envoy for Emerging Technology, are key components of the Secretary’s agenda to modernizing American diplomacy. This initiative is consistent with recent legislative proposals to both promote and protect cyberspace as a digital platform for global economic development and trade. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department provides the resources required, and uses its full range of hiring and other authorities, to enable these new organizational elements to effectively advance U.S. national interests and diplomacy in these critical policy areas. I commit to full and open engagement with all stakeholders including the Congress, OMB, employees, unions, and all impacted partners throughout the creation and initial operations of these new elements.

#### *Havana Syndrome*

*Question.* I remain concerned that the Department is lagging behind other agencies in providing benefits and caring for individuals affected by Havana Syndrome. I know that Deputy Secretary McKeon and the new head of the health incident task force, Jonathan Moore, will be leading the response, but it will fall to you to ensure that there are sufficient resources, and that bureaus under your leadership—primarily MED and Diplomatic Security—are acting with sufficient urgency.

- Do I have your commitment that you will review the resources allocated for these efforts and that getting to the bottom of these incidents will be a priority for the bureaus you oversee?

*Answer.* Yes. The Secretary of State has security responsibility for all U.S. Government employees on official duty overseas, except those under the command of an area military commander, a responsibility that entails protecting them and their families from a wide range of threats. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of my colleagues in the Department of State. I will review the resources that we have allocated for these efforts, identify additional resources as needed and work to reduce the administrative burdens on those suffering from the effects of these incidents. Anomalous Health Incidents (AHIs)

have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken. As Under Secretary, I would direct those bureaus and offices reporting to me to help the Health Incident Response Task Force achieve its priorities: strengthening the Department's communication with our workforce, providing rapid, thorough care for affected employees and family members; better protecting our work force against these incidents; and strengthening interagency partnerships to find the cause of these AHIs.

#### *Morale/Political Appointees*

*Question.* As you are aware, the Department's workforce endured serious declines in morale under the previous administration. While Secretary Blinken and Deputy Secretary McKeon have made this issue a top priority, I'd like to know what you will do to ensure that the Department's workforce is empowered and trusted to carry out its critical diplomatic work.

- Can you tell us today what concrete steps you will take to rebuild morale?

*Answer.* To fully succeed, the State Department must be more responsive to the needs of the contemporary work force, drawing on lessons and best practices from private industry that are applicable in a global public institution. If confirmed, I would continue to promote and expand workplace flexibilities—including telework and remote work—and stress the importance of caring for oneself and family. Our Employee Consultation Service (ECS) is integral to this effort. I fully support ECS's continued outreach to employees and family members to further reduce barriers to seeking care by increasing knowledge of supports ECS can offer and addressing any misperceptions that this will impose adverse consequences. If confirmed, I would ensure ECS has the resources it needs to permanently support its 24/7 expansion of services.

I also would seek additional ways to promote full use of resources the Department offers to assist employees including FSI workshops and engagements; 24/7 online access to Worklife4U to address personal issues, including mental health; and TalentCare, the single touchpoint for resources for well-being, community, safety, and workplace flexibilities. I would also plan to expand opportunities for professional development across the workforce and promote a culture of career-long learning.

*Question.* What steps will you take to reverse the culture of fear surrounding political reprisal and retribution? And what measures will you take to protect the Department from a future administration that might once again seek to act in such a fashion?

*Answer.* I view my Foreign and Civil Service colleagues with the highest regard. Department employees are free to express their views as part of the Department's policy formulation process without fear of reprisal. Career Civil Service and Foreign Service employees are protected by law from being removed from positions or deferred from promotions or appointments due to their political affiliation. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Department's other senior leaders to ensure these protections are observed and valued throughout the organization. If any Department personnel feel that political reprisal and retribution are taking place, I will highly encourage them to report it to the appropriate authorities, including the Office of the Inspector General. If confirmed, I will ensure that any transgressions are investigated and addressed promptly, including by ensuring the relevant elements of the Department have the personnel and resources needed to meet this standard. I would work to ensure that Congress is fully and currently informed on our ongoing efforts to prevent and punish any political reprisals or retribution. I would also personally reinforce our internal messaging to ensure employees have confidence that the Department will protect them from unlawful retaliation, including by subjecting supervisors to disciplinary action, up to and including separation, if they retaliate against employees.

#### *Afghanistan Evacuation*

*Question.* Americans, including U.S. Government employees, have reported that the State Department has limited communication pathway to successfully report Afghans in need of evacuation or assistance outside of Afghanistan. I have heard from other government agency employees that it is difficult to get through to the State Department and to discuss evacuations or assistance for Afghans overseas because the State Department lacks a transparent process or single point of contact with whom to discuss difficult cases of Afghans seeking assistance.

- Have you created a referral process for other government agencies or U.S. citizens and residents to alert the State Department of Afghans in need of evacuation?

Answer. If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will work at the Department to ensure we put in place a reliable set of mechanisms through which other U.S. Government agencies and private individuals can highlight cases of vulnerable or at-risk Afghans who need our support to depart Afghanistan.

*Question.* Members of my staff have flagged a number of cases over the last several months, many of which remain unresolved. The lack of response or resolution is disturbing. Will you commit that you will take action on these cases in a timely way?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues at the Department to ensure these cases are addressed in a timely way.

*Question.* We understand that a number of active-duty U.S. service members have contacted the State Department for assistance with their immediate family members trapped in Afghanistan. Does the State Department have the ability to coordinate the evacuation of the family members of active-duty U.S. military? Do immediate family members of our active-duty military qualify for SIV status? If not, will you prioritize family member evacuation via charter flights and resettlement to the United States or a third country under other programs?

Answer. The Department of State is working with the DoD and U.S. service members who have alerted us of their immediate relatives in need of relocation assistance. If confirmed, you have my commitment this will continue and, as necessary, be strengthened.

I understand from my Department colleagues that U.S. immigration and other laws dictate who is eligible to derive immigrant status from a U.S. citizen, an LPR, or a SIV principal applicant based on their familial relationship.

The Afghan SIV program does not provide an immigration pathway for family members of active-duty U.S. military members unless they independently qualify under the SIV program. Interested parties can check the Bureau of Consular Affairs' website for more information: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/special-immg-visa-afghans-employed-us-gov.html>. Members of our active-duty military who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents may petition for family-based immigrant visas for their families, visa categories that are different from SIVs. Regardless of the legal pathway—SIV or family-based immigration—any Afghan who is eligible for an immigrant visa may continue to pursue that pathway to immigrate to the U.S.

#### *Processing Afghans at Risk*

*Question.* I understand that consular officers are not involved in P-1 or P-2 processing for Afghans, but that they can make P-1 embassy referrals.

- What guidance have you given to consular officers working overseas on how to assist Afghans—whether P-1, P-2, SIV, or others—who may arrive at the U.S. Embassy seeking help?

Answer. The Department continues to provide U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide with guidance for Afghans seeking help with refugee or visa processing. Personnel representing every part of our missions overseas remain committed to assisting Afghans that are vulnerable or at risk.

The Department continues to expedite SIV applications at every stage of the SIV process, including by transferring cases to other U.S. embassies and consulates around the world where applicants are able to appear. Consular officers at immigrant visa processing posts worldwide have been instructed to accept transfer of any interview-ready Afghan SIV application for processing at their location. To date, more than 17 embassies and consulates have issued SIVs to Afghan applicant since late August. The Department also has concluded an agreement with the Government of Qatar that will enable use of Camp As-Saliyah as a processing location for SIV applicants with Chief of Mission and I-360 petition approval, meaning they have established eligibility for the SIV and are ready to undergo a visa interview. We also continue to expedite processing of SIV applications at stages of the process that are performed in the United States.

*Question.* How are consular officers working with PRM refugee coordinators and Resettlement Support Centers to assist with refugee processing for Afghans? Can they submit parole applications on behalf of SIV and P-2 eligible Afghans?

Answer. With the exception of “following-to-join” for family reunification cases, consular officers are not involved directly with refugee processing. However, personnel representing every part of our missions overseas remain committed to assisting vulnerable and at-risk Afghans and to working with organizations that are seeking to resettle priority groups in the United States or in third countries where they

will be safe. I respectfully refer you to DHS for questions on eligibility or application procedures for parole.

*Question.* Why is the administration not doing remote/virtual processing for P-2 refugee-referred Afghans? Is there a way to break up the process to do some in-country screening and then to give a tentative “green light” on their eligibility before having them flee to a third country?

*Answer.* Neither in-country screening nor processing of Afghans referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is possible since the U.S. Government does not have a physical presence in Afghanistan. As the Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) works through the backlog of referrals, they are emailing Afghans whose referral is complete to confirm their referral. We are able to accept referrals for Afghans who are located in Afghanistan. Currently, we are legally unable, however, to begin processing those referrals until the individual departs Afghanistan.

Once referred individuals depart Afghanistan and reach a third country where processing is possible, PRM will create a case for the individual and assign the case to the relevant Resettlement Support Center (RSC). At that time, processing through the USRAP may begin.

*Question.* What are the P-2 numbers? Number of total referrals (primary applicants and primary applicants and dependents)? Number that have begun processing? Number approved?

*Answer.* As of December 6, PRM has received 12,158 P2 submissions of which 7,912 have been reviewed. Of those reviewed, PRM had enough information to accept 2,189 P2 referrals. We have thus far created cases for 131 families referred to the P2 for which case processing can now begin. We have been contacted by approximately 400 Principal Applicants who have referrals, and we are working to ensure their referrals are completed so their case processing can begin. We estimate 9,500 P2 families will be eligible for processing once their referral is brought to completion and the principal applicant relocates to a third country.

*Question.* What is Consular Affairs doing to expedite the processing of SIV applications? Has the Department surged resources and people to review SIV applications? And at the current level of personnel and resources, what is the expected processing timeline for SIV applications?

*Answer.* The Department continues to expedite SIV applications at every stage of the SIV process, including by transferring cases to other U.S. embassies and consulates around the world where applicants are able to appear. Embassies and consulates in Europe, the Middle East and South Asia have issued SIVs to applicants present in those regions since late August. The Department also has concluded an agreement with the Government of Qatar that will enable use of Camp As-Saliyah as a processing location for SIV applicants with Chief of Mission and I-360 petition approval, meaning they have established eligibility for the SIV and are ready to undergo a visa interview. We also continue to expedite processing of SIV applications at stages of the process that are performed in the United States.

The Department quintupled the size of its COM review team and cross-trained 54 additional personnel at the National Visa Center to continue managing the demand. It also sent additional officers to Kabul to assist with processing before the suspension of operations in August. Processing times vary on a case-by-case basis and have fluctuated throughout 2021 as a result of shifting resources to surge processing capacity. I understand the Department is analyzing data from the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021 to evaluate the impact of surge staffing on processing times, in order to provide accurate updates to average processing times in the next quarterly report to Congress in January.

#### *Reemployment Opportunities for Afghan Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs)*

*Question.* The U.S. Government acted swiftly in relocating many of the State Department’s foreign service nationals out of Afghanistan to the United States.

- Beyond the housing and integration assistance that the United States is providing via non-governmental organizations, how is the Department supporting those who may be interested in continuing their careers with the State Department?

*Answer.* The Department has provided information to the former Locally Employed Staff from Kabul to find U.S. Government employment opportunities should they wish to continue working with the Department and if their resettlement location allows them to do so. The Department has also identified a number of individ-

uals whose skills are needed immediately and is working on employing them via contract.

*Question.* Who is leading the Department's efforts to rehire its FSNs, either via contracts or as direct hires?

*Answer.* Former Locally Employed Staff from Kabul are eligible to apply for U.S. Government vacant positions, assuming they have received work authorization from the Department of Homeland Security, and they have been provided with the information on how to find these positions. Given that the resettlement agencies in the Washington Metropolitan Area are oversubscribed, the Department's Bureau of Global Talent Management, in coordination with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and the Bureau of Population, Migration and Refugees, is focused on encouraging the Locally Employed Staff to resettle in areas where there are many employment opportunities and where they can receive support.

#### *Fulbright*

*Question.* What actions will the Department take to allow current 2021-2022 Fulbright scholars and other F and J visa holders, like international students and faculty, to remain in the United States after their visas expire? What plans do the Department have for the future of the Fulbright program in Afghanistan?

*Answer.* In 2021, we welcomed the largest cohort to date of degree-seeking Fulbright students (109) at U.S. universities. The Department is committed to supporting these Afghan students' academic success by providing additional monitoring and support. The selection process for FY 2022-2023 Fulbright student program semi-finalists is currently on hold while we address significant safety, logistical, and programmatic constraints.

Regarding the status of students and scholars after the completion of their programs, I would refer you to the Department of Homeland Security.

#### *Civil Service*

*Question.* The structure of the Department's civil service means that civil service employees lack career mobility tracks. This makes career advancement and professional growth extremely difficult.

- What steps do you plan to take to enable civil service employees to grow professionally and to advance in their careers, just as Foreign Service officers can?

*Answer.* If the State Department is to most effectively advance the nation's interests, protect our fellow citizens and promote our values, I believe it needs to assess and value its employees based primarily on their talent and contributions, not the hiring category through which they joined the organization. As Secretary Blinken recently observed, our civil servants comprise some of the State Department's deepest policy and management expertise. I am committed to implementing his direction to increase opportunities and career development for our dedicated professionals in the civil service. Thanks in part to support from you and the committee, the Department was able to secure a 10 percent increase in the number of Senior Executive Service positions, creating new opportunities and pathways for civil servants to advance.

If confirmed, I am committed to listening to the workforce and to better addressing its needs, including investing in their professional development and career-long learning, and strengthening programs that create viable career mobility pathways for those who aspire to reach their full potential. I will support efforts such as developing a mobility float program that promotes and fosters continual employee career growth in a variety of ways and incentivizes bureaus to allow their Civil Service employees to participate in professional development opportunities while simultaneously filling gaps when needed, thereby reducing concerns of hiring managers that their mission goals will go unaddressed.

#### *State Department / USAID Reorganization, Budget, Leadership*

*Question.* Even with the previous administration's reform efforts now dead, there are still a great many legitimate questions concerning the relationship of the State Department and USAID—how they coordinate on policy and implementation, how they are run, and how to balance funding they each require to conduct their operations.

- What are your views on how to improve the relationship between State and USAID?

*Answer.* State and USAID partner to advance the President's priorities in defending democracy, mitigating climate change, and ending COVID-19, in a highly complementary manner. Because the Department's policy priorities drive our resource



and management decisions, if confirmed I commit to coordinating closely with the other members of the Department leadership team and our USAID counterparts to leverage the comparative advantages of each agency. For example, the Department and USAID teams are collaboratively developing a Joint Strategic Plan that will articulate shared goals and objectives for the next four years. If confirmed, I will ensure my team oversees a budget process that accounts for USAID's corporate perspective as we ensure coherence of foreign assistance programs across State and USAID. These strategic planning and budgeting efforts help align foreign policy and development priorities.

One of the characteristics of effective, healthy embassies overseas is a vibrant partnership between the State and USAID components in which each understands the respective strengths and works together to ensure their respective efforts are complementary and mutually reinforcing. If confirmed, I would support efforts to explore whether some of those overseas best practices could be applied more uniformly to the relationship between the two headquarters in Washington.

#### *Embassy Security*

*Question.* I am interested in your views on managing the Department's personnel security needs. For example, there are competing organizations within State that have overlapping areas of responsibility, including Diplomatic Security and Overseas Building Operations.

- How do you plan to de-conflict and align the different demands of different organizations inside the Department to assure the security of the Department's personnel?

*Answer.* The leaders of the State Department have a to protect all of our employees, and their families when overseas, from a wide range of threats and occupational workplace hazards. At the same time, our profession is at times dangerous and may involve service in harm's way. If confirmed, I would seek to improve our ability to balance these two imperatives while ensuring we secure maximum value for those taxpayer resources entrusted to the State Department, particularly with respect to providing our employees overseas and across the United States with secure, accessible, cost-effective work environments.

If confirmed, I would apply core principles of leadership to ensure Department organizations with lead responsibility for security and workplace safety share information; work together to achieve a common set of objectives; identify and resolve disagreements about priorities to the extent possible; and refer those issues on which they cannot reach resolution to me or other Department leaders for decision.

#### *State Department Staffing—DRL and PRM*

*Question.* During the Trump administration, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration were hollowed out, and remain understaffed to this day. These bureaus are critical in implementing President Biden's foreign policy agenda and in responding to ongoing crises, including in Afghanistan.

- What steps are you taking to remove barriers to fully staffing these bureaus as quickly as possible?

*Answer.* In 2021, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) was approved to add 68 new direct-hire positions and worked to quickly staff these positions utilizing all available recruitment mechanisms and hiring authorities. Despite a slow security clearance process, unprecedented Afghanistan refugee resettlement operations and the intense competition for talent, PRM has already filled, or is in the process of filling, 46 of the 68 new positions and is actively working to fill the remaining 22 positions.

In 2017, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) had 30 vacant civil service positions as a result of the hiring freeze, which have all been filled. Since 2017, Congress has increased DRL's administrative funding by 50 percent, which allowed the bureau to fund 21 full-time positions to focus on foreign assistance programs. Most of these positions have now been filled. Continued recruitment remains a high priority for DRL.

If confirmed, I will monitor closely staffing levels and vacancy rates in these and other bureaus who were impacted disproportionately by the 2017 hiring freeze and subsequent decisions regarding allocation of resources.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*State Department Management and Oversight*

*Question.* The State Department has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout the State Department?

*Answer.* The people who serve the nation at the U.S. Department of State are dedicated public servants committed to implementing the policies of our elected government, protecting our country's interests and promoting our values around the world in a wide range of operating environments. Our employees and their families have been buffeted by some policy choices in recent years that proved controversial given our nation's current political environment. The workforce continues to weather the challenges of the pandemic and fulfill its missions but is experiencing pandemic fatigue like the rest of the nation.

Many State Department employees who served in Afghanistan are struggling to come to grips with the Taliban's return to power, even as they support ongoing efforts to keep faith with those Afghans to whom our country has a special commitment. Many employees are frustrated there has not been more progress addressing some longstanding challenges with the Department's infrastructure, internal policies, business processes and workforce demographics.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all the State Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, and other senior leaders, to implement the core provisions of the modernization agenda outlined by Secretary Blinken in November 2021:

- building State's expertise and capacity to address cross-cutting issues, especially climate change, global health, economics and multilateral diplomacy;
- supporting the organization, staffing and activation of the new bureau of cyber and digital policy, and office of the special envoy for emerging technologies, thereby turning concepts into organizational realities;
- identifying organizational changes and incentives that encourage more innovation and initiative across the workforce;
- implementing specific measures to build and retain diverse, dynamic, entrepreneurial workforce; and
- promoting changes in organizational culture to reinvigorate in-person diplomacy and engagement, including by implementing sensible changes to the methods used to manage threats and risk across the enterprise.

I believe we also need to be more responsive to the needs of the contemporary workforce, drawing on lessons and best practices from private industry that are applicable in a global public institution. If confirmed, I would continue promoting and expanding workplace flexibilities—including telework and remote work—and stressing the importance of caring for oneself and family. Our Employee Consultation Service (ECS) is integral to this effort. I fully support ECS's continued outreach to employees and family members to further reduce barriers to seeking care by increasing knowledge of support ECS can offer and addressing any misperceptions that this will impose adverse consequences. I would ensure ECS has the resources it needs to permanently support its 24/7 expansion of services.

I also would seek additional ways to promote full use of resources the Department offers to assist employees including FSI workshops and engagements; 24/7 online access to Worklife4U to address personal issues, including mental health; and TalentCare, the single touchpoint for resources for well-being, community, safety, and workplace flexibilities. I would also plan to expand opportunities for professional development across the workforce and promote a culture of career-long learning.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across the State Department?

*Answer.* The President and the Secretary have articulated a clear vision for the Department: the lead foreign affairs agency, responsible for advancing the United States' interests and values through diplomacy, engagement, and assistance. It is a vision that restores diplomacy and the work of the Department to the center of our foreign policy. This is a vision all Department employees can embrace. If confirmed, I would partner with other senior leaders and utilize sustained communication, dialogue, and direct engagement to ensure those entrusted with fulfilling the

Department's mission understand their unique role in carrying it out and the responsibilities that accompany this privilege.

*Management: A Key Responsibility for State Department Leadership*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I believe strongly in empowering individuals and teams at all levels of an organization to take initiative, solve problems and improve our performance. I prioritize collaboration and emphasize the 'need to share' principle in making information widely available. I concentrate on delegating authority to the greatest extent possible, reserving for myself those decisions and problems that only I, through my rank, position and authorities, can address.

We all make mistakes. I emphasize to my teams that in an organizational culture centered on achievement, people will make mistakes. When mistakes occur, I focus my team's energy on learning from those mistakes and making any adjustments necessary to prevent repeats. I expect my team to share information, contacts and credit with each other and their colleagues across the larger organization. I am accessible to colleagues at all levels of the organization; I try to prioritize engaging personally those colleagues engaged in the tasks that are essential but unheralded to ensure the entire team knows that everyone's contributions are important to our success.

In the three embassies I led and as the Executive Secretary and Director of the Operations Center at State, this philosophy yielded strong, effective teams that were highly productive, positive environments in which people pulled together and looked out for each despite heavy workloads, high stress and, often, acute security threats. If confirmed, I intend to apply the same philosophy to those bureaus and offices within the Department for which the Under Secretary has line authority and to attempt to imbue these qualities into the broader organizational culture.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an executive department setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

Answer. Throughout my thirty-three years as a federal employee, I have contended frequently with staffing shortfalls and uncertainty regarding the scope and timing of funding and other resources. Despite these challenges, I repeatedly have compensated for deficits and found ways to fulfill the mission and achieve core objectives.

In the three embassies I have led as Ambassador, and as the Executive Secretary and Director of the Operations Center at State, I have emphasized the importance of effectively managing uncertainty, focusing on our core mission and identifying top priorities to which we would apply additional resources if they became available.

My leadership and management philosophy yielded strong, effective teams that were highly productive, positive, collaborative environments in which people pulled together and cared for each despite heavy workloads, high stress and frequent uncertainty regarding staffing levels and funding. If confirmed, I intend to apply the same philosophy to those bureaus and offices within the Department for which the Under Secretary has line authority and to attempt to imbue these qualities into the broader organizational culture.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new appointees to integrate themselves into department operations and culture?

Answer. Across my thirty-three-year career in the federal government, I have had the opportunity to work extensively with a wide range of non-career officials, both in embassies overseas and at the State Department headquarters in Washington. The most effective of those political appointees were curious about the institution and organizational culture of the State Department; applied themselves to understanding how government service differed from their prior professional experiences; and adapted to those aspects of the operating environment unique to the federal government and the State Department. Conversely, non-career officials who were ineffective or drew special scrutiny from the inspector general often were those who were least interested in understanding the State Department and the unusual challenges associated with serving the nation overseas.

Many political appointees/non-career officials and ambassadors bring experience and perspective that can help the Department and its dedicated professionals. Virtually all of them want to be successful during their tenure in government. If confirmed, I would encourage non-career officials to learn the basics of State's structure, operations and organizational culture, emphasizing the strong correlation between absorbing this context and successful tenures as ambassadors and senior offi-

cials. I would also solicit their views and expertise in tackling some of the core issues on Secretary Blinken's modernization agenda for which there was strong evidence the private sector's methods were more effective than our current approach, yet still consistent with inherently governmental functions performed by the State Department.

*Question.* If you do believe it is incumbent on appointees to integrate themselves into department operations and culture, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would first solicit views of current non-career officials to assess the effectiveness of the Department's formal and informal orientation efforts, including by assessing to what extent non-career officials were aware, and had utilized, the range of orientation materials and programs available to them. Working with other senior leaders at State, I would ensure all nominees for ambassadorial positions continued to be required to attend the Ambassadorial Seminar organized by the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC) for outbound chiefs of mission.

I also would work closely with officials in Global Talent Management, NFATC and other bureaus in the Department to strengthen our orientation program for political appointees serving in positions at State's headquarters here in Washington. I would intend to focus particularly on non-career officials occupying Deputy Assistant Secretary and equivalent positions in the Department. Individuals appointed to these positions often possess considerable substantive expertise but may lack equivalent experience at the State Department or other national security departments and agencies that hinders their ability to be optimally effective.

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

*Answer.* No, I do not. "Name and shame" neither improves performance nor strengthens organizational culture. I believe high-achieving organizations develop cultures that acknowledge their team members sometimes make mistakes, despite the best of intentions and effort. Addressing mistakes, deficiencies of performance or other workplace issues always should be done with wider morale and well-being in mind, and in accordance with the Department's regulations and guidelines concerning performance and conduct.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your Deputy Under Secretary?

*Answer.* The position of Deputy Under Secretary for Management was discontinued when an Act of Congress of October 7, 1978, established the permanent position of Under Secretary of State for Management, and I do not intend to reinstate the position. Adding an additional management layer would be counterproductive to my goal of reducing bureaucracy and empowering the workforce, key elements employed by many private sector leaders to retain talent and boost productivity.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Under Secretary?

*Answer.* I do not plan to reinstate the Deputy Under Secretary position.

*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.

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

*Answer.* The Secretary of State has security responsibility for U.S. diplomats on official duty overseas, a responsibility that entails protecting them and their families from a wide range of threats. At the same time, our profession is at times dangerous and often involves serving in harm's way. If confirmed, I would seek to improve our ability to balance these two imperatives. Our national security mission entails diverse types of risk. While our personnel routinely engage with interlocutors and contacts beyond the walls of our embassies, we are committed to doing even more. The Department goes to great lengths to facilitate our nation's diplomacy in challenging places, including high-threat locations, but a combination of current law and policy impairs our ability to most effectively tailor our management of risk to reflect actual threat levels in individual countries. If confirmed, I would welcome opportunities to consult and work closely with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to identify adjustments that would enable us to advance more effectively the country's interests in every country and threat environment.

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

- What is the public diplomacy environment like overall?

Answer. The United States confronts complex security, economic, health, social, and climate challenges in a world of rising nationalism and rivalry with authoritarian states. The public diplomacy environment is competitive. Other actors are actively competing for control of the information environment and for the affinities of foreign publics. Our competitors deploy centralized, state-run propaganda and disinformation fueled by the vast expansion of communications through technology and expend unprecedented resources in whole-of-government efforts to gain advantages in the sphere of public opinion and influence.

U.S. public diplomacy has enduring strengths founded on more than 70 years of work to build relationships and partnerships built on transparency and trust with governments, businesses, civil society, leaders, and ordinary citizens in the United States and around the world. Our global public diplomacy footprint—composed of 185 public diplomacy sections in U.S. missions abroad and over 4,000 public diplomacy professionals serving domestically and overseas—design and implement public engagement programs and messaging campaigns to support U.S. policy objectives in local context, help us understand foreign audiences, and design approaches that inform, listen to, and build relationships with them.

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

Answer. The Department faces a number of public diplomacy challenges, including rising authoritarianism, competition from rivals who outspend us, disinformation from malign actors, and closed media and communication environments. In addition, the COVID pandemic has impacted travel and consequently in person exchanges and the participation of foreign students in higher education in the United States.

Some provisions in law, enacted with the best of intentions in the aftermath of tragic attacks on embassy facilities and personnel, have reduced public access to our public diplomacy facilities, programs and professionals, constraining the State Department's ability to deliver maximum impact from the taxpayer resources entrusted to us to advance the nation's interests overseas. If confirmed, I would welcome opportunities to consult and work closely with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to identify adjustments that would enable us to advance more effectively the country's interests in every country and threat environment.

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

Answer. The messaging guidance provided by the Department is executed, supported, and refined for foreign audiences by public diplomacy teams in our embassies overseas, in close coordination with their corresponding regional bureaus' public diplomacy offices and the Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA). Our embassies design and implement messaging campaigns to support U.S. policy objectives in local context. Public diplomacy staff at our embassies, as well as monitoring and analyses undertaken by GPA and the Global Engagement Center help us understand foreign audiences and design approaches that inform, listen to, and build relationships with them. Washington-based and overseas public diplomacy staff strive to coordinate mutually reinforcing messaging.

*Human Rights and International Organizations*

*Question.* Officers who cover human rights at posts abroad are often singular officers or very small groups of officers responsible for reporting on a large quantity of human rights issues, including informing or drafting reports published by the bureaus of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, the office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons, and the Office of International Religious Freedom.

- What is your assessment of the lack of officers who cover human rights?

Answer. I appreciate the committee's sustained attention to human rights, trafficking in persons, and international religious freedom issues, and specifically the number of Department personnel at posts focused on them. The Department constantly strives to improve the quality of the work in these areas, including our reporting. While it is generally true that with additional resources, we could devote more staff to these valuable efforts, the Department is currently using available resources as efficiently as possible to both address country conditions and to produce well-respected reports. I am committed to further consulting with you and the committee on addressing any Department staffing needs.

*Question.* Should posts have more officers monitoring human rights in country?

Answer. I appreciate the Ranking Member's attention to human rights and, if confirmed, am committed to further consulting with you and the committee on addressing any of our staffing needs at overseas posts. Secretary Blinken, Deputy Secretary McKeon and others have underscored the importance of improving the State Department's agility, enabling more regular reallocation of our career professionals to address compelling policy priorities. If confirmed, I would ensure those bureaus and offices reporting to me, including Global Talent Management, support fully any future reviews of current overseas staffing distribution or initiatives to adjust staffing in our embassies and consulates overseas.

*Question.* During your time in Afghanistan during the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO), who was responsible for flight clearances to land and depart from Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA)?

Answer. I refer you to the Department of Defense for more information about flight clearances at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) during the NEO.

*Question.* When you ceased operational responsibility, was the same person/entity still responsible for flight clearances in and out of HKIA and to the lily pads on U.S. military bases?

Answer. I refer you to the Department of Defense for more information about flight clearances at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) or U.S. military bases during the NEO and in the ensuing months.

*Question.* Please describe interactions with the Taliban during the NEO.

Answer. During the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation, the United States communicated with the Taliban in Kabul and Doha on matters of important, temporary, operational U.S. interests, including the departure of U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, local U.S. Government staff and others from Afghanistan. As part of this communication, the Taliban altered their actions in ways that enabled us to evacuate most American citizens and many vulnerable and at-risk Afghans. Subsequent operational, ad hoc communications with Taliban representatives have allowed us to continue to relocate U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents, and Afghans.

*Question.* At what point did the bottleneck become so bad that gaining entry into the airport required passcodes and/or "knowing someone on the inside."

Answer. As Secretary Blinken noted in his testimony on September 14, "[T]he situation outside the airport became incredibly chaotic, with thousands of people massing at the airport, massing at the gates of the airport."

My involvement with the evacuation operation began on August 17, so I can only speak to circumstances that occurred on and after that date. By the time I arrived on the ground on August 19, the principal access points were characterized by extreme overcrowding that impeded entry by American citizens and legal residents, foreign nationals of Allied and Partner nationals, and those vulnerable or at-risk Afghans we sought to help depart.

In the ensuing days, numerous factors—threats of suicide attacks by ISIS-K, uneven conduct by Taliban irregulars controlling checkpoints on the approaches to the airport, severe overcrowding and viral information-sharing among Afghans seeking to depart—hampered our ability to develop methods to safely and predictably facilitate entry to the airfield complex for our citizens and other priority groups. State Department professionals and U.S. military counterparts developed new methods on a daily basis, then adjusted those methods multiple times each day to reflect real-time conditions and constraints. This persistent, creative problem-solving enabled us ultimately to evacuate many in priority groups for the United States and for over two dozen Allied and Partner nations.

The men and women with whom I served during the NEO did the best we could with what we had to work with, in the time constraints we faced. I think every day about the people, many of whom I know personally, who are still inside Afghanistan, who we were not able to reach. If confirmed, I intend to continue supporting the many career professionals working in various ways to support the relocation effort, today and in the years ahead.

*Question.* How many American Citizens remain in Afghanistan?

Answer. Since August 31, and as of December 1, the Department has directly assisted in the departure of 479 U.S. citizens from Afghanistan. As of December 8, 129 additional U.S. citizens in Afghanistan had requested assistance with departure, and, of those, three were ready to depart. This number fluctuates depending on those who have made their presence in Afghanistan known to the Department;

expressed a desire for departure assistance; or returned to Afghanistan and are again requesting assistance. Most U.S. citizens still in Afghanistan are there because they are not ready to depart.

*Question.* Under your direction, please describe your interactions with Veterans/Veterans Groups/NGOs looking to evacuate Afghans on private charters or other means of evacuation.

*Answer.* Upon my most recent return from Afghanistan, I was asked to establish a team to coordinate relocation efforts across government agencies and with advocacy groups, nonprofit organizations, and others. The team works closely with the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and other partners to facilitate the departure of those who wish to leave Afghanistan, including U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), and vulnerable or at-risk Afghans.

The team I established began communicating and working with veterans advocacy groups in early September. It now coordinates with a self-organized coalition of more than 100 organizations who share our commitment to continuing to facilitate the safe and orderly travel of U.S. citizens, LPRs, and vulnerable or at-risk Afghans.

*Question.* Did the Department offer to provide any resources to these groups to facilitate additional evacuations during the NEO or continued after the end of the NEO?

*Answer.* Other than the ongoing work of our personnel on these issues, the Department of State is not funding privately organized flights from Afghanistan. The Department has funded the cost of certain transportation, including air travel, for U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), and their immediate family members. As of December 1, the Department has assisted directly in the departure of 479 American citizens and 417 Lawful Permanent Residents since the conclusion of the noncombatant evacuation operation on August 30. We will continue our efforts to facilitate the safe and orderly travel of U.S. citizens, LPRs, and our other vulnerable or at-risk Afghan allies.

If confirmed, I would seek to ensure the Department continues to provide information to you and your colleagues about our support for private organizations' efforts, including as necessary in a closed setting.

*Question.* In your view, what is the difference between the Undersecretary of State for Management and the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources? Are these two positions at all duplicative?

*Answer.* The Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources enables the Department to thoughtfully approach issues and resource needs that are cross-cutting, interdisciplinary, and involve substantial coordination with OMB, Congress, and other department and agency leadership. The Undersecretary of State for Management has a mix of operational responsibilities for today's issues and a focus on implementation for longer term planning to ensure proposed improvements to organization, process, and infrastructure are sustainable and applicable to a wide range of operating environments overseas. These positions are complementary and mutually reinforcing, enabling Department leadership to focus on both urgent and important challenges.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* There have been numerous reports and many discussions here on the Hill in recent years about the lack of diversity at the State Department. I applaud the creation of the role of a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and look forward to hearing more about the office's work. However, much of the responsibility for not only recruiting and hiring diverse talent, but retaining that talent, falls under the Undersecretary for Management. We have also heard many reports in recent years, about low morale at the State Department, for a variety of reasons.

- What specifically do you think needs to be done to retain diverse talent in the ranks of the State Department, both in the Civil Service and the Foreign Service? What policies and practices need to change, and how can Congress assist?

*Answer.* I am committed to retaining our talent. We must continue to expand our support to employees, including wellness resources, workforce flexibilities, childcare, targeted support for employees and their family members overseas, professional development opportunities, and rewarding career paths. We also must promote a diverse, equitable, inclusive and accessible environment where our employees can

thrive. The Secretary recently announced that the Department is establishing a retention team in the Bureau of Global Talent Management to better understand why employees leave, why they stay, and their personal and professional priorities, to build a Department-wide strategic plan focused on retaining our talented staff. I look forward to working with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to address these needs and opportunities.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*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.* I agree these incidents must be taken seriously and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel. I understand a major interagency effort is investigating what is causing the incidents and how all U.S. personnel worldwide can be protected, and this issue remains a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports anomalous health incidents receives immediate and appropriate attention and care, and I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Mission Poland community.

*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.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a potential anomalous health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy teams. I consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Mission Poland community.

*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.* Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Mission Poland community. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and to ensure that all protocols are being followed.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Nord Stream 2*

*Question.* The administration has declared that Nord Stream 2 is a Russian malign influence project and a bad deal for Europe. While it is widely accepted that Ukraine will be most disadvantaged due to its role in the transmission of Russian gas westward, Poland also operates a pipeline connecting Europe to Russian gas supplies.

- If Nord Stream 2 becomes operational, what new challenges will Poland face?

*Answer.* Poland, like the United States, opposes Nord Stream 2 as a harmful Russian geopolitical project that damages European energy security, particularly for Ukraine. Poland will end Gazprom gas contracts by the end of 2022, because it has diversified its energy mix away from Russian sources, including imports of LNG from the United States and other countries and the planned completion in October 2022 of the Polish-owned Baltic Pipe from Norway. The United States also has a



strong partnership with Poland to develop nuclear power using U.S. technology and expand the use of other forms of zero-emission renewable energy.

*Question.* While the U.S. and Germany came to an agreement on how to respond should Russia use Nord Stream 2 to weaken Ukraine, what plan is in place should Russia do the same in Poland?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to work with Poland to advocate for full adherence in letter and in spirit of the pipeline's certification process and compliance with the EU's Third Energy Package, including its requirements for ownership unbundling and third-party access to the pipeline to transit gas from sources other than Russia and Gazprom. These measures, together with Germany's implementation of its commitments under our July 2021 Joint Statement on Support for Ukraine and European Energy Security, reduce the risks an operational NS2 pipeline would pose to European energy security and to the security of Ukraine and frontline NATO and EU countries, such as Poland.

*Question.* How do you believe Poland has interacted with this U.S.-Germany agreement?

*Answer.* Immediately following the conclusion of the agreement, State Department Counselor Derek Chollet traveled to Poland, as well as Ukraine, to consult with our Polish Ally about steps to avoid the worst-case scenarios regarding the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Senior Advisor Amos Hochstein followed up with a trip to the region in September where he met with senior officials in Ukraine, Poland, and Germany to further coordinate our approach on this issue.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021].* *Poland opposes Nord Stream 2, as does the United States. President Duda told Polish press the U.S.-Germany Joint Statement "reduces the security of a large part of Europe, including a number of European Union countries" To address Polish and Ukrainian concerns following the conclusion of the Joint Statement, State Department Counselor Derek Chollet traveled to Warsaw, as well as to Kyiv, to consult with our Polish Ally about steps to avoid the worst-case scenarios regarding the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Senior Advisor Amos Hochstein followed up with a trip to Ukraine, Poland, and Germany in September to further coordinate with senior officials on this issue. Senior Advisor Hochstein continues to engage Allies and partners to address the risks posed by the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project.*

#### *Belarus and the Weaponization of Migrants*

*Question.* Belarus has launched a hybrid attack by pushing thousands of migrants to its borders with its EU neighbors, and most intensely on Poland. This serves two purposes: 1. To put pressure on Poland, and 2. To divide the European Union over how it should approach the crisis.

- How will you work with the Polish Government to help them address the situation and find a domestic solution to the crisis?

*Answer.* The actions by the Lukashenka regime threaten security, sow division, and aim to distract from Russia's activities on the border with Ukraine. I hope the Belarusian authorities will take affirmative steps to resolve the humanitarian crisis that Lukashenka's regime started and alleviate the suffering of the people the Lukashenka regime has victimized. If confirmed, I pledge to continue close cooperation with Poland to support a free, independent, and democratic Belarus, including maintaining contacts with the Belarusian opposition exiled in Poland and strengthening U.S. Embassy grants to several Poland-based media outlets and NGOs that support independent media and democratic values in Belarus.

*Question.* How will you ensure that Poland upholds its international and EU obligations to uphold the rights of migrants?

*Answer.* The regime in Belarus refuses to respect its international obligations and commitments, with respect to its treatment of its own people and undermines the peace and security of Europe. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish Government to ensure it is doing everything it can to secure its borders while seeking to assist and protect the migrants and asylum seekers that Lukashenka has victimized. I will encourage the Polish Government to grant humanitarian organizations access to the border area to provide assistance to the migrants and asylum seekers. I should note that the Belarusian authorities have refused at least three attempts by the Polish Government to provide humanitarian aid to the migrants and asylum seekers on the Belarus side of the border.

*Question.* How will you work with your fellow U.S. diplomats in other EU countries to encourage their governments to work together to find a solution?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts representing the United States in other EU and partner countries on working with our allies and partners to promote freedom, democracy, and rule of law in Belarus, to support the Belarusian opposition in exile, and to hold the Lukashenka regime accountable for its flagrant violations and abuses of human rights in its treatment of Belarusians.

*Expats and Exiled Opposition in Poland*

*Question.* Many opposition politicians, activists, and journalists have fled Russia and Belarus to escape political persecution, and have formed expat communities in Poland and Lithuania where they continue their work.

- How will you engage with these opposition groups in Poland?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the frequent engagement that Mission Poland has had with Russian and Belarusian democracy activists since they were forced to flee to Poland.

*Question.* How will you engage with your fellow U.S. diplomats in other expat host countries to help protect the opposition's liberties and support their work against authoritarianism?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts representing the United States in other EU and partner countries on working with our allies and partners to promote freedom, democracy, and rule of law in Belarus, to support the Belarusian opposition in exile, and to hold the Lukashenka regime accountable for its flagrant violations of the human rights of Belarusians. I will especially seek to work with my counterparts in Lithuania, Ukraine, and Latvia, where most Belarusians fleeing Lukashenka's repression have gone.

*Question.* What U.S. Government resources will you bring to bear to support the exiled pro-democracy and human rights activists of Russia and Belarus?

Answer. The U.S. Government dedicates significant resources to support exiled activists from Russia and Belarus, many of whom reside in Poland. If confirmed, I will ensure that Mission Poland is an active part of U.S. Government-wide efforts to use these resources effectively. This would include Mission Poland personnel engaging with exiled activists and coordinating closely with Department of State and USAID colleagues in Poland and Washington. I would also coordinate with the Government of Poland, and with representatives of like-minded governments, to ensure our support for exiled activists advances our policy goals and the aspirations of those who are fighting for a democratic future for Belarus and Russia.

*Defense Issues*

*Question.* The Polish Government has announced the desire to significantly expand its military capabilities to counter Russian aggression. Poland has indicated it plans to double the size of its military,

- As the Polish military grows in size and power, do you anticipate any issues for Poland maintaining civilian control over the military? What command and control issues exist in the Polish military?

Answer. The Polish constitution specifically enjoins the military to observe neutrality in political matters and subjects the military to civilian democratic control. The establishment of civilian democratic control of the armed forces was a key principle of NATO's 1995 Study on Enlargement. Poland observes this constitutional obligation and political responsibility as a NATO Ally. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Poland to strengthen its national security in accordance with these principles and look forward to consulting with members of this committee on this subject.

*Question.* Do you have any concern that such a military expansion will provoke Russia?

Answer. Poland, like all sovereign nations, has the obligation to defend its territory and people. As a NATO Ally, Poland develops its Armed Forces in coordination with Allies and the NATO Defense Planning Process. NATO is a defensive Alliance. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Polish Government, colleagues in the Executive Branch, and members of this committee to increase Poland's capacity for individual and collective self-defense.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. No. It is Russia's aggressive policies and military expansion that are provocative, not the measures that its neighbors take to provide for their own defense. Poland, like all sovereign nations, has the obligation to defend its territory and people. As a NATO Ally, Poland develops its Armed Forces in coordination with Allies and the NATO Defense Planning Process. NATO is a defensive Alliance. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Polish Government, col-*

*leagues in the Executive Branch, and members of this committee to increase Poland's capacity for individual and collective self-defense, which is consistent with successive administrations' calls for Allies to shoulder more of NATO's military burden.*

#### *Nuclear Threats*

*Question.* The Biden administration has been exploring the idea of establishing a “sole purpose” nuclear policy. Previous administrations have considered changing to a “no first use” policy, but realized international security was more important than ideology. Over time, proponents re-labelled the concept as “sole purpose,” but have been clear that idea is the same in all but name. If this administration abandons nuclear deterrence, and adopts a sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy, it will scare our friends, embolden our adversaries, and damage the very nonproliferation goals it claims to support.

If the United States were to adopt a “sole purpose” nuclear policy:

- What new vulnerabilities and challenges would Poland have to face in revising its national defense strategy?

*Answer.* The Department of Defense is currently leading a Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) that will define U.S. declaratory policy. That review remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. During this review, the Biden administration is conducting extensive, wide-ranging consultations with U.S. allies and partners, including Poland. I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Congress, and experts regarding U.S. adoption of a “no-first-use” or “sole purpose” policy. Those concerns will inform the review process. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Poland to understand how the NPR may impact Poland's national defense strategy.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021].* *The Department of Defense is currently leading a Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) that will define U.S. declaratory policy. During this review, the Biden administration is conducting extensive consultations with U.S. Allies, including Poland, and the views expressed, including concerns about “no-first-use” or “sole purpose” will weigh heavily in the administration's decision making. President Biden has called Article 5 a “sacred obligation” and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. The President's Interim National Security Strategy also makes clear “that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.” While I am not part of the NPR review, I am confident that the final result will ensure that the U.S. will have the capabilities needed to deter aggression and respond if deterrence fails. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Poland to understand how the NPR may impact Poland's national defense strategy.*

*Question.* How would a change to sole purpose affect Poland's confidence in the Biden administration's allegiance to NATO's Article 5 commitments?

*Answer.* The DoD-led NPR, which will define U.S. declaratory policy, remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. Regardless of the outcome of the NPR, however, President Biden has called Article 5 a “sacred obligation” and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad.

*Question.* How would unilateral reductions in U.S. nuclear forces, regardless of growing threats, assure allies and deter adversaries?

*Answer.* President Biden's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, which guides the drafting of the NPR, directed that “we will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.” Whether unilateral or reciprocal, any potential reductions would need to be carried out in a manner consistent with the objective of ensuring the United States sustains a modern, credible, and effective deterrent so long as nuclear weapons exist. I would never support unilateral reductions that endanger U.S. security or weaken U.S. negotiating leverage.

*Question.* What reforms and revisions to its strategy do you anticipate the Polish Armed Forces would make?

*Answer.* The DoD-led NPR, which will define U.S. declaratory policy, remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. During this review, the Biden administration is conducting extensive, wide-ranging consultations with U.S. allies and partners, including Poland. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Poland to understand how the NPR may impact the Polish Armed Forces.

*Question.* How could the U.S. reassure Poland that we can mount an effective offense in the case of a conventional attack on its borders?

Answer. The DoD-led NPR, which will define U.S. declaratory policy, remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. Regardless of the outcome of the NPR, however, President Biden has called Article 5 a “sacred obligation” and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we are ready to respond to any attack on Poland, be it a conventional military attack or otherwise.

#### *Democratic Backsliding*

*Question.* Poland has been criticized by the EU for failing to uphold standards for judicial reforms as defined by an EU law that was rejected by Poland’s Constitutional Tribunal. They have raised related concerns for the Polish Government’s ability to fight corruption and uphold the rule of law.

- What are your concerns for judicial reforms, corruption, and rule of law in Poland?

Answer. I share the concerns expressed by the administration regarding democratic backsliding in Poland. I welcome Poland’s decision to dismantle the disciplinary chamber for judges as a positive first step toward restoring separation of powers and judicial independence, which are integral to a healthy democracy. If confirmed, I will engage in frank discussions between our governments on these issues and work with all stakeholders in Poland to strengthen the rule of law. I will stress that NATO not only defends our territories, but also our shared democratic values and way of life. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Polish Government to uphold shared democratic values, especially as Poland becomes chair of the OSCE in 2022.

*Question.* How will you engage with the Polish Government to promote reforms for good governance?

Answer. Promoting our shared democratic values is an essential component of U.S.-Polish relations. If confirmed, I will advocate with the Polish Government to promote good governance. We will also leverage the strength of our civil society partnerships and depth of our public diplomacy tools, including social media, to engage with Poles regarding the importance of preserving the shared democratic values that underpin our relationship.

#### *TVN and Discovery*

*Question.* A bill in the Polish parliament proposes a ban on entities outside of the European Economic Area owning majority shares in media companies operating in Poland. The bill was approved by the Sejm, rejected by the Senate, and has now returned to the Sejm for a second vote. While progress has come to a standstill, there is still a serious possibility that the bill will become law. If this happens, U.S.-based company Discovery will be forced to sell its ownership stake in TVN, the most prominent television station that still maintains independence from Polish Government influence.

- The arguments in parliament are as such: the ruling Law and Justice party states this bill is designed to protect Poland from foreign disinformation, however the opposition argues it is an attempt to silence independent media. What is your interpretation of the bill’s purpose?

Answer. Despite the governing coalition’s claims that the bill is intended to prevent Russian and Chinese companies from acquiring Polish media companies, it is clear passage of this bill would erode democratic principles and further shrink the space for media freedom in Poland. If confirmed, I will continue to stress to Poland the importance of upholding shared democratic values, including media freedom, which are vital for the functioning of a democracy.

*Question.* Do you think it is likely that the bill will be passed?

Answer. I hope not. I was pleased the Senate rejected the Sejm’s legislation restricting foreign media ownership. This bill undermines the trust of investors and calls into question Poland’s commitment to democratic principles as it threatens media freedom. A definitive rejection of this bill in the Sejm would reassure foreign investors in Poland, but leaving it unresolved damages investor confidence. I welcome President Duda’s statements in support of freedom of expression, the sanctity of contracts, and the values that underpin our relationship and his promise to veto the bill if it were to reach his desk.

*Question.* If you could broker a compromise between the political parties that both protects independent media and protects Poland from malign influence, what would it look like?

*Answer.* A free and independent media makes our democracies stronger. Given the current regional challenges, and with Poland assuming the OSCE chairmanship in 2022, I believe it is in Poland's interest to maintain a strong and healthy democracy, a foundational component of U.S.-Polish relations. If confirmed, I will continue cooperation with Poland in promoting peace, prosperity, security, and democratic governance in Central and Eastern Europe while countering malign, outside influences and disinformation. We should work together in the OSCE to promote our democratic values. Media pluralism and freedom make democratic societies resilient against disinformation and malign influence, which are threats all our societies face.

#### *Restitution Law*

*Question.* The Polish parliament has passed bills that end restitution claims for both the Nazi and Communist periods.

- How will you engage with political parties in Poland to encourage the restoration of those rights?

*Answer.* I regret the passage of a law limiting claims for property restitution for victims of communism and Nazism, including Jewish Holocaust victims. This is a complex issue, and if confirmed, I will support our ongoing engagement with Poland to focus on Holocaust remembrance and education, including the acknowledgement of history. I would also explore ways to achieve a measure of justice for victims and their heirs to properly address that history.

*Question.* Many Americans are affected by the nullification of restitution claims and the end of the possibility to apply for restitution. How do you plan to work to fight for those Americans' and their concerns?

*Answer.* While I was disappointed by the enactment of the law to limit claims for property restitution for victims of communism and Nazism, including Holocaust victims, if confirmed, I will continue exploring ways to achieve a measure of justice through some form of compensation. This is a complex issue, so I believe it is best to establish a direct dialogue between experts on it. If confirmed, I would like the Polish Government to meet with U.S. experts to discuss new and creative approaches to meeting Poland's Terezin Declaration commitments on compensation.

#### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & HUMAN RIGHTS

#### *Trafficking in Persons*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Poland remained on Tier 2 due to continued inadequate efforts to prevent identification of child trafficking and forced labor victims, among other failures to meet the minimum standards.

- How will you work with Poland's Government and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure Polish interlocutors understand the United States is committed to combating trafficking in persons in Poland and beyond. While the Polish Government is making efforts to address this issue, more needs to be done. If confirmed, I will encourage the Polish Government to increase proactive identification and assistance for victims, particularly among vulnerable groups, and encourage consistent and sufficient funding for victim services. If confirmed, I will lead Mission Poland to develop and implement both short and long-term strategies of engagement with government officials, business leaders, and civil society in Poland.

#### *International Religious Freedom*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, serious religious freedom issues were highlighted in Poland, including anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim and anti-Catholic hate crimes.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office for International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Increasing societal respect for religious freedom and members of religious minority groups in Poland is important. If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations, religious minority groups, and government entities to develop programs and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms. If confirmed, I will pro-

mote inter-religious dialogue among religious groups in Poland. I will work with both the Office of International Religious Freedom and the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to ensure Mission Poland recommends, develops, and implements policies and programs to combat discrimination and promote tolerance.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* In the State Department’s 2020 Human Rights Report, serious human rights abuses in Poland included violence against or threats of violence against members of ethnic minorities.

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

*Answer.* U.S. foreign policy has always promoted respect for human rights, as embodied in our Constitution as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations and government entities to assess and bolster human rights and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms to address potential threats of violence against members of ethnic minority groups in Poland. If confirmed, I will underscore to the Polish Government that our bilateral partnership relies on a genuine shared commitment to democratic values and to the protection of human rights for all. And I will support civil society efforts to hold the Government accountable to its international commitments, including through the OSCE as Poland assumes the Chairmanship in 2022.

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

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support civil society efforts to hold the Government accountable to its international commitments on human rights for all, including through the OSCE as Poland assumes the Chairmanship in 2022. With my Political Section and Public Diplomacy team, I will seek opportunities to support civil society advocacy and to lift up the voices of human rights defenders. If confirmed, I will also underscore to the Polish Government that our bilateral partnership relies on a genuine shared commitment to democratic values and to the protection of human rights for all. We will leverage the strength of our civil society partnerships and the depth of our public diplomacy tools to engage with Poles to promote respect for human rights in Poland as well as throughout the region.

#### INDO-PACIFIC

#### *China*

*Question.* You gave a speech in 2019 at the China Development Forum. I would like to ask you to comment on several statements you made in your speech, specifically whether you still stand by these statements, and if not, how your views have changed. Please respond to each statement separately.

- “[T]oday the Sino-U.S. geopolitical relationship is being reduced to the specific disagreements we have.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021].* When I gave these remarks, I had a considerably more optimistic view of PRC intentions than I do now. I now recognize that the United States can address the PRC challenge by rebuilding our strength at home, and by revitalizing our partnerships and alliances. The U.S. relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Question.* “The shared strategic determination to agree to disagree meant that a diplomatic accommodation could become a de facto strategic partnership, which it did.”

Answer. I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. When I gave these remarks, the relationship with the PRC was at a different point than it is now. My views have evolved as well, based on an on-going pattern of provocative Chinese actions. The strategic environment has changed significantly in recent years, as has the PRC itself. There was once a broad consensus that economic liberalization in the PRC would lead to political liberalization. That has not happened. The PRC has been growing more authoritarian at home and more assertive abroad. Beijing is now challenging our security, prosperity, and values—and the international rules-based order. Our relationship with the PRC is now characterized by strategic competition. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Science & Technology collaboration was key, and brought the U.S. and the Chinese together around the concept of a segmented relationship: Consultative, bilateral as well as normalizing.” While this was true at the outset of normalization, much has changed. What are your views now on the extent to which the United States should engage in technology cooperation with China?

Answer. I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. When I made those earlier remarks, they reflected my earlier view, which has since evolved, that collaboration on science and technology was possible. We must be extremely vigilant toward PRC investment in critical infrastructure or technology that can expose any country to national security risks, as well as data privacy risks. We also should safeguard sensitive technology in research spaces, in order to minimize threats without threatening our own values and strengths of openness and diversity. Our STEM restrictions on student and research visas are carefully targeted and affect less than 2 percent of PRC university students, but help to safeguard national security and data privacy. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Despite the current trade difficulties and the alarming rhetoric associated with it, the U.S.-China relationship is one of “complex interdependence” as an article in “Liaowang” put it, where both sides can compete and consult within the existing international rules.”

Answer. I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. These remarks reflected an earlier view I held, including my hope that the PRC would support the international rules-based order and norms. An on-going pattern of Chinese provocations makes clear that this view is not realistic. As U.S. Trade Representative Tai outlined in her October 4 speech, the United States is taking four initial steps to re-align our trade policies towards the PRC. I support the U.S. Government's approach, which includes discussing Beijing's performance under the Phase One Agreement, restarting our targeted tariff exclusions*

*process, raising concerns about Beijing's non-market policies and practices that distort competition, and consulting allies and partners like Poland to set the rules of the road for trade and technology in the 21st century. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish government to promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to Poland and work to combat the PRC's malign influence in Poland.*

*Question.* “To be sure, in so far as the status quo is concerned, China does seek changes in the international system, but it does so in a patient, prudent and peaceful fashion.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. This statement does not reflect my current view of PRC coercive activities in specific sectors. The PRC is taking deliberate steps in attempts to reshape the United Nations and other multilateral bodies in ways that are inconsistent with the institutions' foundational values and established international norms. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I would make it a priority to work with the Polish Government to oppose efforts that undermine the rules-based international order as I advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Americans who deal with foreign affairs especially appreciate that Chinese strategic thinking about the world has moved away from notions of global class conflict and violent revolution, emphasizing instead China's “peaceful rising” in global influence while seeking a “harmonious world.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. My views on the PRC's role in international organizations has significantly changed since I made this statement. The United States and other democracies share a deep commitment to the international rules, norms, and institutions that promote our security, stability, and prosperity. When the PRC's actions work against these institutions, the United States must adopt a competitive or even adversarial posture toward these actions. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC's malign influence and destabilizing activities while promoting current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to Poland.*

*Question.* “The U.S.-China relationship will either expand or narrow. The whole world—as well as our countries—will benefit if it expands.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. This statement conveyed my previous view of the U.S. relationship with the PRC, a view which has developed and become more nuanced, to include how competition with the PRC is an inevitable component of U.S. foreign policy. I now believe intense competition requires intense diplomacy. That's why President Biden initiated the November 15 meeting with President Xi.*



*These high-level meetings help us to responsibly manage U.S.-PRC competition. President Biden underscored the importance of managing strategic risks. As part of this effort, the two leaders decided to explore talks on arms control and strategic stability. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC's malign influence and destabilizing activities as I promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC.*

*Question.* “There is great potential for the Sino-U.S. relationship to be a comprehensive global partnership that parallels U.S. relations with Europe and Japan, complete with regularly scheduled formal and informal meetings of our top leaders and truly personal in-depth discussions regarding not just our bilateral relations but about the world in general.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021].* *Chinese conduct in recent years make it clear that this view is no longer realistic, although meetings between our top leaders are necessary, common-sense guardrails on the U.S.-PRC relationship to ensure that competition does not veer into unintended conflict. That said, my focus is now on the bilateral relationship between the United States and Poland. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Beyond the trade dispute, I worry there is developing in the U.S. an industry around demonizing China, scaring U.S. businesspeople away from normal business engagement.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021].* *This statement conveyed my earlier perception of the bilateral relationship, which has evolved in the face of China’s increasingly aggressive conduct in the international arena. While I was hopeful about the role business engagement could play in our bilateral relationship with China, I now recognize the importance of being deliberate when we look at areas of competition with the PRC. We are not opposed to fair market cooperation with or competition from PRC companies. We are deliberate in our scrutiny of PRC threats, such as investment in critical infrastructure or technologies that can expose a country to national security risks, data privacy risks]. This vigilance is necessary, and if confirmed, I will work with Poland to help build capacity and resilience in this area. If confirmed, I also will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC’s malign influence and destabilizing activities as I promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC.*

*Question.* In your 2019 China speech, you also said U.S.-PRC consultations regarding India-Pakistan can lead to more effective mediation.

- Given the violence and ongoing skirmishes on the PRC-India border, do you still think the PRC could be a helpful partner in this area?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. I made that earlier statement in the context of my hope that we could work with the PRC across different areas of our foreign relations. I do not believe the PRC can play a constructive role in any mediation between India and Pakistan, particularly due to the PRC-India border skirmishes. The administration is working with European allies and partners through NATO and the U.S.-EU Dialogue on China to influence the PRC to make a positive contribution to global and regional security issues. When the United States and allies and partners like Poland can influence Beijing to bolster global and regional security, it is worth pursuing. If confirmed, I will seek to collaborate with the Polish Government to advance current U.S. policy objectives regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* In your China speech, you say that we can “agree to disagree” and work with China despite our disagreements on Taiwan, human rights, and other things. Yet today the disagreements have veered into fundamentally competitive areas of conflict, such as the PRC’s insistence on Taiwan’s annexation and its goal to become “technologically dominant”. Moreover, through public statements and the insistence of adherence to the “Two Lists”, the Chinese Government has made clear it will not “de-link” areas of cooperation and competition, such as human rights and climate.

- Can we still agree to disagree on issues with China?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. I believe that the U.S. relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. Our commitment to Taiwan remains rock-solid and contributes to peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. I would publicly highlight how the PRC’s military, economic, and diplomatic pressure on Taiwan, and coercive actions toward countries that seek to deepen ties with Taiwan, exacerbate tensions and increase concerns about the PRC’s behavior. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed as the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, I will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC’s malign influence and destabilizing activities while promoting current U.S. policy regarding the PRC.*

*Question.* What risks does doing so present to U.S. national security and national interests?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. I believe that the United States must pursue its national security priorities, without giving into PRC insistence on linking areas of competition or adversarial interaction without potential areas for cooperation. My focus is on the security relationship between the United States and Poland. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Poland to build resiliency and tools that will help it stand against PRC attempts at economic and political coercion and linkage of issues that should not be linked.*

*Question.* My understanding is that you accepted an \$18,000 honorarium for this speech, but that you originally only reported \$1,000 on U.S. Government ethics forms.

- Can you confirm that you did accept the \$18,000?

*Answer.* Yes. As described below, information related to the China Development Forum was correctly reported on my OGE 278 Nominee Financial Disclosure Report in accordance with the reporting instructions.

*Question.* Can you confirm you have corrected your ethics forms?

Answer. Information related to the China Development Forum was correctly reported on my OGE 278 Nominee Financial Disclosure Report in accordance with the reporting instruction. As noted above, I spoke at the China Development Forum in 2019. The honorarium for that event was received before 2020, and thus fell outside the reporting period covered by Part 2 of the OGE 278 report. However, Part 4 of the OGE 278 covers a longer period of time, and I accurately disclosed that I had received more than \$5,000 from the China Development Forum within the preceding two calendar years, which reflects the 2019 honorarium. I was subsequently scheduled to provide written remarks for a China Development Forum symposium in 2021, for which I received \$1,000. This honorarium is reflected in Part 2 of my nominee financial disclosure report because it was received during the “reporting period.” I ultimately decided not to participate in the 2021 symposium, and I returned the \$1000 to the entity that sponsored the conference.

*Question.* Do you still believe you should have accepted this honorarium for such a speech?

Answer. I accepted this invitation as a result of my longstanding family narrative with China. I come to this from a family that was educated by the Cold War, and knows about the Rule of Law. A lot of that speech is about hope. I was raised to find a diplomatic way forward, even when the chances are not high. I recognize now that is not the way forward. I have read Senator Risch’s report on China’s malign influence in Europe. I understand China’s malign influence, and the case studies offered in the report are incredibly illuminating. I wish I had read that report before I did the speech in 2019. I took in good faith the honorarium and thought at the time there was a good faith possibility for an opening for the U.S. to re-engage with China diplomatically. I of course do not feel the same way now. China has not demonstrated good faith efforts in engagement with the U.S., and with our transatlantic partners. China has demonstrated a bellicose foreign policy as it related to its neighbors in Southeast Asia, including Taiwan, and has mistreated the Uighurs and other ethnic minorities within China.

*Question.* China today is very different from the China of the 1980s and 1990s—and not just in all the economic growth it has achieved.

- How would you characterize the ways China has changed, and how should those changes affect the ways we and our allies like Poland engage with the Chinese Government?

Answer. The PRC has prospered economically since the 1990s, but its government continues to abuse human rights, particularly of Uighurs, Tibetans, and other ethnic and religious minorities, while denying all the people under its control basic freedoms and democratic rights. The PRC’s predatory lending practices and destabilizing activities place it outside the rule-based international order that maintains global peace and prosperity. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Polish ally, bilaterally and through the European Union and Three Seas Initiative, to counter the PRC’s malign influence in Central Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks.

*Question.* Deng Xiaoping took a very different economic approach than Xi Jinping. Xi is actively pursuing a common prosperity political goal, putting individual wealth, large technology and financial companies, and the global stock market at risk just to maintain the Party’s power over the Chinese economy and push foreign players out of the Chinese market. Externally, the Chinese Government uses its market power to coerce and punish countries that do not adhere to CCP policy. The time of Deng’s “reform and opening” has ended.

- Do you agree that there has been a fundamental shift in China’s economic policy?

Answer. Yes; the PRC is doubling down on an economic model that is fundamentally at odds with the market-based global trading system that enabled China’s economy to grow as it has. The PRC is using that system to gain access to U.S. and global markets without adhering to the rules and norms that enable fair competition, while imposing industrial policies with massive subsidies for its domestic firms that disadvantage foreign businesses in China. The PRC also uses its economic heft to coerce other countries and companies. This is a direct challenge to the United States and our allies, including Poland, and the Biden administration is determined to work with our allies and partners to address these challenges.

*Question.* If so, what risks does this shift present to U.S. businesses, the international financial system, and global supply chains?

**Answer.** I support the Biden administration's effort to realize resilient, diverse, and secure supply chains to ensure our economic prosperity and national security, including by encouraging American companies to diversify their PRC supply chains to create more resilient supply chains that can reduce vulnerabilities to economic coercion. Chief among the concerns is the PRC's use of state-led, non-market interventions, to capture large portions of value chains in sectors crucial to U.S. national and economic security. The PRC has used its dominance of critical sectors as economic leverage to advance its own geopolitical agenda, including numerous cases of economic coercion against trading partners who do not fully support Beijing's policies.

*Question.* What opportunities are there to work with Poland to offset these risks?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Polish ally to counter the PRC's malign influence in Central Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I will support Poland's leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central and Eastern Europe and continue to promote U.S. participation in the Three Seas Initiative to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Question.* China-Poland relations have fluctuated wildly in the past few years, from tentative approaches towards rapprochement, to Poland being one of the most vocal opponents of the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment and expelling Chinese spies on Polish soil.

- How would you characterize Poland-China ties, and how would you engage the Polish Government on its relationship with China?

**Answer.** Poland maintains diplomatic and trade relations with the PRC, but I see Poland as wary of the PRC's malevolent intentions in the region and destabilizing activities globally and critical of the PRC's human rights abuses and disrespect for democratic values and institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Polish Ally to counter the PRC's malign influence in Central Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I will support Poland's leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe and continue to promote U.S. participation in the Three Seas Initiative to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Question.* What would your main messages be in this engagement?

**Answer.** Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I will encourage Poland to continue its leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Question.* You mentioned you were edified by my report on transatlantic cooperation regarding China. The PRC Government is accelerating its aggressive tactics every day to leverage China's influence in Europe.

- Do you commit to take classified briefings from the relevant national security agencies on the risks China presents to U.S. interests in Europe prior to your departure to Warsaw?

**Answer.** Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit to regular classified and unclassified briefings to stay abreast of this issue?

**Answer.** Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advise any official senior to sacrifice other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

**Answer.** Yes.

### *Regional*

*Question.* Poland is India's largest trade partner and export destination in Central Europe, and as of March 2021, India was the number one country in Asia for Polish investors.

- What role can the U.S. play to help foster Poland's relationships with other U.S. Indo-Pacific allies and partners, such as India?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage Poland to strengthen its relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. The United States supports Poland's growing ties with Indo-Pacific partners, including India. If confirmed, I plan to hold regular consultations with Polish officials and like-minded Ambassadors in Warsaw to further deepen these ties and identify areas for cooperation. This would include meetings with the Indian Ambassador and with Indo-Pacific Quad Ambassadors in Warsaw to discuss our shared commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, which is also inclusive and resilient. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage Poland to strengthen its relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities.*

*Question.* Poland has sought to expand economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific to diversify away from China as well as counter Chinese economic holds in Europe.

- What can the U.S. do to support Poland in its attempts to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage Poland to strengthen its economic relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities. In Europe, if confirmed, I will stress our continued partnership with Poland to counter the PRC's malign influence in Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I also will encourage Poland to continue its leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. If confirmed, I will encourage Poland to strengthen its economic relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities. I will encourage Poland to continue its leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East. I will encourage the Government of Poland to utilize its investment screening mechanism to safeguard the country from national security and data privacy threats posed by untrusted vendors investing in critical infrastructure and sensitive sectors.*

*Question.* According to recent survey data by European Council on Foreign Relations, the majority of those in Poland support the EU increasing its investment in maritime security in the Indo-Pacific.

- In what areas can Poland be helpful in encouraging more EU security engagement in the region?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage Poland to coordinate and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities.

*Answer [updated—12/16/2021]. I have been encouraged by recent efforts in Europe to increase their interaction with Indo-Pacific countries on maritime security, and in increasing their presence in the region where consistent with their own security strategies and capabilities. The presence of UK, French, German and Dutch maritime security forces in the region in the past year shows how much Europe is investing in this issue.*

*I do not expect every European nation to deploy to the region, but Poland, as a likeminded partner, can actively support efforts—particularly through assertive public and private messaging—to preserve the rules-based international order, including the primacy of international law in resolving maritime disputes.*

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MICHAEL M. ADLER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents (AHI)). Ensuring the safety and se-

curity 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. Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the inter-agency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*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. Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*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. Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL M. ADLER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Belgium remained on Tier 1 due to their consistent and effective efforts to stop the scourge of human trafficking. However, there is always room for improvement. How will you work with Belgium's Government and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. Belgium continues to take trafficking in persons issues seriously and has been a steadfast partner in coordinating on the issue with the United States. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Belgian authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Belgian Government. I will urge the Government of Belgium to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report, including the issue of lenient sentences for convicted human traffickers.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with other regional ambassadors whose host countries are not on Tier 1 to improve regional counter-TIP efforts?

Answer. If confirmed, I will stay in regular contact with U.S. Ambassadors in the region to share best practices on how to ensure host governments are prioritizing the issue of human rights.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, societal respect for religious freedom wavers with recently reported incidents of violence, threats, harassment, discrimination, and hate speech against Muslims and Jews.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue?

Answer. Incidents of violence, threats, harassment, discrimination, and hate speech against members of any religious group are unacceptable. If confirmed, I will work with both government and civil society interlocutors to ensure that religious freedom and human rights are respected in Belgium.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with the Office for International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Office for International Religious Freedom to monitor incidents against members of religious groups and advocate for religious freedom in Belgium. I would welcome the Ambassador at Large, if confirmed, and other USG officials to visit Belgium to promote religious freedom and human rights.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Belgium was reported to have significant human rights abuses to include attacks motivated by anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim sentiment.

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

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work with the Government of Belgium to keep the issues of human rights and religious freedoms at the forefront of our bilateral agenda. I would call upon the government to hold accountable perpetrators of such attacks. I would also encourage the Belgian Government to continue to take forward community-based initiatives promoting tolerance and inclusivity, including for Muslim and Jewish communities.

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

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage Embassy Brussels to support outreach to civil society organizations working to improve tolerance, inclusion, and respect for human rights across all sectors of Belgian society.

*Question.* In September, a Rwandan court convicted Belgian citizen and U.S. lawful permanent resident Paul Rusesabagina, who inspired the film "Hotel Rwanda," of terrorism-related charges and sentenced him to 25 years in prison. In August 2021, Mr. Rusesabagina arrived in Rwanda after he was reportedly tricked into boarding a plane in Dubai, where he was arrested and allegedly tortured while in detention. Mr. Rusesabagina's trial, and that of his co-defendants, was marred with serious due process concerns which overshadowed the validity of the guilty verdict. Rwandan authorities continue to allow Belgian and U.S. consular access to Mr. Rusesabagina. However, the level of engagement and pressure on the Rwandan government by the United States and Belgium to free Mr. Rusesabagina varies.

- Do you commit, if confirmed, to following Mr. Rusesabagina's case and the Belgian government's statements and actions related to his detention?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to following Mr. Rusesabagina's case and the Belgian government's statements and actions related to his detention.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to coordinating with State Department officials on United States efforts to cooperate with Belgium on diplomatic strategies focused on Mr. Rusesabagina's release from prison and ultimate return to his family?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to coordinating with State Department officials on Paul Rusesabagina's case.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to being responsive to my office regarding any inquiries made to the State Department regarding Belgium as it relates to Mr. Rusesabagina's case?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to being responsive to your office regarding any inquiries made to the State Department regarding Belgium as it relates to Mr. Rusesabagina's case.

*Question.* Mission Belgium has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Belgium?

*Answer.* Belgium and all of Europe has been hit hard by COVID-19. As I understand, travel and other restrictions, heightened uncertainty, health concerns, and family obligations have been stressful for Mission Belgium officers and their families. If confirmed, I pledge to work with my team to address any concerns and proactively support morale-building activities in the Mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Belgium?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make clear that the safety and morale of the Mission is of paramount importance to me. I appreciate the wealth of talent and experience of the Foreign Service and Locally Engaged Staff, and will ensure that they know that I will do everything I can to take care of them and their families. If confirmed, upon arrival, I will hold a Town Hall to seek input from all members of the Mission. I will meet regularly with all sections of the Mission to share my appreciation for the invaluable work and contributions they make and listen to their concerns.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Belgium?

*Answer.* Throughout my career in the private sector, I have worked hard to create a unified administration where communication, cooperation and coordination are

paramount. I understand that motivating people and providing resources to accomplish our goals are key to success. If confirmed, I will work with my Country Team to establish clear goals and empower my staff to reach them.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I work hard to create a team approach. I appreciate and seek input from all members of my team. I also understand that, as team leader, I am ultimately responsible for my team's actions and decisions.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

Answer. As a long-time business owner, I understand how to work with limited resources and career public servants. If confirmed, I believe as a team we will be able to use what resources we have to accomplish targeted goals.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture?

Answer. Yes, I do believe that it is important to integrate myself into the Embassy operations and culture.

*Question.* If you do believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture, how do you intend to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to proactively support and participate in activities set up by the Mission for Mission employees and families. I will maintain the smooth operation of the Embassy by following the established regulations and protocols. If confirmed, I look forward to becoming a part of the Mission family.

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

Answer. No, I do not believe it is constructive to berate subordinates in public or private. If there are issues, I will address them professionally and constructively.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission? If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to have an excellent, professional relationship with my deputy chief of mission. If confirmed, I will support the deputy chief of mission's role in the day-to-day management of the Mission and as my key advisor.

*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.

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to encourage officers to meet with contacts as the COVID situation allows, and to travel around the country to meet a diverse range of Belgians. I understand and embrace the value of people-to-people exchanges, and I intend to promote U.S. policies by supporting the Mission's public diplomacy programming.

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

Answer. While our U.S. diplomats in Brussels have access to virtually all sectors of Belgian society, if confirmed, I intend to continue to instill in members of the Mission community the importance of broadening and diversifying their contacts to form a complete picture of the local situation.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

Answer. I agree. If confirmed, I will prioritize public diplomacy efforts.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Belgium? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

Answer. The media environment in Belgium is professional, modern, respectful, multi-lingual, and mildly partisan. If confirmed, I will work with the public diplomacy section to raise the profile of U.S. priorities, such as in climate action, countering the actions of malign actors in Europe, and enhancing U.S.-Belgium economic ties. I will work with the public diplomacy section to build closer ties with the youth in Belgium, so they too understand the important role the United States played in the history of Belgium and Western Europe to help ensure our bilateral relationship remains strong into the future.



*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. If confirmed, I will work with the public diplomacy section to tailor messages on policy priorities with the realities on the ground. I will work with my team to communicate with Main State and make sure that our messaging resonates with Belgians. I will also encourage creative ways of sharing our message to appeal to targeted audiences.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. government personnel around the world, including at U.S. embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

Answer. I have received an unclassified briefing on anomalous health incidents. If confirmed, I commit to receiving additional, classified briefings on the incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will maintain detailed records of the incident and share them with the State Department and others to contribute to the investigation. I commit to working closely with the leaders of the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF) in Washington, Ambassador Jonathan Moore, and Ambassador Margaret Uyehara to support affected personnel.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

Answer. If confirmed, I will take every measure to keep our staff safe and secure and would take any report of an anomalous health incident very seriously. I will do my best to ensure those affected receive the attention they deserve, that incidents are investigated fully, and that we work with the appropriate offices and agencies to ensure required reporting, investigation, potential countermeasures, and provision of medical care. I would share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and the mission community.

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