

**NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE
115TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION**

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—
JANUARY 3, 2017 TO JANUARY 3, 2018
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2017

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:00 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jeff Flake, presiding.

Present: Senators Flake [presiding], Gardner, Young, Booker, Coons, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF FLAKE, U.S. SENATOR FROM ARIZONA

Senator FLAKE. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Today the committee will consider the nominations of three experienced career Foreign Service officers to be the U.S. Ambassadors to Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Algeria. I was pleased to meet each of today's nominees in my office earlier and to learn about them and this potential posting.

Ethiopia is a key regional security partner, helping to counter al Shabaab in the region, helping to diffuse a violent crisis that we just learned more about in South Sudan.

Sierra Leone's economy continues to struggle while the country is still recovering from the devastation brought by the Ebola virus.

Algeria and the United States work together on important counterterrorism issues, but more can be done on the economic front to allow for greater opportunity and investment in that country.

Before I recognize Ranking Member Booker, let me take a moment to thank the families who are here. We know that the work is hard and separation sometimes is difficult when the post is in a far-flung place, as all of these are. So we appreciate your sacrifice and are glad to have you here today. And I am sure you will be introduced later.

Senator Booker?

STATEMENT OF HON. CORY A. BOOKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

Senator BOOKER. I just want to echo my colleague and friend and his comments. It is extraordinary the service you all have already rendered to the United States of America. Citizenship in the United States has tremendous blessings and privileges, and most of us luxuriate in rights that were fought for and struggled for by

generations before. But you all are not just enjoying your privileges, but you are showing that your commitment to the obligations of citizenship through service under difficult conditions, difficult circumstances, and a service that necessitates sacrifice. And for that, I am just very, very grateful.

As Senator Flake said, it is not just you. Obviously, when you all are serving, it is your entire families as well. And so my gratitude to all of you for stepping forward to these difficult challenging positions of leadership in areas of the world that desperately need leadership and service and the best of America. So thank you for your willingness to represent that.

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you.

Our first nominee is Michael Arthur Raynor, former Ambassador, who has served as an American diplomat since 1988. He served in eight missions, including Benin, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Guinea, Djibouti, and Congo Brazzaville.

Our second nominee, Maria Brewer, has served one of her first postings as a Foreign Service officer in Sierra Leone. So this will be a return, if she is successful, to the country for which she is now nominated. That is a great thing, I am sure, the prospect of returning.

Lastly, we will hear from John Desrocher currently serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Egypt and Maghreb Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the Department of State.

With that, the committee recognizes Ambassador Raynor first. Please feel free to introduce any family that you have here as well.

STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL ARTHUR RAYNOR, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Tillerson for their trust and confidence in me.

I am also very proud to have my family with me today: my wife Kate, my son Bradley, and my daughter Emma. I could not be more grateful for their support.

During my 29 years as a Foreign Service officer, I have developed substantial African policy and managerial experience and a record of leadership fostering strong performance from interagency teams and challenging environments.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, my top priority will be the security, interests, and welfare of American citizens. I will also seek to strengthen our strong partnerships with Ethiopia, to support, health, education, food security, and economic growth.

Starting in November 2015, Ethiopia began experiencing widespread unrest, resulting in the imposition of a state of emergency.

If confirmed, I will advocate for full respect of the rights guaranteed under Ethiopia's constitution.

Ethiopia has a deep commitment to promoting regional stability and countering terrorism. If confirmed, I intend to sustain and strengthen this important security partnership.

U.S. national interests also lie in supporting Ethiopia's economic progress because a sound business environment is a strong driver of good governance, development, and long-term stability.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you and for considering me for such an important posting. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

[Ambassador Raynor's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL ARTHUR RAYNOR

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for their trust and confidence in me. I am also very proud to have my family with me today: my wife Kate; my son Bradley, who is serving with Teach for America in Buffalo, New York; and my daughter Emma, who is going into her senior year at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York.

During my 29-year career as a Foreign Service Officer, I have developed substantial African policy and managerial experience, and a record of leadership fostering interagency collaboration, strong performance from diverse teams, and high morale in challenging environments. As U.S. Ambassador to Benin, I strengthened the country's democratic trajectory, elicited strong anti-terrorism cooperation, and helped improve the business climate while promoting U.S. commercial interests. As Assistant Chief of Mission in Afghanistan, I coordinated some of the United States' most complex law enforcement and foreign assistance programs as well as the embassy's large security and management operations, while also engaging with the Afghan Government on security and governance challenges. As Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs, I led management and crisis support to over 50 African posts.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, my top priority will be the security, interests, and welfare of American citizens. Whether ensuring responsive consular services, advocating for U.S. businesses, or strengthening partnerships against terrorism, this priority will guide the Embassy's activities and objectives. If confirmed, I also commit to doing everything I can to ensure that the dedicated women and men working at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa are safe, secure, and have every opportunity for success.

The United States has strong partnerships with Ethiopia, in alignment with the Ethiopian Government's own priorities, to support health, education, food security, and economic growth. These programs contribute meaningfully to Ethiopia's governance, stability, and prosperity. However, starting in November 2015, Ethiopia began experiencing widespread unrest, resulting in the imposition of a state of emergency that has included arbitrary detention, excessive use of force, and restrictions on civil and political freedoms. The unrest stems from complex factors including land tenure, ethnic tensions, and joblessness, but is rooted in popular desires for greater political freedom and civil liberties. If confirmed, I will advocate for full respect of the rights guaranteed under Ethiopia's constitution, as well as for reforms that strengthen democratic institutions. Such steps will not only support Ethiopian's own aspirations for stability and development, as well as its efforts against violent extremism in the region, but they will also strengthen the foundation for the U.S.-Ethiopia partnership in areas of vital interest to both nations.

Ethiopia is a strong partner to the United States in the Horn of Africa, and has a deep commitment to promoting regional stability and countering terrorism. This engagement includes Ethiopia's significant contributions to the African Union's counterterrorism and peace support mission in Somalia and to the United Nations' peacekeeping efforts in South Sudan, as well as Ethiopia's leading role in the South Sudanese peace process. Ethiopia also contributes to regional stability as the second-largest host of refugees in Africa. If confirmed, I intend to sustain and strengthen this important security relationship.

U.S. national interests lie in supporting Ethiopia's economic progress as well, because economic freedom and a sound business environment are strong drivers of

good governance, rule of law, and long-term stability. These factors also create opportunities for American businesses, and if confirmed, I will work to promote a business climate in Ethiopia that encourages U.S. private sector activity and ensures a level playing field for U.S. firms.

Ethiopia is a dynamic nation with an extraordinary history of independence and accomplishments as well as a future of enormous potential. I am honored by your consideration of me to serve in such an important posting. If confirmed, I will welcome input and advice from you and your staff on any aspect of the multi-faceted relationship between the United States and Ethiopia. I will also be pleased, if confirmed, to receive you and your staff in Ethiopia and to keep you apprised of the activities of the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you so much, Ambassador Raynor.

Ms. Brewer?

STATEMENT OF MARIA E. BREWER, OF INDIANA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Ms. BREWER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, and members of the committee, thank you for your consideration of my nomination to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone.

I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for their trust in me to lead the U.S. embassy.

And I am honored and fortunate to have my husband Mark and our 8-year-old daughter Arina here with me today. I thank both of them for their constant love and support. Without them, I would not be here before you.

Senator FLAKE. That is a nice looking young ambassador you have there. [Laughter.]

Ms. BREWER. We have a strong relationship with Sierra Leone. If confirmed, I will work to enhance our bilateral relationship while maintaining the U.S. principles of promoting democracy and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will advocate for transparency, accountability, and economic stability.

But in addition to these policy aims, I hold paramount the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Sierra Leone and the entire U.S. embassy team.

My initial introduction to Africa was as a first-tour officer assigned to Lagos, Nigeria. I was then posted to Freetown, Sierra Leone. At the time, Sierra Leone was suffering through the last years of its civil war. But despite their many hardships, the positive spirit and the resilience of the people of Sierra Leone both moved and impressed me.

After several tours in South Asia, I returned to the African Affairs Bureau in Washington, D.C. from 2010 until 2013 and then was Deputy Chief of Mission in Abuja, Nigeria, 2013 to 2016.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome your questions.

[Ms. Brewer's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARIA ELENA BREWER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and for your consideration of my nomi-

nation by President Trump to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone. I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Tillerson for their trust in me to lead the U.S. Embassy and to maintain our relationship with Sierra Leone. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will uphold that trust. I am honored and very fortunate to have my husband, Mark, and our eight-year-old daughter, Arina, here with me today. I thank both of them for their constant love and support. Without them, I would not be here before you today.

Sierra Leone has shown remarkable progress in maintaining peace, strengthening democracy, and working toward an environment suitable for economic growth. Its perseverance is especially remarkable considering the challenges it has endured. After its devastating decade-long civil war, Sierra Leone rebuilt itself and made notable economic progress. Sierra Leone saw impressive economic growth in 2012 and 2013. But in 2014, the Ebola crisis struck. By late 2015, roughly 14,000 individuals in Sierra Leone contracted the disease, of whom approximately 3,900 died.

In late 2015, Sierra Leone adopted a post-Ebola recovery plan, which received indirect and direct U.S. support. While damage from the Ebola crisis is still evident, collaborative efforts such as USAID's Ebola Transmission Prevention and Survivor Services Project have helped Sierra Leone to make great strides in combatting the epidemic and advancing in its aftermath. Sierra Leone ranks eighth from the bottom among countries on the U.N.'s Human Development Index. One in eight Sierra Leonean children will not live to age five. Sierra Leone has one of the world's highest rates of maternal mortality. Sierra Leone must allocate funds and resources to public health; doing so will be crucial to the country's future progress. If confirmed, I will work with Sierra Leonean leaders to ensure that public health remains a top national priority. Good governance and the rule of law will be key. The United States has made great inroads in working with Sierra Leone. Through programs funded by the Department of State's Bureau of Immigration, Narcotics, and Law Enforcement Affairs, Embassy colleagues have built relationships that have resulted in tangible diplomatic and law enforcement achievements. These include extraditing a U.S. fugitive and repatriating Sierra Leonean nationals from the United States. These projects have bolstered access to justice, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and security for ordinary Sierra Leonean citizens. If I am confirmed, I would plan to increase collaborative efforts toward mutually beneficial goals for Sierra Leone and for our bilateral relationship.

Also if confirmed, I will continue our focus on strengthening democratic institutions and combatting corruption. Since 2002, Sierra Leone has held three successful presidential and legislative elections that were broadly judged to be free, fair, and transparent. Sierra Leone has an important presidential election in March 2018. If confirmed, I will make it a priority in my first months to engage with candidates and other stakeholders to advocate for another free and fair election with a peaceful transfer of power.

I will also work to continue U.S. support for market-oriented endeavors and to boost employment in Sierra Leone. The International Monetary Fund predicts growth of 6-7 percent for Sierra Leone in 2017 and 2018. If confirmed, I will advocate for transparency, accountability, and economic sustainability. And at the same time, I will work closely with the U.S. business community to encourage greater trade and investment between our two countries as a way to spur prosperity both for U.S. citizens and Sierra Leoneans.

I should emphasize that we are starting off on a strong footing with our relationship with Sierra Leone. We have many shared goals, as evinced by our successful projects in country. If confirmed, I will enhance our strong bilateral relationship as we work together to achieve new goals in an increasingly globalized world, while maintaining our principles of promoting democracy and rule of law.

In addition to these policy aims, I hold paramount the safety and security of hundreds of U.S. citizens resident in Sierra Leone, and the entire U.S. Embassy team, including U.S. citizen employees, their families, and our Sierra Leonean colleagues. If confirmed, I would do all within my power to ensure the security of our Mission and oversee its smooth operation.

My initial introduction to Africa was as a first-tour, entry-level officer, when I was in Lagos, Nigeria. I was then posted to Freetown, Sierra Leone, for my second tour from 1999 through 2001. At the time, Sierra Leone was suffering through the last years of their brutal civil war. Despite their many hardships, the positive spirit and resilience of the people of Sierra Leone moved and impressed me. After several tours in South Asia, including India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, I returned to the African Affairs Bureau in Washington, DC., serving in the Executive Office from 2010 until 2013. I then served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Abuja, Nigeria from 2013 until 2016. If confirmed, I would bring a strong understanding of the African con-

continent and its people, as well as the knowledge and experience to successfully advance our national interests in Freetown.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome your questions.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.
Mr. Desrocher?

STATEMENT OF JOHN P. DESROCHER, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Mr. DESROCHER. Chairman Flake, Ranking Member Booker, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored that President Trump has nominated me to be the U.S. Ambassador to Algeria, and I deeply appreciate the confidence he and Secretary Tillerson have shown by making this nomination.

I am also very pleased that my wife Karen could join me here today. She has put up with a lot of those separations that you mentioned, Mr. Chairman.

If confirmed by the Senate, my first priority will be to keep safe the people who serve in the U.S. embassy in Algiers and the American expatriate community in Algeria. I will also work to advance three critical U.S. interests: strengthening our bilateral security cooperation to fight terrorism and promote regional stability; expanding bilateral trade and investment; and working with Algerian counterparts as they pursue political and economic reforms that will foster stability as Algeria navigates new economic realities.

The U.S.-Algeria relationship has grown broader and deeper in recent years. In the last several years, we have consulted extensively at high levels and with broad interagency participation regarding terrorism in North Africa. Our governments also hold bilateral strategic dialogues and joint military dialogues on a recurring basis. Our embassy in Algeria also facilitates a broad and ever-growing spectrum of bilateral cooperative programs that strengthen our security, economic, governance, educational, and cultural ties. This speaks to the value that both of our countries place on our growing partnership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, and members of the committee, for giving me the opportunity to address you. It is a great honor to have been nominated as Ambassador to Algeria. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to lead an active, talented mission at U.S. Embassy Algiers, as we work with Algeria to advance our shared interests.

And I would be happy to take any questions you might have.
[Mr. Desrocher's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN DESROCHER

Chairman Flake, Ranking Member Booker, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Trump has nominated me to be the U.S. Ambassador to Algeria, and I deeply appreciate the confidence

he and Secretary Tillerson have shown by making this nomination. I am also very pleased that my wife, Karen, could join me here today.

If confirmed by the Senate, my first priority will be to keep safe the people who serve in U.S. Embassy Algiers, and the American expatriate community in Algeria. I will also work to advance three critical U.S. interests: (1) strengthening our bilateral security cooperation to fight terrorism and promote regional stability, (2) expanding bilateral trade and investment, and (3) working with Algerian counterparts as they pursue political and economic reforms that will foster stability as Algeria navigates new economic realities.

The U.S.-Algeria relationship has grown broader and deeper in recent years. Algeria's Foreign Minister visited Secretary Tillerson in Washington this May. In the last several years we have consulted extensively, at high levels and with broad interagency participation, regarding terrorism in North Africa. Our governments also hold bilateral Strategic Dialogues and Joint Military Dialogues on a recurring basis. Our Embassy in Algeria also facilitates a broad and ever-growing spectrum of bilateral cooperative programs that strengthen our security, economic, governance, educational and cultural ties. This speaks to the value that both of our countries place on our growing partnership.

From Algeria's fight against terrorism in the 1990s, it has achieved a hard-won stability, which it has maintained through rigorous counterterrorism efforts, national reconciliation programs, and de-radicalization initiatives. Algeria has also exported this peace dividend to its neighbors. I am consistently impressed by Algeria's efforts to foster political reconciliation in Libya and to align neighboring states in support of a political agreement. Algeria has also provided security assistance and training to other neighbors such as Tunisia and Niger.

As the largest country in Africa and situated in a volatile neighborhood, Algeria clearly recognizes the threat that regional unrest poses to its domestic security. Fighters from Iraq and Syria returning to the region, smuggling networks, and organized criminal groups represent significant threats. Left unchecked, these threats have the potential to harm vital U.S. interests. For this reason, if confirmed by the Senate, I will work to expand our important bilateral security and counterterrorism relationship.

The U.S.-Algeria relationship is also growing in the economic and commercial spheres. The government has faced budgetary difficulties following the decline in global oil prices, as hydrocarbons account for most of its revenue. Yet, these challenges have given Algeria an opportunity to make important structural economic changes, promote private sector growth, as well as foreign investment. Last year, Algeria launched a new economic model to develop and diversify its domestic industries. It has also reevaluated state subsidy programs and explored new forms of financing.

The U.S. Government has supported Algeria's economic transition. In January, the Treasury Department sent a technical advisor to Algeria to provide advice on efficient debt management and domestic debt market development. In April, our governments held the latest annual meeting of the Trade and Investment Framework

Agreement Council, to identify ways to strengthen economic ties by reducing barriers to trade and investment. Additionally, our Embassy in Algiers supports U.S. firms in Algeria through commercial advocacy. In April, GE Power signed a services deal with Algerian utility Sonelgaz, valued at \$3.3 billion, to provide upgrades and long-term services for 10 gas plants throughout the country. Many other companies have also benefitted from U.S. Government advocacy, and, if confirmed, I will continue to prioritize this critically important function of our Embassy.

While new investments are essential, Algeria also remains one of the key regional producers of oil and gas, and it provides an essential energy lifeline to Europe and the Middle East. It ranks 10th in world gas reserves and 16th in oil reserves. As the United States has considerable expertise in the energy industry, if confirmed, I will promote U.S. companies as they seek to partner with Algerian firms to develop the energy sector.

Last year, the Algerian Government adopted a package of constitutional reforms to strengthen Algeria's political system and enshrine freedom of religion. If confirmed, I will work with the Algerian government to solidify these important reforms, which will strengthen Algeria's democratic and social fabric. I am committed to continuing our outreach to key human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in Algeria. I will also prioritize expanding social ties through new academic and people-to-people exchanges.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, and members of the committee, for giving me the opportunity to address you. It is a great honor to have been nominated as Ambassador to Algeria. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to lead an active, talented mission at U.S. Embassy Algiers, as we work with Algeria to advance our shared interests.

I will be happy to take any questions you might have.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you. Thank you all.

Ambassador Raynor, opposition activists and journalists have been jailed by the Ethiopian Government on charges related to national security. How will that affect our relationship with Ethiopia, and how do you plan to raise those concerns?

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you, Senator.

I do think that these are issues that we must raise and, if confirmed, I would raise with Ethiopian leadership. And I would seek to do so in a way that is thoughtful but forthright and that makes reference to good will, shared interests, and objectives, Ethiopia's own statements with regard to its own intentions to look at political and governance reforms.

The state of emergency, the constraint of political space and rights does not serve Ethiopia's own long-term developmental or security interests. It creates space for potential violent extremism and it precludes members of their society from contributing to the development of their own nation. So I would see every opportunity I could to press that case, to use the resources at the embassy, including a resident legal advisor and a USAID mission who have strong resources and expertise to help facilitate community-based dialogue, other means of bridging gaps, and helping to move the country past this phase where all of its citizens are not being given

the political space they need to participate in the governance of their own country.

Senator FLAKE. How do you understand the investment climate in Ethiopia now? There is some controversy with the government giving away large swaths of land, agricultural land to foreign owners, I guess, for electricity production and some other things. How does that affect the investment climate?

Ambassador RAYNOR. Well, first, I would note that there are extraordinary opportunities in Ethiopia. It has had one of the fastest growing economies in the world over the past 10 years, and I think that creates opportunities for U.S. businesses. And the government's own growth and development strategy calls for greater private sector engagement.

You are right. The land use issues were one of the sources of tension underlying the recent unrest. I think there is still work to be done to resolve those. But there is also work to be done to strengthen the broader business climate in the country so that it is more welcoming to private investment, private sector engagement like the American private sector can bring.

So I would work with the Ethiopian Government, if confirmed, to promote improvements in their business climate and to promote U.S. commercial activity both for the sake of our own business community and for the sake of Ethiopia's development and stability.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you so much.

Ms. Brewer, Sierra Leone was caught up with the Ebola virus and devastating effects there. As bad as it was, it could have been worse had it spread to other countries. It was contained at least in West Africa. And there is concern of new outbreaks at some point. We know it never goes completely away. And public health, certainly having an infrastructure there to contend with a new epidemic that might come there and in other countries is important.

What is the situation with regard to public health in Sierra Leone, and what is the United States doing to improve that?

Ms. BREWER. Yes, thank you, Senator.

Yes, the Ebola crisis was a terrible loss for the country. Some 14,000 Sierra Leoneans were infected and almost 4,000 died during the crisis. So we know that the country is very cognizant of the dangers, as well as to the international community.

The U.S. Government has done quite a bit through USAID and other partners, including DOD. It was truly a whole-of-government approach that was used to stem the tide of this horrible scourge.

Since then, we have been working with post-recovery efforts, including expanding the global health security agenda. We are sampling animals to ensure that we know what kinds of diseases can be spread animal to human, both wild and domesticated. We have just rehabilitated 300 clinics which will serve some 1.7 million Sierra Leoneans to give them some basic health treatment as well. So we are working very closely with our international partners, as well as with the Sierra Leonean Government, and we will continue to encourage them to put more of their own national assets and resources towards health care as well.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Mr. Desrocher, we talked in my office about some of the challenges facing Algeria. Low oil prices have, obviously, affected their

revenues. What efforts are being made to diversify that economy? And how is the U.S. helping in that regard?

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

You are right. Low oil prices have had an impact on Algeria's economy. It is traditionally an oil-dependent economy, but the government is looking to diversify that economy. It is very interested in foreign direct investment. That is something we are obviously interested in as well. A diverse economy is a more robust economy. That is certainly good for Algeria. It is also good for countries like us that want to work with Algeria.

We want to help with those reforms as Algeria moves forward with its own reform program. We have a Treasury Department technical advisor in Algiers working on issues like private debt management, and we are willing to look at how we might expand the way we cooperate with the Algerian Government in this economic reform area because we really think it would benefit both our countries. If confirmed, that is something I will certainly strongly encourage.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

Senator BOOKER?

Senator BOOKER. If it is all right with you, Mr. Chairman, I am going to defer to Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that, Senator Booker.

And congratulations to each of you. I am not on the Africa Subcommittee of FRC, but I am on the subcommittee that oversees Arab North Africa. I call it the subcommittee from Marrakech to Bangladesh. And so, Mr. Desrocher, my questions are going to be for you. But for all of you, congratulations both on your lengthy careers of service but also on these important nominations.

You referred in your opening testimony to new economic realities from Algeria without description. I assume you were referring primarily to low oil prices and how that has affected the country. And you responded a bit to the chair on that question.

But what are some other areas that you think the U.S. can be particularly helpful? Are there private investment opportunities, industries in the United States that might find promising opportunities in Algeria? What can we do to help them deal with that challenge?

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

I think there is a great deal that the United States can do to work with Algeria as it seeks to reform and diversify its economy. Obviously, American firms bring a great deal of expertise and technology across all sectors, and Algeria could really benefit from that. Algeria is anxious for foreign direct investment, and I think we can work with the Algerians to help build an environment that is more welcoming to foreign direct investment.

I mentioned the Treasury technical advisor that is there. That is something that we certainly think he has only been there a short time, but it is already showing some fruit. I have worked in other countries where we have had programs from various parts of the U.S. Government that help countries that are looking to examine their domestic investment environment and look at ways to make it more attractive for private investment. And that is certainly

something that I would address with my Algerian counterparts, if confirmed, and be very ready to look for ways to move forward on.

Senator Kaine. Thank you for that.

Share a little bit about your thoughts on how Algeria is dealing with anti-terrorism efforts. There was a Reuters report this morning that they had just broken up an ISIS cell that was headed by a former al Qaeda operative. And so there is this mixture of al Qaeda and ISIS elements in Algeria. It sounds like a good bit of investigative and intel work to break up the cell. But talk a little bit about the challenge they face and how they are dealing with it.

Mr. Desrocher. Certainly, Senator. Thank you for the question.

Algeria has a great deal of experience in this area, and it has proven itself to be an effective counterterrorism partner for the United States. It does have some terrorism presence in the country, as you mentioned, but it has been effective at constraining that.

We work closely with the Algerians on counterterrorism and security issues. We have a number of assistance programs, not very large particularly, but we have a number of assistance programs that help with managing terrorist incidents, with forensics, with investigations, airport security, and issues like that. Certainly, if confirmed, that is something I would want to encourage because we have found thus far the Algerians to be a very willing and very effective counterterrorism partner.

Senator Kaine. We have a very strong ally next door to Algeria in Morocco. The relations between Morocco and Algeria have been very, very challenged over many years. There is a whole series of issues, including the Western Sahara.

Do you see any prospects based on your expertise and work in the area? Do you see any prospects for change in the Algeria-Morocco relationship so that there would be a cessation of challenges and stronger bilateral ties?

Mr. Desrocher. Thank you, Senator.

You are right. The Algeria-Morocco relationship has certainly been a tense one for some time. It is something that we think is in the interest of both countries to try to find ways to work better together. If confirmed, that is something that I would certainly work on. There are definitely areas of cooperation in border security and drug smuggling and other issues, counterterrorism where the ability for those two countries to work together would really benefit them both and the wider region. And it is certainly something I would very eagerly work on.

Senator Kaine. Great.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And I appreciate your answers to those questions.

Senator Flake. Thank you.

Senator Young?

Senator Young. Thank you, Chairman.

Ms. Brewer, I first want to congratulate you so much on your nomination to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone. I am glad that your family, who I met earlier, could be here with you. Your husband Mark and your daughter Arina, a cute little 8-year-old right there—I am glad they are here as well.

So as many of you know, Ms. Brewer is a career member of the senior Foreign Service. She served as Deputy Chief of Mission at

our embassy in Nigeria. She also served in important positions at our embassy in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as well as our consulate in Mumbai, India. You have valuable experience, Ms. Brewer, related to the Ebola crisis, as well as the Boko Haram and al Qaeda threats.

But most importantly to me, Ms. Brewer was born in Indiana and you earned your degree at Valparaiso University. Based on your status as a Hoosier and a tremendously qualified career member of the senior Foreign Service, I look forward to supporting your nomination and supporting your important work in Sierra Leone, once you are confirmed.

So, Ms. Brewer, I just want to touch on something in your prepared statement. You mentioned a number of development-related issues that will be important to the future of Sierra Leone, including good governance, rule of law, democratic institutions, economic sustainability, and anti-corruption measures. Which of these do you believe will be particularly important to the future of Sierra Leone and U.S. interests there?

Ms. BREWER. Thank you, Senator, for those remarks. And thank you for your acknowledgement of my status as a Hoosier. My husband and I are both proud Hoosiers. So it is really an honor for a girl from Portage, Indiana to eventually go and represent our country all over the world. It has been amazing. So thank you for that.

Regarding the various issues that face Sierra Leone, there are many and they have many deep challenges. I think one of the issues that I would like to focus on during my tenure, if confirmed, would be to help them create the economic and business climate where they can attract the business that they will need to truly advance. That includes issues of corruption. It includes issues of rule of law. Businesses need to know that when they go to have a contract to have a business, that the terms of that contract will be honored, that they will not be endlessly asked for a number of fees, other issues like that that will make it harder for them to attract the kind of business that they need.

Recently the embassy stood up an American business community to help U.S. entities doing business in Sierra Leone bring their issues forward to the government and help amplify those voices. But I think creating an environment that includes the respect for rule of law and respect for contracts and strong judicial bodies will help Sierra Leone advance the most quickly.

Senator YOUNG. Well, I am encouraged by that response. And increasingly our own country's development assistance programs, as you know better than I, are focused on helping countries graduate out of receiving development assistance. I know there are a number of opportunities in Sierra Leone to grow their economy amidst all the challenges that they face in that regard.

One of the things I think is really important from our standpoint is to make sure that we optimize our development enterprise. This is something I have been involved with with Senator Shaheen forming a bipartisan panel with CSIS, the think tank, and we have produced a report about how we can reform our development enterprise to support efforts like yours in Sierra Leone. So I would commend that to you, recommend you take a look at the website and

download the report. And I think a number of those recommendations will be incorporated in the forthcoming reforms we will see at USAID.

So thanks again to all of you for your interest in serving and for your service to date.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you.

I am told that we have a hard stop at 11:30 for this, but we will try to get through as quickly as possible.

Senator Booker?

Senator BOOKER. Senator Coons, please go ahead.

Senator COONS. Thanks, Senator Booker. I will be quite brief. Just two quick questions, if I might, to Mr. Raynor for your upcoming service, if successful, in Ethiopia.

Just talk to me briefly, if you would, about how you understand China's role in Ethiopia. I have some concerns about adoption and ongoing challenges that Delaware families and many others have in concluding adoption cases that had been open. And I would be interested if you could speak to those two topics just briefly.

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you very much, Senator.

China is certainly very active in Ethiopia, has identified Ethiopia as a preferred partner in Africa. I think that is most visible in infrastructure projects, work on the airport, work on the railroad connecting Addis to Djibouti, and in many other areas as well. It is an interesting dynamic. It is something that I think the U.S. Government needs to be cognizant of. And yet, I think that there is value in multiple donors and multiple points of engagement with a country like Ethiopia that has enormous potential. And I think it is incumbent on us to look at how we engage in ways that complement with other donors, including China. But I think it is clear that there is a strong and deep relationship between Ethiopia and China.

On adoption, that is of paramount concern to me, Senator. There are about 300 American families currently in the process of trying to adopt and have invested emotionally, time, resources, formed real connections with real children who are desperate for that connection and for the resources that they can gain from being adopted by loving American families.

The Ethiopian Government did suspend international adoptions in late April. The embassy immediately began engaging to resume those, receiving quite thoughtful and helpful engagement from the Ethiopian authorities to resume international adoptions. The 40 or so that had gone through the judicial process I understand have all gone through the entire process at this point, including the final documentation. About 250 other families are farther back in the pipeline. The government has engaged to continue processing those as well.

One of the challenges is that some of the early steps in the process take place at the regional level, and there is some variation in how the various regions are doing that.

So, if confirmed, I would continue to engage constructively with Ethiopia and to welcome their constructive engagement to see these cases through, but also to engage on the regional level to make sure that we are getting appropriate cooperation.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Raynor. Given the press of time, I will defer to the ranking member. Let me just in quick closing say McKinsey has recently issued a report about China's ascendancy across the continent, a trend that has been underway for a decade. I urge all of you to be active in promoting American exports and engagement with the continent. Thank you.

Thank you for the chance to question, Senator.

Senator FLAKE. Senator Booker?

Senator BOOKER. I have got about 3 minutes before they actually literally stop the cameras because of some wonderful non-bipartisanship in our Senate.

So, first of all, Ms. Brewer, I am very concerned about human trafficking concerns. Is there anything you can enlighten me as to how much of a focus that will be for you?

Ms. BREWER. Certainly. Thank you, sir.

I know that the U.S. Government has been engaging with the Government of Sierra Leone for several years on this issue, and in fact, we have been supporting through our Trafficking in Persons Office in the State Department—we have been supporting a women's shelter there for victims of trafficking. It is also heartening. I have learned that the government has laws against such acts. However, it has been some years since anyone has been prosecuted and jailed under these provisions of the criminal code. So that is something that I know that I will continue, if confirmed. I would continue to press for actual action and convictions against traffickers.

Senator BOOKER. I appreciate that, and anything you can highlight for us as a legislative body that we could be doing more on that issue and especially to help with Sierra Leone.

There were programs I was reading about in preparation for this about the Young Africa Leaders Initiative that Obama talked a lot about and funded very well. Do you have concerns about that not being funded in this next administration?

Ms. BREWER. I do not have specific information about what would or would not. I understand those conversations are still going on in terms of what the funding levels will finally be to the Department of State. So, of course, whatever the funding levels are, I will seek to be a good steward of U.S. taxpayer resources, to maximize them.

Sierra Leone, while a small country, has been able to benefit greatly from these programs, sending about a dozen young people to the U.S. for these training programs over the last several years every year in each program, both the YALI and the Mandela fellowship. So I think we really are maximizing our relationship as much as we can.

Peace Corps also has recently been reestablished. And over the years, there have been nearly 4,000 Peace Corps volunteers that have deployed to Sierra Leone, many of whom are back here in the U.S. and continue to keep Sierra Leone in their hearts.

So we have many avenues of engagement and YALI is a strong one, but I look forward to, if confirmed, continuing to maximize all of those.

Senator BOOKER. Great.

Mr. Raynor, really quickly, we just were hearing in our previous hearing, as you probably did, about the challenges between Ethiopia and Egypt, the conflict over the dam, as well as how that is playing out and the conflict that we are having in South Sudan. In the 120 seconds I have left, could you take up a third of that or two-thirds of that and give me a short answer?

Ambassador RAYNOR. Sure. Thank you, Senator.

I think the main issue being about the water rights and the dam. At the moment, it is incumbent on all countries to share the waters of the Nile, to work collaboratively on how that water gets used. I would, if confirmed, encourage Ethiopia to continue its consultative process in that regard and the launch of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in a manner that takes into account the interests of all those who share the water.

More generally, I think these are two very powerful and influential countries in the region, and everything they can do to communicate clearly and collegially with each other is in the interest of the regional stability and our own interests as well. So I would take every opportunity to encourage them to continue to be constructively forthright in their engagement with each other.

Senator BOOKER. Thank you very much. I am going to cut you off before the cameras cut off. I do not have time to ask you about Russian influence in Algeria, but maybe we can do that offline. And I am going to turn it over to the chairman to close us out.

Senator FLAKE. Thank you so much for your testimony. Thank you for your willingness to serve. We are always well served by our career diplomats.

This hearing is so short that Senator Coons did not even have to talk about chicken exports to Africa. [Laughter.]

Senator FLAKE. But anyway, with the thanks of the committee, we look forward to the business meeting.

This hearing is adjourned.

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

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. MICHAEL RAYNOR BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have sought to contribute meaningfully to the promotion of human rights and democracy throughout my career. As Assistant Chief of Mission in Afghanistan, I directed U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and State International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) programs that increased girls' enrollment in primary and secondary schools, improved access to basic health services, and increased women's enrollment in public universities. I worked closely with USAID to launch the "Promote" program to strengthen Afghan women's participation in civil society, the economy, and decision-making positions within the Afghan Government. Also in Kabul, I helped resolve missteps by Afghan partners that threatened to curtail U.S. Government capacity-building in justice and corrections, ensuring continued U.S. engagement to improve Afghan rule of law and prison conditions. I worked closely with Afghan counterparts to bolster their commitment to democracy, chairing the U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Commission working group on

democracy and governance that elicited strong Afghan commitments to strengthening democratic institutions and practices.

As Chief of Mission in Benin, my close rapport with the then-President enabled me to counter negative tendencies that threatened media crackdowns, divisive constitutional amendments, and other potentially anti-democratic actions. I helped strengthen Benin's respect for human rights, with a particular focus on gender equality. I elicited greater Beninese commitments and resources to combat trafficking in persons, launched USAID and Peace Corps projects to counter violence against women, and supported greater female access to education, health care, and business opportunities. I beefed up U.S. engagement to improve Beninese labor conditions, to resettle the last refugees in Benin, to tackle HIV/AIDS along transportation routes, and to support disability rights. I strengthened U.S. interagency engagement in Benin to professionalize the country's judiciary by enhancing its responsiveness and transparency and countering judicial corruption. I provided strong support to Benin's traditions of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence, while developing an innovative interagency program to prevent violent extremism in the face of extremist threats immediately across Benin's borders.

As Zimbabwe desk officer during the height of Zimbabwe's economic, political, and humanitarian crisis, I helped preserve Economic Support Funding for Zimbabwe's civil society and worked to ensure that U.S. sanctions focused on the corrupt Zimbabwean elite without worsening the hardships of average Zimbabweans. This included fostering a compromise to allow a pilot U.S. feeding program for Zimbabweans who had been excluded from assistance because they had been resettled onto commercial farmland seized by the Zimbabwean Government.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights issues in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. In the past year, the most significant challenges to human rights and democracy in Ethiopia included excessive use of force by state authorities to silence dissent, arbitrary arrests, politically motivated prosecutions, and continued restrictions on free speech, assembly and other activities of civil society and non-governmental organizations. If confirmed, I will work with the Ethiopian people and government to open political space, to advocate for full implementation of the Ethiopians' constitutionally-guaranteed rights, political freedoms, civil liberties and due process, and to promote reforms that strengthen democratic institutions. I will make the case that adhering to its own constitutionally guaranteed rights and basic freedoms will enhance Ethiopia's stability and further support its sustainable development goals and ability to act as a bulwark against the spread of violent extremism in the region. I will also argue that an empowered civil society can and would be an important ally for a government that prides itself on good governance. My goal will be to convince the Ethiopian Government that forward progress in democratic development serves its own interests as well as the interests of the Ethiopian people.

Question 3. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. The main obstacles to achieving progress on these areas are laws and policies that run counter to the Ethiopian Government's stated goals of political reform and democratic development, and that in some cases violate constitutionally protected rights. In particular, I am concerned by the continued use of the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation, and more recently the state of emergency, to silence journalists, activists, and opposition voices. Also, the 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation ("CSO law") has placed restrictions on funding for non-governmental organizations, which makes it extremely difficult for well-intentioned Ethiopians to sustainably operate civil society organizations, thereby undercutting their ability to channel popular grievances into proposals for policy solutions. If confirmed, I plan to engage in frank discussions with Ethiopian officials about how long-term stability comes through the protection of human rights and democratic governance.

Question 4. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed as Ambassador, I will meet with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations. I will encourage the Ethiopian Government to seek input from a broad range of viewpoints, including civil society. I will also advocate for the protection and defense of human rights.

If confirmed, I will make certain the Embassy continues to rigorously implement Leahy vetting to ensure that U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities, including pre-deployment training to Ethiopian peacekeepers in Somalia and South Sudan under the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance program, require specific human rights training to reduce the risk of human rights abuses in peacekeeping operations in which Ethiopia participates. I will do the same for rule of law programs with the police. I will be vigilant to ensure that our security cooperation is never misused to restrict the rights of the Ethiopian people.

Question 5. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Ethiopia?

Answer. If confirmed, my team and I will work hard to ensure that the rule of law is respected in Ethiopia, including the Ethiopian Constitution, which not only guarantees basic human rights but also enshrines a wide range of other rights. I have very real concerns regarding reports that there are a number of cases where these rights are infringed by violations of due process and political interference, including with regard to members of the political opposition. It is important to urge the government to follow due process for trial proceedings, to refrain from appealing acquittals pronounced by Ethiopian courts, and to protect the rights of anyone who is accused of committing a crime.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to advocate for the respect of fundamental human rights to include the freedom of speech and peaceful assembly, and advocate for persons unjustly detained by the Government.

Question 6. Will you engage with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I would consider human rights and democracy advocacy to be a fundamental part of my job and will engage with the Ethiopian Government. I will make support for human rights, civil rights, and good governance key elements of my engagement with the Ethiopian Government across the full range of issues. Ethiopia stands to benefit greatly in all areas when its people are empowered, informed, and have trust in the rule of law.

Question 7. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 8. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels

Question 9. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia?

Answer. No.

Question 10. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As a management-coned Foreign Service officer who has managed diverse teams throughout my career, I am a strong believer in the value of diversity in the workplace and have sought to create supportive and inclusive workplaces in each of my assignments. In my current capacity as Director of the State Department's Office of Career Development and Counseling, I oversee the Department's Continuity Counseling operation, which exists to support and promote the success of underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa has active and accessible Equal Opportunity (EEO) and Federal Women's Program (FWP) operations, programs, and outreach, and I

will ensure that EEO and FWPC counselors at the Embassy are properly trained and afforded sufficient time in the workplace to perform these important functions. I will ensure that the Embassy has formal, structured mentorship programs and will be attentive to ensuring that each member of the Embassy team has every chance for personal growth and professional success. In my own behavior, I will model a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. I will ensure that the employee evaluation process is rigorously followed, including formal and documented counseling sessions throughout each performance period, so that employees receive timely and constructive feedback on their performance and have structured opportunities to raise with their supervisors any workplace concerns or impediments to success.

Question 11. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy is fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I will speak publicly and regularly, including in Town Hall and Country Team meetings, about my own commitment to diversity and inclusion and my expectations that all members of the Embassy team will experience and sustain an inclusive and supportive workplace. I will require all supervisors to promote an inclusive, supportive, and ethical workplace. I will encourage that the performance evaluations of all supervisors comment on the supervisor's success in valuing diversity and promoting inclusion, and will recognize and commend efforts among supervisors to value diversity and foster inclusion. I will ensure that supervisors are cognizant of EEO principles and rules, and held accountable for respecting them. I will ensure prompt engagement, and corrective action when warranted, on any expressions of concern that the Embassy workplace does not value diversity or promote inclusion.

Question 12. The U.S. and Ethiopia began a human rights working group to follow up on the commitments the Ethiopian Government made to improve in the areas of democracy and human rights as a result of the President's visit to Ethiopia in July 2015. Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Tom Malinowski traveled to Ethiopia several during the remainder of the Obama administration to participate in the working group, and met with both the Prime Minister and other high ranking officials to discuss U.S. concerns, and proposed setting up a civil society fund for Ethiopia which is exempt from the 10 percent cap on foreign funding imposed by the 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation.

- What is the status of the working group? When was the last meeting? Who is currently participating on behalf of the United States?
- What is the status of the proposal to set up a civil society fund? How much has the United States contributed and what organizations are being funded?
- If confirmed, what will you do as Ambassador to secure agreement to the advance the aforementioned initiatives?

Answer. The U.S. Government and the Government of Ethiopia (GOE) maintain a bilateral Democracy, Governance, and Human Rights Working Group, which most recently met on December 15, 2016. Then-Assistant Secretary Malinowski, Chargé d'Affaires Peter man, and Ethiopian Foreign Minister Workneh Gebeyehu were the co-Chairs of those discussions. Typically these working group meetings are held annually. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to hold these meetings as they provide a proven platform in which both sides can speak candidly.

It is my understanding that the Embassy consistently advocates for more open and inclusive political and civil space in Ethiopia, including a loosening of restrictions on civil society and greater tolerance for opposition views. Our Embassy has consistently engaged in this space through a variety of mechanisms. My understanding is that the Government of Ethiopia has our proposal on the Civil Society Fund but has yet to provide an answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will make the case that adhering to its own constitutionally guaranteed rights and basic freedoms will enhance Ethiopia's stability and further support its sustainable development goals. I will assert that this adherence will serve to strengthen the Government of Ethiopia's ability to act as a bulwark against the spread of violent extremism in the region. I will also argue that an empowered civil society can and would be an important ally for a government that prides itself on good governance. My goal will be to convince the Ethiopian Government that forward progress in democratic development serves its own interests as well as the interests of the Ethiopian people. To achieve this, I will leverage the tools available through USAID and State to continue to advocate for space for NGOs to operate freely as a feature of any democratic and law-based society.

Question 13. The United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, who visited in May, was reportedly denied access to the Oromia and Amhara regions the locations

of widespread popular protests in 2015 and 2016 that resulted in hundreds dead and tens of thousands detained.

- Has the Government of Ethiopia granted the High Commissioner or U.N. Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association access to Oromia or Amhara? What concrete steps can you take, if confirmed, to encourage the Government of Ethiopia to provide such access?
- Will you commit to ensuring that you and your embassy staff attempt to regularly visit if you are confirmed?

Answer. The High Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein traveled to Ethiopia in May but did not get to Oromia or Amhara. During his three day visit, by his own account he met with government officials, spoke to the press, and advocated for greater and freer civic space. He appealed to the Government of Ethiopia to grant U.N. human rights officials access to areas that experienced unrest. He also expressed interest in returning to Ethiopia in 2018. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will speak frankly and openly with the Government of Ethiopia about the value of hosting visits by the U.N. bodies. The Embassy staff in Addis Ababa maintains a robust and active tradition of traveling throughout the country as part of our ongoing outreach and engagement with the people of Ethiopia. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to uphold this tradition including in Oromia and Amhara regions.

Question 14. When is the last time the State Department conducted a review of security assistance to Ethiopia? If none has been conducted when will one be? If one has been conducted, when will that review be shared with Congress?

Answer. The Departments of State and Defense regularly conduct a review of security assistance to all recipient countries. This is also the case for Ethiopia. The Departments of State and Defense conducted a review of security assistance to Ethiopia in the fall of 2016. The review was completed earlier this year. These exercises form the basis for future decision-making and provide useful context. It is my understanding that the Department can provide a classified briefing regarding the current security assistance to Ethiopia. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will be a steward of our assistance programs and fully comply with our standards and regulations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO MARIA E. BREWER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my career, I have sought to support human rights, strengthen the rights of women, and reinforce principles of democracy. When I served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Nigeria from 2013–2016, we pressed for peaceful, transparent, and democratic national elections in 2015. We did so in numerous ways, from supporting the work of Nigeria's Independent National Election Commission (INEC) with technical advice and providing independent election observers, to working with the major parties to reinforce the need for the parties to cooperate with INEC, to reinforcing on a daily basis the message of violence-free elections, including the potential of personal sanctions against anyone who would foment violence. In the end, Nigeria experienced a peaceful transition of power from the ruling party to the former opposition party, a first in its history as a democratic nation.

At the same time, my staff and I at the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria ensured that we scrupulously carried out Leahy vetting to ensure that our support to military and law enforcement bodies only reached those with a clean human rights record. We pressed the Nigerian Government to strengthen its broader human rights record, reinforcing that respect for human rights would support its armed forces in its fight against Boko Haram. We noted that security is a multidisciplinary endeavor, requiring coordinated engagement by all aspects of federal, state, and local governments, as well as civil society. We addressed issues of accountability, stating that the United States remains ready to support Nigeria and its security services as the country fulfills its responsibilities with restraint and impartiality.

When Boko Haram carried out the horrific kidnapping of 276 young women from a secondary school in the town of Chibok, the worldwide public outcry included a major social media movement, #BringBackOurGirls. I coordinated and focused the efforts of multiple U.S. agencies addressing the crisis. We brought in an interagency team of experts representing a wide variety of skill sets. I ensured that U.S. efforts were closely coordinated, internally and with Nigerian and international partners.

We focused on both the immediate crisis and on finding longer-term solutions to the underlying causes. I coordinated activities, reviewed policy imperatives, and leveraged resources to maximum effect. Working as one team, our military, intelligence, humanitarian, strategic communications, and law enforcement representatives shared information and created strategies. I was honored to lead a complex inter-agency U.S. Government response to a crisis with significant political, security, and public diplomacy dimensions. While not all of the girls have been returned to their families, our work supported survivors as they were rescued, made their way to safety, or were released through negotiation.

During my tenure, Nigeria passed comprehensive Anti-Trafficking in Persons legislation in 2015. In 2014, we successfully nominated Beatrice Jedy-Agba, Executive Secretary of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), to receive recognition as a "TIP Report Hero Acting to End Modern Slavery," thanks to her efforts to fight human trafficking. Additionally, I spoke out against violence against women and children, including during my annual participation in the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the ensuing 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.

Throughout my career, as a Management Officer entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing our Human Resources operations in both domestic and overseas environments, I reinforced the need for scrupulous adherence to U.S. and local labor laws, including support for Equal Employment Opportunity principles.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Sierra Leone? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Sierra Leone? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. As a member of the U.N. Human Rights Council, Sierra Leone has a strong record of voting with the United States, including on contentious country-specific resolutions. Nonetheless, a number of human rights challenges remain. Among the most significant are: abusive treatment by police, prolonged detention and imprisonment, harsh prison conditions, widespread corruption, lack of access to justice, violence against women, culturally-entrenched female genital mutilation, child abuse, societal discrimination against LGBTI persons, trafficking in persons, and child labor. As noted in the 2016 Human Rights Report, constraints on freedom of speech and expression remain. Government officials have used the criminal libel provision in the Public Order Act of 1965 to harass journalists and members of civil society who have expressed views critical of the Government, although no one has been convicted under the libel provisions for many years.

If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize to the Sierra Leone Government the importance of holding free, fair, and peaceful elections in March 2018. I would reinforce the importance of freedom of expression as a fundamental freedom for a democratic society in my dialogue with the Government, politicians, and press contacts. The embassy has strongly advocated for free, fair, timely, and peaceful elections. If confirmed, I would do the same.

Question 3. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Sierra Leone in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Extreme poverty in Sierra Leone has impacted all aspects of society. Lack of technical capacity and resources have created an environment in which corruption has taken root, reducing the Sierra Leone Government's ability to address many of the country's problems.

Nevertheless, the Government of Sierra Leone has made efforts to address such issues. President Koroma declared his support for human rights. The U.S. Government is supporting the Government of Sierra Leone to professionalize security forces, combat human trafficking, improve judicial processes, address official impunity and corruption, empower women, and protect the human rights of marginalized groups including disabled individuals and individuals in the LGBT community. Since 2009, the U.S. Government has provided \$1.7 million to help operationalize Sierra Leone's Transnational Organized Crime Unit through specialized training, mentorship, and provision of equipment. Additionally, the Embassy has provided oversight to the "Promoting Transparency in Sierra Leone's Judiciary" project, which has drafted modern bail and sentencing guidelines to combat corruption, promote transparency, and greater credibility in the judiciary and law enforcement, and alleviate prison overcrowding. The Embassy is also implementing a \$1.1 million "From Prisons to Corrections" project to help Sierra Leone's Corrections Services antiquated prison system become a modern corrections service that conforms to international human rights standards.

Question 4. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Sierra Leone? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will meet with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations. I will encourage the Sierra Leonean Government to seek input from a broad range of viewpoints, including civil society. I will advocate for the protection and defense of human rights.

If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Embassy continues to rigorously implement Leahy vetting regarding U.S. security assistance, security cooperation, and law enforcement activities. The U.S. Embassy, with Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics, and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) funding, is implementing a prison reform program to improve prison conditions to meet international human rights standards. The "Promoting Transparency in Sierra Leone's Judiciary" project has produced modern bail and sentencing guidelines to address problems relating to prolonged detention, abuses relating to the granting of bail, and alleviate prison overcrowding. This, along with other programs, will result in strengthening Sierra Leone's justice system and corrections service. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that support for any and all security endeavors is made carefully, and under strict adherence to the Leahy Law.

Question 5. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Sierra Leone to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Sierra Leone?

Answer. If confirmed, I will advocate for fair and equal treatment for all under Sierra Leonean law. We are sensitive to concerns from opposition political parties and civil society groups that some political figures have been unjustly targeted and arrested, but as noted in the 2016 Human Rights Report, there are no political prisoners in Sierra Leone.

During the upcoming 2018 Sierra Leonean election season, if confirmed, I will reiterate the U.S. Government's support for inclusive campaigning, and our expectation that Sierra Leonean authorities will allow for the free exchange of diverse opinions.

Question 6. Will you engage with Sierra Leone on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to engage Sierra Leonean leadership on matters of human rights and good governance. I will encourage credible, free, timely, and peaceful elections in March 2018. I will continue to advocate for adherence to international humanitarian law. If confirmed, I will engage with the full range of Sierra Leonean society regarding the importance of upholding human rights and democratic freedoms, to include the right of all registered candidates to campaign freely and safely.

Question 7. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 8. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels

Question 9. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Republic of Sierra Leone?

Answer. No.

Question 10. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. Throughout my Foreign Service career, I have served as a mentor to many of my fellow staff, a role that I hold of the utmost importance for the development of the next generation of leaders. Most recently, as Deputy Chief of Mission

to the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, I managed a formal mentoring program that included a wide range of events intended to assist first and second tour staff with learning about the Foreign Service and enhance their future careers. Such programs are extremely valuable, and my intention would be to establish a mentoring program at all of my future postings. I also believe in making myself available to hear the concerns and answer the questions of all my staff, both U.S. and local employees, at all levels.

Question 11. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I believe that senior managers must first themselves be model actors that foster inclusivity and respect for diverse backgrounds. As a Hispanic female Management coned officer from an under-represented part of the country myself, I appreciate the need for respecting all kinds of diversity in our work force. As the most senior U.S. Government official at the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone, I would require that all who report to me would demonstrate the same kind of respect for each other. I would encourage Embassy staff to remain open and willing to learn from each other and from our host nation, modeling the best aspects of diplomacy to all.

Question 12. Sierra Leone's general elections are next slated for March 2018. The country's constitution provides for two five-year terms limit for the president. President Ernest Bai Koroma and his supporters have repeatedly denied he intends to run for a third term. However, rumors persist that he intends to do so.

- If confirmed as Ambassador, what will you discourage any possible attempts by Koroma to run for a third term?
- What will you do, if confirmed, to help promote the transition of power through free, fair and on-time elections?

Answer. While it is the responsibility of the Sierra Leonean Government to enforce their laws fairly, Embassy Freetown has advocated for free, fair, timely, and peaceful elections every time our diplomats have met with the Sierra Leonean leadership, opposition candidates, non-governmental actors, journalists, and ordinary citizens. If confirmed, I would continue to promote the transition of power through free, fair and on-time elections. The embassy has welcomed President Koroma's personal assurances that he will not seek a third term and that he will not try to change the constitution in order to stay in power, and we expect that he will adhere to his promise. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to engage, pointing out the importance of strengthening respect for the constitution and democracy in maintaining peace.

Question 13. Civil society groups in Sierra Leone are playing important roles in promoting good governance and community participation in government decision-making. The opposition also plays a role in defining the political and social landscape of any country.

- If confirmed, what steps do you intend to take to ensure that there is an appropriate understanding of opposition and civil society viewpoints in developing U.S. diplomatic strategic goals?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I would make a priority of engaging with the Government and civil society to reinforce personal responsibility and accountability in the actions of individuals and government officials. The U.S. Government is building on efforts of civil society engagement and if confirmed as Ambassador, I will support several initiatives to promote more female aspirants to run for national, district, and local positions; to assist the media in holding issue-based public policy debates; and to provide pre-election monitors to keep watch over potential flash points where there is a heightened potential for conflicts turning violent in the lead-up to and immediately following the elections.

Question 14. Sierra Leone is a source and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Sierra Leone has been designated a Tier 2 country since 2013 in the Trafficking in Persons Report published by the State Department. (Prior to 2012 it was a Tier 2 Watchlist country.)

- If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that the Government of Sierra Leone takes concrete steps to implement its 2015–2020 national action plan to counter trafficking?
- What will you do if confirmed, to direct appropriate USG efforts towards helping Sierra Leone address the recommendations outlined in the report, including, but not limited to, improving prosecutorial and legislative responses to trafficking cases? Is the United States currently funding specific programs and activities aimed at addressing corruption in the Judiciary, or training prosecutors

and judges to investigate and prosecute trafficking as recommended in the TIP report?

Answer. The Government of Sierra Leone does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. As such, the U.S. has commended the Government's efforts in a resource-scarce environment to identify trafficking victims, refer them to services, and fund repatriation for 25 Sierra Leonean trafficking victims exploited abroad. The U.S. Government continues to engage with the Government of Sierra Leone on trafficking issues. Since 2013, the U.S. Government has invested \$1.2 million to provide shelter and care to victims of trafficking in Freetown. The project is currently focused on building capacity within the Sierra Leonean Government to budget for trafficking victim services and administer the shelter in the capital. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will maintain communication with key stakeholders on human trafficking in Sierra Leone, including government officials, NGOs, and civil society, to make progress combatting human trafficking and to ensure that the Government of Sierra Leone takes concrete steps to implement its 2015–2020 national action plan to counter trafficking.

If confirmed, I would also continue to engage with the Government of Sierra Leone on strengthening their state institutions and implementing legislation to empower existing entities to establish a culture where corruption is not tolerated in the judiciary. Starting in June 2012, a U.S. attorney began intermittently mentoring officials in the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to impart knowledge and skills to prosecute public corruption cases. Since then, the ACC has pursued several new cases of corruption. The Embassy has also provided oversight to the highly successful \$1.5 million Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement-funded Promoting Transparency in Sierra Leone's Judiciary project, which has drafted modern state-of-the-art bail and sentencing guidelines, to combat corruption and promote transparency in the judiciary and law enforcement.

Question 15. More than 15 years after the end of the civil war, and despite recent efforts to combat corruption, Sierra Leone continues to face governance and corruption challenges.

- What programs and activities is the United States currently engaged in to combat corruption? What more could the U.S. be doing in this area?
- If confirmed, how do you intend to undertake the actions referenced in the previous answer?

Answer. Despite its successful post-conflict reconstruction efforts and three consecutive credible national and local elections, Sierra Leone must continue to address serious development challenges. This includes entrenched corruption and a culture of impunity. The prerequisite for improving the country's human rights situation is political stability and a shift in the culture of impunity that prevails. The United States and other donor nations engage with the Government of Sierra Leone to strengthen its state institutions and implement legislation to empower existing entities to establish a culture where corruption is not tolerated.

If confirmed, I would leverage our bilateral relationship and assistance to press for enhanced transparency in government, increased public awareness of reporting mechanisms for corruption, and robust efforts to investigate and prosecute corruption.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO JOHN DESROCHER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question 1. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my career, I have endeavored to help counterpart governments in the Middle East build effective, responsive institutions that value and support the full spectrum of human rights.

During my work on Iraq in both Baghdad and Washington, I pressed the Iraqi Government to adequately protect Mujaheddin e Khalq (MEK) members under threat in Iraq. While the MEK did suffer from attacks, most MEK members were later safely evacuated from Iraq. While I was Deputy Chief of Mission in Baghdad, I had a leading role in the U.S. Government response to ISIS attacks on Iraq's Yazidi community after the fall of Mosul.

Supporting Tunisia's democratic transition following its Arab Spring revolution was central to my tenure as Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Maghreb. U.S. as-

sistance played a critical role in helping Tunisia hold its 2014 Presidential and parliamentary elections, the first since the revolution. Our support to the elections commission, civil society, candidates, and political parties enabled a free and fair process. My frequent engagements with civil society actors in subsequent visits to Tunisia reinforced U.S. commitment to human rights and Tunisia's democratic transition.

Question 2. What are the most pressing human rights concerns in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria today? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to advance human rights and democracy in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Algeria include restrictions on the freedom of assembly, lack of judicial independence, and limitations on civil society, religious freedom, and the media. If confirmed, I will prioritize the promotion of human rights in Algeria. I will work closely with Algerian leaders to press for progress on this important issue. The State Department's annual Human Rights reports remain one of our most effective tools in highlighting human rights issues around the world. Our report regularly garners press attention in Algeria and is studied carefully by NGOs and other groups working on human rights issues in Algeria.

Question 3. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. While domestic and foreign NGOs operate openly in Algeria, the country's Law on Associations imposes a cumbersome registration process and limits on foreign financing. I understand the Government is revising the law and, if confirmed, I will encourage the Government to take into account the views of civil society as it moves forward with the reforms.

Question 4. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs from the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to continuing my predecessors' tradition of meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and in Algeria. Our embassy in Algiers routinely meets with local NGOs to learn about alleged human rights abuses and hear their views on how the United States can be even more effective in advancing human rights in Algeria.

Question 5. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria?

Answer. If confirmed, I stand ready to engage with the Algerian Government on cases involving political prisoners and other unjustly detained people.

Question 6. If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue our strong compliance with the Leahy Law and maintain robust vetting procedures.

Question 7. Will you engage with Algerians on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make promoting human and civil rights and governance one of my highest priorities. In addition to promoting human rights for its own sake, encouraging Algeria to uphold such commitments underpins nearly every pillar of our bilateral relationship.

Question 8. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 9. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question 10. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Algeria?

Answer. No.

Question 11. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. My tenure with the Foreign Service has given me the opportunity to manage teams of talented individuals from diverse backgrounds. If confirmed, I will firmly uphold equal employment opportunity laws and will work to ensure that all of my colleagues, regardless of background, have the opportunity to grow professionally and pursue positions of leadership in the State Department and throughout the U.S. Government.

Question 12. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that all supervisors take mandatory EEO training and strictly adhere to related laws and policies. I will emphasize the necessity of transparency, fairness, and inclusivity when making hiring decisions, my assessment of my subordinates' performance will include evaluation of their commitment to diversity, and I will take immediate corrective action if I learn of any incident that does not reflect the value the United States and the State Department place on diversity and respect for all.
