

U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Chairman Richard G. Lugar
Opening Statement for
Nomination Hearing
July 22, 2005

The Committee on Foreign Relations meets today to consider four important nominations for positions in the Department of State. President Bush has nominated Ms. Karen Hughes to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs with the rank of Ambassador; Ambassador Josette Shiner to be Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs; Ms. Kristen Silverberg to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs; and Ambassador Jendayi Frazer to be Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. We welcome these four distinguished nominees and look forward to our discussions with them.

I applauded President Bush when he nominated his longtime advisor Karen Hughes to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Ms. Hughes is close to the President, and she has extensive national communications experience. She began her career in journalism, and then became a communications advisor for our former colleague, Senator Phil Gramm. She established her own business, and later served the President when he was Governor of Texas. Ms. Hughes played a large role in the President's two successful national campaigns, and served with distinction in the White House. I am pleased that she has agreed to take up this newest challenge.

The United States is involved in an international strategic communications campaign to promote and defend American interests in the world. Public diplomacy is a national security function of the highest magnitude. Americans are troubled by examples of virulent anti-American hatred in the Islamic world, and they are frustrated by public opinion in allied countries that seems increasingly ready to question American motives or blame American actions for a host of problems.

In an era when allied cooperation is essential in the war against terrorism, negative public opinion overseas has enormous consequences. The Ranking Member and I have observed for some time the unfortunate irony of American public diplomacy efforts. We have asked how the United States can be "all thumbs" at public diplomacy when we are so expert at the strategy and tactics of public relations, marketing and advertising. Numerous reports have concluded that American public diplomacy is dysfunctional and requires major reform.

This Committee stands ready to ensure that the position of Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy has the power, the funding, and the political support required to do the job. We have backed increased funds for public diplomacy, but these funds will have to be spent efficiently if we are to explain clearly the views of the United States, successfully display the humanity and generosity of our citizens, and expand opportunities for interaction between Americans and foreign peoples. Creative thinking will be required. We welcome yours, Ms. Hughes, and look forward to working with you.

Ambassador Josette Shiner currently serves as Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, where she is responsible for spearheading U.S. efforts to open new markets and enforce existing trade agreements in East Asia, South Asia and Africa. She also leads global negotiations on counterfeiting, pharmaceuticals, labor and environmental issues, and trade capacity building. Before joining USTR, Ambassador Shiner was Managing Director of Starpoint Solutions, a Wall Street technology firm that works with Fortune 500 clients. She also served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Empower America, where she developed its agenda on trade, technology policy, education reform, and tax reform. Her many years of public and private sector experience would serve her well as a promoter of U.S. international economic policy.

If confirmed, the nominee would be the principal adviser to the Secretary of State on matters of foreign economic, business, and agricultural policy and would coordinate and supervise implementation of that policy. Working with USAID, she would provide overall guidance for U.S. development assistance, including service as Chair of the Policy Coordinating Committee on Development.

The United States has strong economic, national security and humanitarian interests in promoting trade, supporting development and alleviating poverty around the world. We are also the world's largest donor of development assistance. It is imperative that effective stewards be in place throughout our government to help combat corruption and ensure the proper utilization of U.S. taxpayer funds.

Our next nominee, Kristen Silverberg, most recently served as Deputy Assistant to the President and Advisor to the White House Chief of Staff. She has worked in the White House on domestic and foreign policy matters since January 2001. During that time, Ms. Silverberg played a key role in the development and implementation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, also known as PEPFAR. In 2003, she spent five months in Baghdad as a Senior Advisor to Ambassador Paul Bremer.

Ms. Silverberg has played a role in many of the President's development initiatives, including the Millennium Challenge Corporation. She helped craft Administration policy on refugee affairs and human trafficking. She also has worked on UN issues including the Conference on the Status of Women and last year's General Assembly Declaration on Cloning.

As we discussed at our hearing yesterday on United Nations Reform, high-level attention by the administration is critical if we are going to be able to shape the reform debate in New York. Other nations are vigorously engaged in lobbying efforts regarding their particular reform initiatives, and the United States needs to do the same. Just this week, President Bush met with Prime Minister Singh of India who pushed his nation's interest in securing a permanent seat on the Security Council.

The United Nations needs more focused oversight, better whistleblower protection, greater transparency in its procurement and financial dealings, and better management of its personnel. It also needs to reform two functions vital to international peace and security: peacekeeping and human rights protection.

These are all issues of concern to the United States and other nations, many of whom are awaiting intensified U.S. leadership on these matters. At the State Department, the Bureau of International Organizations will handle much of this work, including policy formulation and inter-agency coordination. The experiences and relationships Ms. Silverberg developed and solidified during her time at the White House will serve her well as this process moves forward, and I look forward to hearing her views on these matters.

Our final nominee is Ambassador Jendayi Frazer, who serves as our Ambassador to South Africa. She is the President's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary State for Africa. Prior to her assignment to South Africa, a position which brought her before our Committee in 2004, she served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director of African Affairs at the National Security Council. Dr. Frazer's resume is augmented by academic and Department of Defense experience in African affairs. Her nomination reflects the confidence of the President and of the Secretary of State.

I have been encouraged recently by the growing interest in Africa in the United States. Americans are coming to understand that a stable and prosperous Africa can better cooperate on a range of shared concerns, from weapons proliferation and terrorism, to environmental challenges and contagious diseases.

These changing attitudes have bolstered the work of those in Congress who regard Africa as a priority for action. During the last several years, we have been able to put in place the building blocks for a sustained American engagement in Africa.

In 2004, Congress passed a bill that I had introduced to extend the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. Thanks to AGOA, which has exempted 1,800 African products from U.S. tariffs, the African textile industry now employs tens of thousands of workers. Moreover, non-oil trade between the United States and Africa is expanding significantly.

In 2003, Congress passed legislation creating the President's Millennium Challenge Corporation. This bold new approach to aid will funnel extra assistance to developing countries that are making improvements in economic reform, promotion of the rule of law, and anti-corruption measures.

In 2003, Congress also pledged \$15 billion over five years for the most serious crisis facing Africa, the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In support of this initiative, I have introduced additional legislation to address Africa's AIDS-orphan crisis and a resolution backing global cooperation on an HIV vaccine.

More work needs to be done to provide incentives for private investment in Africa, to ensure that the revenues from Africa's oil boom will go to all of its citizens, and to relieve Africa's international debt burden. We also need to promote agricultural development. Wealthy countries must modify their own farm subsidies, so that Africans can both feed themselves and compete in a fair world market for exports.

The legislation Congress has enacted and ongoing Administration initiatives have the potential to form the type of sustainable, comprehensive program that we have previously lacked. But enactment of a legislative framework for Africa is not an end in itself. Initiatives must be carefully managed to ensure that they work well and enjoy strong support. We look forward to hearing Ambassador Frazer's thoughts on how she would manage the U.S. relationship with African nations.

I congratulate each of our nominees. We will begin with Ms. Hughes and Ambassador Shiner. I ask that you deliver your statements in the order that you were introduced. If you are summarizing a statement, the text of your entire presentation will be included in the hearing record. Also, please introduce family and friends that may have accompanied you on this important occasion.

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