

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m., in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Kaine, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, and Young.

Also Present: Senator Graham.

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

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here to consider nominations for four important positions—Senator Jeff Flake to be Ambassador to Turkey, Ambassador Mark Gitenstein to be the U.S. Representative to the European Union, Ms. Cindy McCain to be the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, and Governor Jack Markell to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD.

So congratulations on all your nominations, as well as to your families who are part of the sacrifice in this process. We certainly appreciate them as well.

The four of you have a distinguished history of public service and advocacy, and I appreciate your willingness to serve the country in this capacity.

I understand that Senator Coons will be introducing Senator Flake—in a great, grand show of bipartisanship at a time that it is difficult to achieve it here—and Governor Markell. And that Senator Graham, who we welcome back to the committee—he left us precipitously—will be introducing Ms. McCain.

So, Senator Coons?

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch.

Before proceeding with more detailed introductions, I ask unanimous consent to add a statement from my predecessor, former Senator Ted Kaufman, a detailed statement of introduction in support of Mark Gitenstein to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the EU.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.
[The information referred to follows:]

INTRODUCTION OF HON. MARK GITENSTEIN

Senator KAUFMAN. As a former member of this committee and as a friend and colleague of Mark Gitenstein, I am pleased to introduce Mark to this committee to be Ambassador to the European Union.

I have known Mark for over 40 years and have worked closely with him as a colleague on the staff of then-Senator Biden and later in then-Senator Biden's transition to the vice presidency. More recently, I worked closely with Mark in setting up the Vice President's transition to the presidency.

I know him to be a man of integrity, principle, intelligence and drive.

He also brings exactly the right experience to the job.

From 2009 to 2012, he was the U.S. Ambassador to Romania. The U.S.–Romanian Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement was negotiated and signed during his tenure.

In 2012, Romanian President Traian Băsescu awarded Mark with the “Star of Romanian Grand Cross,” the country's highest civil order.

Mark also led efforts to strengthen the rule of law and fight corruption in Romania, doing so with considerable diplomatic skill and success. In the midst of this struggle to preserve the rule of law in Romania, he was honored in 2011 by Nine O'clock, the premier English speaking journal in Romania, as the best foreign diplomat in Bucharest.

He developed deep expertise in rule of law and intelligence issues in his 17 years working on the Senate staff. These included his tenure as Chief Counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee, and its Subcommittee on Criminal Justice. He also served as counsel to the Senate Intelligence Committee, and the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights.

Mark has spent over 25 years in private law practice. Especially in the last eight years, he has focused on strengthening energy independence for Romania, a key issue he will face for all of Central and Eastern Europe should he become Ambassador to the EU.

Mark has the core values and toughness to deal with the Russians. He also possesses the keen ability to build consensus and enhance our relationships with European allies. As a creature of the Senate, Mark will also be very mindful of, and responsive to, this committee's oversight responsibilities.

He knows well the President and the key leaders of the administration's foreign policy and national security teams.

Having Mark in Brussels will greatly enhance the ability of this administration to accomplish one of its critical goals: to rebuild multilateralism by rebuilding trust between the U.S. and the EU. The sooner we can get Mark to Brussels, the better.

Senator COONS. And I join Senator Kaufman in urging support for Mark Gitenstein, who I know will be a very capable and experienced Ambassador, his second term of service as an Ambassador to now an entire region so critical to all of us.

I have known Jack and his wonderful wife, Carla, for 32 years. In Delaware, we pride ourselves on being able to work together. We are a State of neighbors, a State that cares about solving problems and doing the right thing. And no one epitomizes that more than our former Governor and State treasurer, Jack Markell.

As State treasurer for 10 years, Governor for 8 years, Jack has been guided by strong values and a sharp intellect. His passion for helping others is rooted in his faith and strengthened when, at age 17, he had a chance to travel to India and to see profound inequality and deep poverty. And in the decade since, he has built a remarkable record of achievement, of creating opportunity, of not just talking the talk, but of taking effective action.

Across two decades in leadership, he led innovative financial literacy and banking access initiatives; managed a severe fiscal crisis that affected our whole country, but did so responsibly in Delaware; helped grow our local economy; and showed real vision in

creating new opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities. He helped create Pathways to Prosperity in the State of Delaware, a national model for helping workplace experience and college credit opportunities for young people, and launched one of the best language immersion programs in kindergarten.

He has a deep understanding of the private sector and economic development. He has an MBA from the University of Chicago, and helped launch and create the telecom company Nextel, a company now valued at \$35 billion. So he understands both how to solve complex problems and how the United States can work with our OECD partners to put in place policies to create conditions for economic growth.

He led both the Democratic Governors Association and the National Governors Association, and today, he is leading Operation Allies Welcome, the resettlement of thousands of the Afghan partners who served alongside us in our 20 years of conflict.

A dedicated and capable public servant, with the experience, intelligence, and character to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the OECD, I look forward to supporting him not just in his nomination, but in his service and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if I might, I am also honored to introduce my friend and our former colleague, Senator Jeff Flake.

Senator Flake, to be clear, is a conservative Republican from Arizona, and I am a Democrat from Delaware. In the 6 years we served alongside each other, we voted on the opposite way of virtually every vote we ever took in the Senate. But during those 6 years, I came to know Jeff as an honorable man, as a principled public servant, as a patriotic American, and a loyal friend.

We traveled together to more than a dozen countries—West Africa, East Africa, and Northern Europe. We had the bonding moment of both being chased by elephants in Mozambique. We worked together on legislation to protect wildlife from trafficking, to protect the rule of the law on the Judiciary Committee, to promote free and fair elections and economic reforms in Zimbabwe, where he did his mission service.

Senator Flake has long championed American leadership around the world by promoting the rule of law, protecting human rights, and through strong international agreements. And his deep sense of right and wrong has not wavered. I am confident that his commitment and character thoughtfulness and skills will serve him well in a very demanding post as Ambassador to Turkey, where his abilities will be greatly needed to navigate difficult security issues and one where his service will reinforce the importance of bipartisanship in foreign policy.

I know he will be even more successful with his amazing wife, Cheryl, by his side, and I look forward to supporting Senator Flake's nomination and encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Coons.

I noticed you said you are a Democrat from Delaware. You did not define what type of Democrat from Delaware, but in any event—

Senator RISCH. There are different types?

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Well, he said Senator Flake was a conservative Republican. So I thought maybe he wanted to share some light—we have to have a little fun here. Otherwise, it is tough to get through the day.

To our dear colleague, Senator Graham.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator GRAHAM. Glad to be back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

Our good friend Chris Coons is a short Democrat from Delaware, as I am a short Republican from South Carolina. We literally see eye-to-eye on everything.

So I just want to let the committee know when Cindy called me last week and asked me to introduce her to the committee, I stopped for a second and thought, wow, I am very proud to do it. I know John is looking down with pride. President Biden chose wisely.

She is being nominated to be the Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome. So all of us will be visiting you.

I am very familiar with this program because, along with Senator Coons, I am the vice chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee that deals with the State Department's budget and the United Nations' budget. And the World Food Program just received the Nobel Peace Prize. That is run by David Beasley, the former Governor of South Carolina.

They received the Nobel Peace Prize because the World Food Program has made a huge difference. With the advent of war and climate change, there are so many people in this world not knowing where their next meal comes from, and the World Food Program has stepped up to the plate, and the American taxpayer should be proud. The agency that Cindy has been nominated to lead as an Ambassador I think is the key to this whole problem. It is one thing to provide meals. It is another thing to provide the ability to grow your own food.

And Senator Risch, I am going to be all in working with this committee as an appropriator, along with Senator Coons, to beef up the capability of people throughout the world in impoverished regions to be able to farm as if it were the 21st century, not the 18th century.

Cindy has a heck of a resume. I think we all know Cindy in a variety of roles. She has been a public figure for a long time. But to those who have not followed her career, you should have. She has been deeply involved in the human trafficking scourge of the planet. She has been to the developing world, particularly Africa, numerous times, dealing with women's issues and humanitarian problems.

But I know her best from traveling with her where we went to Africa with the Gates Foundation and others to look at how to modernize farming practices. We visited a woman who had two daughters, basically farming with her two daughters, and the Gates Foundation and Department of Agriculture was trying to provide her with seeds that were more drought-resistant and over

time to increase her family's capability to feed itself and actually earn money.

So I am excited about this part of the World Food Program, this agency, and I want to pledge to Cindy that I am going to do everything I can to increase your capability to provide the best farming practices for those people who are on the bubble in terms of being able to live and those people in dire situations to turn their lives around.

And one thing that Cindy and I were talking about was water. Water is the new oil. And this agency, I think, is going to be very aggressive in how to manage water and make sure that we get the best utilization where water exists and desalinization programs where it does not. So, Mr. Chairman, Senator Risch, I am going to be talking to you a lot about the portfolio under Cindy's control.

And I just end with this. I have never known a more decent, capable person in my life. An Ambassador is supposed to represent America in the best fashion. I think the two nominees here today that I know, Jeff and Cindy, will be the best advocates for American interests in Turkey, and I can assure you that when Cindy McCain shows up in the room anywhere in the world, people already know her, they respect her, and she will be a great face for America. And working with Governor Beasley, we are going to turn this world around when it comes to feeding people.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

I know that both of our colleagues have other obligations, and so they should feel free to leave when they need to.

Let me turn to our nominees. Senator Flake, welcome back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Given Turkey's aggressive actions in the region as well as the repressive tactics used by the Erdogan regime against its own people at home, we need an Ambassador who will not hesitate to hold Turkey accountable and will push it to live up to the principles that undergird NATO membership—individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Erdogan's repression is unbecoming of a democracy and unbecoming of a NATO ally. Democracies do not jail journalists, intimidate academics, and infringe upon freedom of religion. They do not renege on their commitments to stop violence against women, and they do not put political opponents in prison.

So, Senator, you will have your work cut out for you, and I look forward to hearing how you plan to address some of these challenges awaiting in Ankara.

Ambassador Gitenstein, we welcome your nomination to this post at a critical time in the transatlantic relationship. The bond between the United States and the European Union has been tested in recent years. Former President Trump repeatedly mocked our European allies while sabotaging the strategic relationship at seemingly every turn. I believe that close ties between Brussels and Washington are not just in our national interest, but in the interest of democracies everywhere.

Going forward, smart diplomacy, careful coordination with our European allies will be critical to dealing with the challenges we both face, whether it be Russia's ambitions in Eastern Europe, Chi-

na's growing soft power influence and investment in the Balkans, or Turkey's aggressive behavior in the Eastern Mediterranean. Having an Ambassador who works with our European allies will be an important first step.

As Nord Stream 2 continues to be a concern, I hope you will develop a strategy with our European friends on a comprehensive energy plan that shields Europe from extortion at the hands of the Kremlin. In short, we need someone with your knowledge, expertise, and proven record as a diplomat in Brussels as quickly as possible.

Ms. McCain, congratulations on your nomination. I admire your years of advocacy for vulnerable peoples around the world, including your commitment to combatting human trafficking globally. You shared that powerful commitment with your husband of almost 40 years and our much-admired and missed colleague, Senator John McCain.

For these reasons, I believe you are a superb choice to serve as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. The challenges these U.N. agencies face today, as you and I discussed yesterday, are enormous.

In this year alone, the number of people in need of urgent food assistance is expected to reach 270 million people, double that of 2020. Conflict and instability continue to push millions of people into acute food insecurity. Climate change threatens food production, and the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change exacerbate the situation even further.

Your role at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organizations are of the utmost importance in supporting the United Nations work to eradicate poverty, hunger, food insecurity, and promote sustainable agriculture-led economic growth. Your strong leadership will be essential to empowering, supporting, and guiding these agencies in this critical work.

Governor Markell, congratulations on your nomination. Appreciate your service not only as the Governor of Delaware, but most recently as the White House coordinator for Operation Allies. At a time of growing nationalistic sentiment, we have to remain at the leadership of international economic and financial institutions, not abdicate that role. We have to work with our allies to create a stronger, more inclusive global economy that benefits everyone.

The OECD is an important tool for U.S. diplomacy. Together, with OECD member states, which account for 63 percent of the world's GDP and three-quarters of all of the world trade, we can confront the challenges of a global economy. So I look forward to hearing how you plan to approach the OECD upon your confirmation and how you will use your position to advance U.S. interests, such as free markets and good governance, in the liberal international order.

With that, let me turn to our distinguished ranking member for his opening comments. Senator Risch?

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

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

Good morning, and thank you, all four of you, for your willingness to serve in these capacities. And to your families, as noted by the chairman that families certainly share the sacrifice.

On the nomination of the Ambassador to the European Union, the EU was one of the world's key economic unions, and its regulatory regimes are increasingly attempting to set standards for the world. This week, the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council will meet for the first time in Pittsburgh. There are a lot of trade and regulatory issues to discuss, and the results, or lack thereof, are likely to impact our joint ability to stand up against China's predatory trade practices with which we are all familiar.

I was very glad to see that last year, the EU and U.S. started a U.S.-EU dialogue on China. We need to use these discussions to start advancing shared priorities and policies, including those raised in my recent report on transatlantic cooperation on China.

Sadly, European leaders have grown louder in their calls for strategic autonomy, an idea in which European Union nations should decrease their interconnection with the U.S. or contribute to an EU member-only military force. Proponents of this movement claim it will enhance NATO capabilities and will allow Europe to engage in military operations that are outside of U.S. interests. I remain concerned that it will, in fact, deepen divisions within NATO.

Europe is and will continue to be one of our closest allies. There are very few places on the planet where our culture and our values are as congruent as they are with our European friends. As together, their population is much equivalent to the United States, and it is going to take the work of both in order to stand up to the 1.5 billion people of China.

Finally, the Balkan nations are under heavy pressure from China and Russia, which could be better resisted if there was greater integration with the rest of Europe. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on all of these important issues.

On the nomination of Ambassador to Turkey, the relationship between the United States and Turkey has been at an impasse over Turkey's purchase and deployment of Russian S-400 missile launchers. As everyone knows, the system is not interoperable with NATO, and Erdogan, not understandably, insists on buying—it has the S-400 missiles and which makes collaboration with NATO more difficult at best.

Erdogan has claimed that we would not sell them the Patriots that are in the same class as the Russian S-400. We know that is not true. Senator Shaheen and I delivered a letter in 2012 to the Turks at the time they were shopping, telling them they should buy, and we were ready to deliver as many as they needed. Erdogan shrugged when I handed him that letter.

The human rights situation in Turkey also remains difficult. Turkey is one of the highest jailers of journalists and opposition activists in Eurasia and has persecuted multiple locally employed staff of our U.S. missions there. This is not acceptable.

To be fair, Turkey was a key collaborator in Afghanistan, and our military-to-military contacts remain strong. Turkey also continues to house millions of Syrian refugees, and its cooperation is key to delivering aid and assistance to Syria.

Senator Flake, I know that you will be able to straighten these matters out, and happy to be sending you to Turkey to do so.

On the nomination of Ambassador to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, for 60 years, the OECD has been an important part of our foreign economic policy. As China seeks OECD membership, it is important that our Ambassador understands the challenges we face today from a rising China that promotes a socialist model.

This model seeks to undermine and replace the private sector growth model that has lifted hundreds of millions, indeed, billions of people out of poverty around the world and has led to the greatest period of prosperity in human history. Today, many regret letting China into the WTO. We should not repeat past mistakes.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter and to working with you to meet this challenge head on.

On the nomination of Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, the United States is the most generous donor of humanitarian assistance globally. We need a strong and capable representative to the U.N. agencies in Rome—the World Food Program, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development—to ensure that these agencies are as efficient and effective as possible so we can spread our assistance further and save more lives.

Additionally, our representative must fight against malign Chinese influence in the U.N. I believe you are up to the task, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these matters.

Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

With that, we will start with our nominees' testimony. We ask you to summarize your testimony in about 5 minutes. Your full statements will be included in the record without objection.

And we will start with Governor Markell and work our way down to Ms. McCain.

STATEMENT OF HON. JACK A. MARKELL OF DELAWARE, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to start by thanking Senator Coons for his generous introduction. The Senator and Annie have been great friends of Carla and mine for three decades, as he mentioned. We are all incredibly proud of the work he is doing in the U.S. Senate for the people of Delaware and the country.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear as the nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I am indebted to my family, who have played an important role in my being here. My wife, Carla, who is with me today; our kids, Molly and Michael; as well as my mom and sister and her family. I am also grateful to my father and brother who are no longer with us, as well as to my brother's family.

We are at an inflection point in human history with democratic norms receding in many parts of the world and the global economic system under strain from COVID-19. The OECD has long been a forum to advance our common values and demonstrate what democracies can deliver. But the United States and our allies must continue to demonstrate that democracy, human rights, free markets, and capitalism better deliver growth and innovation and a good quality of life for all our citizens.

The more we show that, as Secretary Blinken has said, the more we can refute the lie that authoritarian countries love to tell. The OECD provides the policy rationale that underlies our economic system and magnifies our voice. President Biden has said we are in competition with China and other countries to win the 21st century. We have to do more than just Build Back Better. We have to compete more strenuously.

Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch, you deserve enormous credit for your bipartisan work on the Strategic Competition Act, which strengthens the U.S. response and abilities to confront the threat of the PRC. The world's authoritarian regimes are trying to show the world that their autocratic systems of single party rule and state-driven economics deliver better results. The OECD is so important, given the democratic community's ongoing competition with the world's autocratic and authoritarian regimes.

I believe I come to the committee with the right package of skills and experiences to advocate on behalf of the United States. After graduating from Brown University, I earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. My private sector career is primarily focused on telecommunications. As Senator Coons mentioned, I helped lead the wireless revolution as the 13th employee and senior vice president at Nextel.

I had long been interested in a career in public service. I always believed that my country had given me enormous opportunities, and I wanted to play a role in ensuring that similar opportunities are available to future generations.

As Governor, I was concerned about the impacts of globalization and automation. I knew that the States and countries that out-educate today will outcompete tomorrow. That is why I have worked hard to ensure that our children had opportunities to thrive in school. For those who wanted to go to college, my team worked to secure opportunities for them to do so, even when they could not afford it.

And we also recognized that many of our young people wanted to go directly to work. So we created terrific new programs to help them do exactly that with the skills needed for good-paying jobs. Good jobs are the best way to solve social problems.

I served as chair of the bipartisan National Governors Association. I learned so much from my colleagues of both parties, and I imagine that the former Governors on this committee also had the chance to learn from and share with their colleagues when they served as Governors.

Although Governors compete with each other to deliver the best economic climate for their constituents, we realize that our States do better when the U.S. does better, and that is one reason OECD is so important.

I will close on a personal note. Both of my parents were first-generation Americans. My dad signed up to fight in the Army during World War II at the earliest opportunity, and he served proudly in Europe. My grandparents left Belarus, Latvia, and Lithuania at the turn of the 20th century, seeking a better life in the United States.

It would have been beyond my grandparents' wildest imagination when they left Eastern Europe that their grandson would have the opportunity to serve Delaware as Governor and then potentially our country as the U.S. representative to a multilateral institution that fosters prosperity for all. They came to the United States in the first place seeking exactly that. It would be an extraordinary honor to play a small part in shaping policies that provide those same benefits for future generations.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Markell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JACK A. MARKELL

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear as the nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I am indebted to my family for the love and support which have played an important role in my being here—my wife, Carla, our kids, Molly and Michael, as well as my mom and sister and her family. I am grateful to my father and brother who are no longer with us, as well as to my brother's family.

We are at an inflection point in human history, with democratic norms receding in many parts of the world and the global economic system under strain from COVID-19. The OECD has long been a forum to advance our common values and demonstrate what democracies can deliver.

But the United States and our allies must continue to demonstrate that democracy, human rights, free markets, and capitalism better deliver growth and innovation and a better quality of life for all our citizens. And as Secretary Blinken has said, "The more we and all democracies can show the world that we can deliver—for our people, for each other—the more we can refute the lie that authoritarian countries love to tell." That's why the OECD is so important—it provides the policy rationale that underlies our economic system and magnifies our voice and our partners' on the many issues where we share common values.

As President Biden has said, "We are in competition with China and other countries to win the 21st Century. We have to do more than just build back better . . . We have to compete more strenuously."

Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch: You deserve enormous credit for your bipartisan work on the Strategic Competition Act, which strengthens the U.S. response and abilities to confront the threat of the PRC

The world's authoritarian regimes—like the PRC and the Russian Federation—are trying to show the world their autocratic system of single party rule and state-driven economics is more efficient and delivers better results for their people.

The OECD is more important now than ever before given the democratic community's ongoing competition with the world's authoritarian regimes. That's why I am so honored about the opportunity to serve.

I believe I come to the committee with the right package of knowledge, skills, and experiences to effectively advocate on behalf of the United States with other Ambassadors to the OECD as well as with the OECD itself.

After graduating from Brown University, I earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. My private sector career was primarily focused on telecommunications. I helped lead the wireless revolution as the 13th employee and Senior Vice President at Nextel.

I had long been interested in a career in public service. I always believed that my home state and my country had given me enormous opportunities, and I wanted to play a role in ensuring that similar opportunities are available to future generations.

As Governor of Delaware, I was concerned about the impacts of globalization and automation on the people of my state. I knew the states and countries that out-edu-

cate today will out-compete tomorrow. That's why I worked hard to ensure that our children had opportunities to thrive in school. For those who wanted to go to college, my team worked to secure opportunities for them to do so, even when they couldn't afford it. And we also recognized that many of our young people wanted to go directly to work so we created terrific new programs to help them do exactly that, with the skills needed for good-paying jobs.

I believe strongly that good jobs are the best way to help solve social problems. I was honored to serve as chair of the bi-partisan National Governors Association. I learned so much from my colleagues of both parties. I imagine that Ranking Member Risch along with Senators Kaine, Romney, Rounds and Shaheen also had the chance to learn from and share with their colleagues when they served as Governors.

Although Governors compete with each other to deliver the best economic climate and quality of life for our constituents, we realize that our states do better when the United States does better. That's one reason OECD is so important.

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It would have been beyond my grandparents' imagination when they left Eastern Europe that their grandson would have the opportunity to serve Delaware as Governor and then, potentially, our country, as the U.S. Representative to a multilateral institution that fosters prosperity for all. They came to the United States in the first place seeking exactly that. It would be an extraordinary honor to play a small part in shaping policies that provide those same benefits for future generations.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador? If you could just put your microphone on, please?

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Can you hear me now?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GITENSTEIN OF WASHINGTON, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored by President Biden's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to the European Union.

If confirmed, serving as this Nation's Ambassador to the EU would culminate my work with the President, beginning with our days together as young men, when I joined his Senate staff in the 1970s, to four decades later in my recent work as U.S. Ambassador to Romania during the Obama-Biden administration.

First, I want to acknowledge my family's role in making my appearance here possible. My late parents and grandparents taught me that patriotism and my Jewish faith are the guideposts of my actions. My sisters taught me that independent, intelligent women are the light of the world.

My children and grandchildren prove that our future is bright because the next generation is undaunted by many of the challenges we face. Most of all, my wife, Libby, who is with me here today—my partner and the love of my life—who still believes in me, especially at those moments when a touch on the shoulder and a word of reassurance are essential.

I grew up in Alabama and graduated from high school in Birmingham when the United States was confronting its own crisis in

democracy during the 1960s. As I pursued my undergraduate degree in history from Duke, I watched with awe and pride as the civil rights movement gained its footing against Bull Connor and George Wallace.

In my summers, I worked with reform-minded politicians in Alabama and in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, acting in my home State to dismantle segregated schools. I came to understand in a very vivid way how a strong Constitution and civil rights protections in a federated system can bring Democratic and Republican principles to the rule of law in a recalcitrant locale.

This experience drove my passion as Ambassador in Romania to help the EU strengthen democracy and free markets in Romania and taught me how, in 21st century Europe, the EU continues to hold dear its founding documents and values. I know firsthand how the United States, working with multilateral and regional organizations, especially the EU, can strengthen democracy, build free markets, and act as a bulwark against autocracy.

If confirmed, I promise to carry forward those values and principles both at the U.S. Mission at the U.N. and to the work of the EU itself.

One other aspect of my history is also relevant. My father's family was Moldovan and Romanian, my mother's Polish and Austrian.

Going to the EU, like serving in Bucharest, is a return to my family's roots. I do so with great humility, recognizing that we have as much to learn from the Europeans and the EU, as they do from us. If confirmed, my top goal will be revitalizing and raising the level of ambition in the U.S.-EU relationship and supporting the deep and ongoing cooperation between the United States and the EU at all levels, including between the Congress and the European Parliament. I will work to advance the agenda President Biden and his EU counterparts set at the June 2021 U.S.-EU summit. This includes working together to end the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future global health challenges; protecting our planet and fostering green growth; strengthening our trade, investment, and technological cooperation; and building a more democratic, peaceful, and secure world.

The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council meeting taking place tomorrow in Pittsburgh and our joint pledge earlier this month to reduce global methane emissions are two perfect examples of the kind of values-driven, future-focused cooperation with the EU that I would prioritize as Ambassador, if confirmed.

In a very real sense, both the EU and the United States are evolving, dynamic experiments in democracy. Both seek to form a "more perfect union." While at different stages, neither side is finished with its work.

I can think of no greater privilege than to be part of what President Biden calls the challenge of our generation, proving that democracy and strong, independent institutions are the best form of governance. They are, indeed, the shortest and surest route to the pursuit of happiness.

I know from my experience in Romania that serving as Ambassador is a great challenge, but it is also one of the best jobs in government. If confirmed, I will use that position to strengthen U.S.-

EU relations and build support for the administration's foreign policy in the interests of all Americans.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.
[The prepared statement of Ambassador Gitenstein follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GITENSTEIN,

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored by President Biden's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to the European Union.

If confirmed, serving as this Nation's Ambassador to the EU would culminate my work with the President beginning with our days together as young men when I joined his Senate staff in the 1970s, to four decades later in my recent work as U.S. Ambassador to Romania during the Obama-Biden administration.

First, I want to acknowledge my family's role in making my appearance here possible: my late parents and grandparents taught me that patriotism and my Jewish faith are the guideposts of my actions; my sisters taught me that independent, intelligent women are the light of the world; my children and grandchildren prove that our future is bright because the next generation is undaunted by the many challenges we face. Most of all, my wife, Libby—my partner and the love of my life—who still believes in me, especially at those moments when a touch on the shoulder and a word of reassurance are essential.

I grew up in Alabama and graduated from high school in Birmingham when the United States was confronting its own crisis in democracy during the 1960s. As I pursued my undergraduate degree in history from Duke, I watched with awe and pride as the civil rights movement gained its footing against Bull Connor and George Wallace. In my summers, I worked for reform-minded politicians in Alabama and in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, acting in my home state to dismantle segregated schools. I came to understand in a very vivid way how a strong Constitution and civil rights protections can bring democratic and republican principles to the rule of law in a recalcitrant locale.

This experience drove my passion as Ambassador in Romania to help the EU strengthen democracy and free markets in Romania and taught me how, in 21st-century Europe, the EU continues to hold dear its founding documents and values. I know firsthand how the United States, working with multilateral and regional organizations, especially the EU, can strengthen democracy, build free markets, and act as a bulwark against autocracy. If confirmed, I promise to carry forward those values and principles both at the U.S. Mission to the EU and to the work of the EU itself.

One other aspect of my biography is also relevant. My father's family was Moldovan and Romanian, and my mother's Polish and Austrian. Going to the EU, like serving in Bucharest, is a return to my family's roots. I do so with great humility, recognizing that we have as much to learn from Europeans and the EU, as they do from us.

If confirmed, my top goal will be revitalizing and raising the level of ambition in the U.S.-EU relationship and supporting the deep and ongoing cooperation between the United States and EU at all levels, including between the Congress and the European Parliament.

I will work to advance the agenda President Biden and his EU counterparts set at the June 2021 U.S.-EU summit. This includes working together to end the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future global health challenges; protecting our planet and fostering green growth; strengthening our trade, investment, and technological cooperation; and building a more democratic, peaceful, and secure world. The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council meeting taking place tomorrow in Pittsburgh and our joint pledge earlier this month to reduce global methane emissions are two perfect examples of the kind of values-driven, future-focused cooperation with the EU that I would prioritize as ambassador, if confirmed.

In a very real sense, both the EU and the United States are evolving, dynamic experiments in democracy. Both seek to form a "more perfect union." While at different stages, neither side is finished with its work. I can think of no greater privilege than to be part of what President Biden calls the challenge of our generation: proving that democracy and strong independent institutions are the best form of governance. They are, indeed, the shortest and surest route to the "pursuit of happiness."

I know from my experience in Romania that serving as ambassador is a great challenge, but also one of the best jobs in government. If confirmed, I will use that

position to strengthen U.S.-EU relations and support the administration's foreign policy in the interests of the American people.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Senator Flake?

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEFFRY LANE FLAKE OF ARIZONA, TO BE
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF
TURKEY**

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

It is an honor to be nominated as U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, and I am grateful for the trust that the President and Secretary of State Blinken have placed in me.

I have the greatest respect for this committee. It was my home when I was in the Senate. I have served with most of you. I know of your experience, your expertise, your deep commitment to the national interest. If confirmed, I look forward to maintaining a close, consultative relationship with each of you.

I would like to start by thanking my family—my wife, Cheryl, and our five children—Ryan, Alexis, Austin, Tanner, and Dallin. They have sacrificed much through the years and yet still have managed to continually assume the best and look for the good. I am more grateful than I can express.

I should note that more than 30 years ago, when we were in college, my wife was part of a singing-dancing touring group at BYU called the Young Ambassadors, and they traveled to Turkey. So when I was asked if I might want to be Ambassador to Turkey, Cheryl said, "I suppose it is your time now." And I look forward to traveling with her and cannot wait for the Turkish people to meet my wife, Cheryl.

I am well aware that, if confirmed, I will be the first political appointee to this position in more than 40 years. I will arrive at a particularly pivotal moment in U.S.-Turkey relations. The United States has a longstanding and complex relationship with Turkey, a NATO ally for nearly 70 years. There are areas where our interests intersect and where we are firmly aligned. There are areas where we profoundly disagree.

As this committee is well aware, we have for decades worked closely with Turkey to advance our national security interests, from Korea to Afghanistan and beyond. Our partnership with Turkey enables us to defend NATO's eastern flank and project U.S. power in the region.

But our interests extend beyond the security realm. Turkey is an important economic partner, hosting more than 1,900 U.S. companies, including some of our largest and most recognized brands, and the United States is Turkey's fourth-largest source of imports. If confirmed, I look forward to robustly fostering this vital economic relationship.

Having said that, our relationship also faces profound challenges. Despite the United States' efforts to address Turkey's security needs, Turkey still chose to purchase and test fire the Russian S-

400 system. This action ran counter to the commitments all allies made at the 2016 NATO summit and rightly triggered Turkey's removal from the F-35 program and the imposition of CAATSA sanctions.

If confirmed, I will consistently reiterate that disposing of this system is the path to removing CAATSA sanctions. I will also warn Turkey that any future purchase of Russian weapons risks triggering further CAATSA sanctions in addition to those already imposed.

At the same time, we should encourage Turkey to purchase U.S. defense items that keep the Turkish military interoperable with NATO. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to determine what defense trade with Turkey is in the U.S. national interest.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, as we all know, the authoritarian, anti-democratic impulse is resurgent in the world. There is no value that defines us more as Americans than the rights of free people to determine the course of their lives and the destiny of their countries. In my career, I have not hesitated to speak out on such issues.

I am troubled by Ankara's democratic backsliding and the negative trajectory in terms of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly in Turkey. Restoring the full freedoms of the Turkish people is a good in itself, and rebuilding confidence in the rule of law in Turkey would go a long way toward expanding the potential for further economic investment and international partnerships. If confirmed, I will challenge Turkey to uphold its domestic and international human rights commitments while also pushing Turkey to live up to its status as a NATO ally.

While some of Turkey's recent actions have advanced U.S. interests in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Black Sea, other actions have been destabilizing and unhelpful. If confirmed, I will encourage Turkey to support efforts to find a sustainable long-term solution to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and encourage peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to disagreements in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Despite the very real challenges to U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkey is an indispensable ally, anchored in NATO and acting as both a bridge and a buffer to a region in constant flux. Our national interest is served when the United States and Turkey work together to confront the very real threats to global peace and security that emanate from Russia, from Iran, and elsewhere in the region.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, if confirmed, I am committed to working with you, as both former and future colleagues, to advance our national interests, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Senator Flake follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JEFFRY LANE FLAKE

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor to be nominated to be the United States Ambassador to Turkey. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I have the greatest respect for this committee. It was my home when I was in the Senate. I have served with most of you. I know of your experience, your exper-

tise, and your deep commitment to the national interest. If confirmed, I look forward to maintaining a close, consultative relationship with each of you.

I would like to start by thanking my family—my wife Cheryl and our five children—Ryan, Alexis, Austin, Tanner, and Dallin. They have sacrificed much through the years and have somehow managed to continually assume the best and look for the good. I am more grateful than I can express.

I am well aware that, if confirmed, I will be the first political appointee to this position in 40 years, and will arrive at a particularly pivotal moment in U.S.-Turkey relations. The United States has a longstanding and complex relationship with Turkey, a NATO ally for nearly 70 years. There are areas where our interests intersect and we are firmly aligned, and there are areas where we profoundly disagree.

As this committee is well aware, we have for decades worked closely with Turkey to advance key national security interests, from Korea to Afghanistan and beyond. Our partnership with Turkey enables us to defend NATO's eastern flank and project U.S. power in the region. Turkey has submitted a credible plan to meet defense spending commitments by 2024 and regularly provides forces for NATO missions in the region, such as its recent deployment of F-16s to Poland.

Our interests extend beyond the security realm. Turkey is an important economic partner hosting more than 1,900 U.S. companies, including some of our largest and most recognized brands, and the United States is Turkey's 4th largest source of imports. If confirmed, I look forward to robustly fostering this vital economic relationship.

However, our relationship also faces profound challenges. Despite the United States' tireless efforts to address Turkey's security needs, Turkey still chose to purchase and test fire the Russian S-400 system. This action ran counter to the commitments all Allies made at the 2016 NATO Summit and rightly triggered Turkey's removal from the F-35 program and the imposition of CAATSA sanctions.

If confirmed, I will consistently reiterate that that disposing of the system is the path to removing CATSAA sanctions. I will also warn Turkey that any future purchase of Russian weapons risks triggering further CAATSA sanctions in addition to those already imposed.

At the same time, we should encourage Turkey to purchase U.S. defense items that keep the Turkish military interoperable with NATO. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee to determine what defense trade with Turkey is in the U.S. national interest.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, as we all know, the authoritarian, anti-democratic impulse is resurgent in the world. There is no value that defines us more as Americans than the rights of free people to determine the course of their own lives and the destiny of their countries. In my career, I have never hesitated to speak out on such issues. I am troubled by Ankara's democratic backsliding and the negative trajectory in terms of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly in Turkey. Restoring the full freedoms of the Turkish people is a good in itself and rebuilding confidence in the rule of law in Turkey would go far toward expanding the potential for further economic investment and international partnerships. If confirmed, I will challenge Turkey to uphold its domestic and international human rights commitments while also pushing Turkey to live up to its status as a NATO Ally.

While some of Turkey's recent actions have advanced U.S. interests in the Middle East, Mediterranean, and Black Sea, other actions have been destabilizing and unhelpful. If confirmed, I will encourage Turkey to support efforts to find a sustainable long-term solution to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and encourage peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to disagreements in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Despite the very real challenges in U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkey is an indispensable Ally, anchored in NATO and acting as both a bridge and a buffer to a region in constant flux. Our national interest is served when the United States and Turkey work together to confront the very real threats to global peace and security that emanate from Russia, Iran, and elsewhere in the wider region.

Mister Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, if confirmed, I am committed to working with you, as both former and future colleagues, to advance our national interests. I look forward to taking your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Ms. McCain?

**STATEMENT OF CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN OF ARIZONA, FOR
THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HER TENURE OF SERV-
ICE AS U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AGENCIES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and the distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be here.

Sitting here in the place that my husband, John, loved the most is a little bit bittersweet for me. Senator Graham, although he is not here now, thank you for all that you said, your kind words. We are so lucky to have him as part of our family.

I am pleased to join my colleagues on this panel today, especially Senator Jeff Flake. Both our family and the entire State of Arizona are grateful for your leadership and for your friendship.

I am grateful and honored to be President Biden's nominee as the United States Representative to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Agencies in Rome. I hope to bring honor, civility, and transparency to the role that you have entrusted me to accept.

One in three people globally do not have access to enough food, and that, simply said, is not okay. I plan to spend my time, if confirmed, working tirelessly to lower that number. I would be honored to help advance U.S. values and worldwide global food security efforts.

The goal is simple to state, but very difficult to achieve. Alleviate hunger and promote agricultural development to increase food access and stability for the hundreds of millions of food insecure around the world. I am very optimistic that with the partners and team we currently have in place in Rome and around the world, we can build on all of the already impressive accomplishments in this arena.

There has never been a more important time for the U.S. leadership on food and agricultural issues both within the U.N. agencies and around the world. I have been working on humanitarian issues the majority of my adult life. My parents taught me that as a woman, I could do anything. My husband, though, instilled in me the desire to serve a cause greater than myself.

I have had the opportunity to pull landmines out of the ground in Mozambique, Angola, and Cambodia. I worked on school feeding programs in Congo and Uganda. I have been able to elevate the plight of Syrian refugees in Greece, Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon as they fled conflict in their home country. I have battled human trafficking not only here in the United States, but in Southeast Asia and in Europe.

Early in my humanitarian journey, I led a group of medical professionals to multiple conflict zones. I have witnessed firsthand what hunger, conflict, and the ravages of natural disaster can do to communities and families. I have seen U.N. agencies at their best, and at their worst. If confirmed, I will welcome your guidance and wisdom on how best to represent U.S. policies and priorities in Rome.

There are certain things that I look forward to focusing on. Being from Arizona, water has always been an issue. I would like to focus on the intersection of access to water and agricultural needs. I hope

to promote American thought leadership, innovation, and technology so others may use less water to feed more people.

I will also focus on representing and fostering U.S. values and integrity. We need to guard against malign actors in the U.N. system and hold others accountable for good governance and transparency. I take very seriously my role in ensuring that the U.S. taxpayer money is not being misused or misspent and will work to reduce redundancy, sharpen focus, and improve efficiency.

The U.S. leadership in this fight against hunger is a tribute to the work of this committee and our workers on the ground around the world, but government contributions just are not enough to take on all of the current global crises we face. I would like to expand public-private partnerships, to bring both new ideas and new donors to fight hunger and food insecurity. I look forward to developing new relationships as we develop local economies and fight poverty.

I have seen firsthand the use of hunger as a weapon in conflict, and it is simply unacceptable. It goes against everything we stand for as a country, and I would like to use the reach and the power of our diplomacy to ensure no person goes hungry at the hands of another person.

Finally, I would like to close by paying a brief tribute to my late husband and your former colleague, John McCain, and to the great cause of his decades of service, human dignity. His efforts to defend human rights wherever they were denied and to advance the values of our democracy to every corner on Earth were undertaken to serve that one end, respect the dignity of every human life.

John believed he had as much dignity as any other person on the Earth, but not one measure more, and he felt a personal responsibility to those of his fellow human beings who suffered oppression and deprivation. Should I be confirmed, he would expect me to use my opportunity to serve the same end, and I will do my very best to do so and hope that he would be proud of me.

Thank you, and I welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McCain follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be here. Sitting here in the place that my husband John loved the most, is bitter-sweet. Senator Graham, thank you for the kind introduction, we are so lucky to have you as part of our family. I am pleased to join my colleagues on this panel, especially Senator Jeff Flake, both our family and the entire state of Arizona are grateful for your leadership and friendship.

I am grateful and honored to be President Biden's nominee as the United States Representative to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome. I hope to bring honor, civility and transparency to the role you have entrusted me to accept. One in three people globally don't have access to enough food, and that, simply, is not OK. I plan to spend my time, if confirmed, working tirelessly to lower that number.

I would be honored to help advance U.S. values and worldwide global food security efforts. The goal is simple to state but difficult to achieve: alleviate hunger and promote agricultural development to increase food access and stability for the hundreds of millions of food insecure around the world. I am very optimistic that with the partners and team we currently have in place in Rome and around the world, we can build on all of the already impressive accomplishments in this arena. There has never been a more important time for U.S. leadership on food and agricultural issues both within the U.N. agencies and around the world.

I have been working on humanitarian issues the majority of my adult life. My parents taught me that as a woman, I could do anything I wanted to. My husband instilled in me the desire to serve a cause greater than myself. I have had the opportunity to pull landmines out of the ground in Mozambique, Angola and Cambodia. I have worked on school feeding programs in Congo and Uganda. I was able to elevate the plight of Syrian refugees in Greece, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon as they fled conflict in their home country. I have battled human trafficking not only here in the United States but in South East Asia and in Europe. Early in my humanitarian journey I led a group of medical professionals into multiple conflict zones. I have witnessed firsthand what hunger, conflict, and the ravages of natural disaster can do to communities and families. I have seen U.N. agencies at their best, and at their worst.

If confirmed, I will welcome your guidance and wisdom on how best to represent U.S. policies and priorities in Rome. There are certain things that I look forward to focusing on.

Being from Arizona, water has always been an issue. I would like to focus on the intersection of access to water and agricultural needs. I hope to promote American thought leadership, innovation, and technology so that others may use less water to feed more people.

I will also focus on representing and fostering U.S. values and integrity. We need to guard against malign actors in the U.N. system and hold others accountable for good governance and transparency. I take very seriously my role in ensuring that U.S. taxpayer money is not being misused or misspent, and will work to reduce redundancy, sharpen focus, and improve efficiency.

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Finally, I'd like to close by paying brief tribute to my late husband, your former colleague, John McCain, and to the great cause of his decades of service—human dignity. His efforts to defend human rights wherever they were denied and to advance the values of our democracy to every corner on earth were undertaken to serve that one end—respect for the dignity of every human life. John believed he had as much dignity as any other person on earth, but not one measure more, and he felt a personal responsibility to those of his fellow human beings who suffered oppression and deprivation.

Should I be confirmed, he would expect me to use my opportunity to serve the same end, and I will do my best to do so in the hope that he would be proud of me. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. McCain. I am sure he will be.

Let me, before I start my questions, ask questions on behalf of the committee as a whole. These are questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from each of you. So I would ask each of you to provide a simple yes or no answer to the following questions.

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

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

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

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

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

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

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

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, thank you. All of the nominees have answered yes to all four questions.

So we will start a round of 5 minutes. I will start off with myself.

Senator Flake, for many decades, the Armenian genocide has been denied by the descendants of those who perpetrated it. In 2019, the Senate recognized the Armenian genocide for the first time. In April of this year, on Armenian Remembrance Day, President Biden joined us in acknowledging this truth.

In the past, you voted against resolutions which recognize the genocide. Will you join this body and the administration in reaffirming the Armenian genocide?

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

If you are confirmed, will you reiterate that commitment on April 24, which is Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day?

Senator FLAKE. I will.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We have talked here, your own testimony this morning, I must say I listened to your statement, and it certainly is more positive than I would have posited as it relates to Turkey. I guess that is the role of a potential Ambassador. Certainly, when we talk about arms sales again, as the committee that has jurisdiction over arms sales, I see no arms sales going to Turkey unless there is a dramatic change-around on the S-400 and moving forward.

His latest calls, Erdogan's latest calls for supposedly purchasing more is certainly not an invitation to find a pathway to arms sales from the United States. So I just put that out there as something that is truly concerning to me. I wish it was different. I wish he would change course.

Senator Risch spent a lot of time with President Erdogan in the previous administration trying to convince him of a different pathway and was largely rebuffed. And so I think we have given off-ramps to Turkey. Unfortunately, they have chosen not to take it. So that is a concern as well.

If President Erdogan makes additional significant purchases from the Russian defense sector, I assume you will strongly support the imposition of additional CAATSA sanctions?

Senator FLAKE. I will. As I mentioned in the statement, they need to know that any purchase of additional Russian weapons will result in additional CAATSA sanctions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator FLAKE. And these CAATSA sanctions will not be lifted until they have disposed of the current system they have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

More than 35,000 Turkish troops remain in Northern Cyprus, now almost 5 decades after Turkey first invaded in 1974. Most recently, President Erdogan now pushes for a two-state solution, something that is not recognized by the United Nations, something that is not recognized by our Government, and flagrantly violates the U.N. Security Council resolutions on the occupied section called Varosha.

Will you commit to speak out publicly and privately in the event that Turkey continues to violate Cyprus' exclusive economic zone?

Senator FLAKE. I will. I was pleased to see after the December visit by Erdogan to Cyprus that the United States Government spoke out, as did the U.N., that any of the action that was contemplated with Varosha, for example, would violate Security Council Resolutions 550 and 789.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And then we will—and I will look forward to your—you said in your opening statement, so I will not explore it more with you, other than to say there are more lawyers and journalists in Turkish jails today than in any other part of the world. That is saying something, considering some parts of the world that are pretty authoritarian.

So the question of human rights is something we would expect you to also engage vigorously upon your confirmation.

Let me turn to Ambassador Gitenstein. France's reaction to AUKUS, I understand the French concern about the consequences or the economic impact of the cancellation of their agreement with Australia, not with us. But France is a vital partner in dealing with China and other global challenges. How do you intend to go about strengthening the U.S. relationships with European allies like France to work together to meet the China challenge?

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, first of all, I was very pleased to see that the President and President Macron had apparently a very good conversation. They reached some common ground. And if I were confirmed and I were sitting in Brussels right now, I would immediately reach out to the leadership of the EU and to the French Ambassador and try and build a personal relationship like I did in Romania and try and strengthen those relationships.

But to the extent the French intend to pursue a strategy, I think as the Ranking Member Risch referred to, in terms of an independent military strategy, it has to be very carefully coordinated with NATO. I have become very friendly with the proposed U.S. Ambassador to NATO Julie Smith. We intend to meet on a very regular basis and develop a common message point and platform and communication with the EU on these very issues.

So while we want to work with the French, it has to be consistent with our national security needs and especially as it relates to NATO.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. One last question.

What steps will you take to increase pressure on the Kremlin and work more closely with the EU to support, you know, a more robust—we have had a series of economic sanctions and other things for Russia's transgressions. The annexation of Crimea, its constant engagement in Ukraine, its use of chemical weapons against its opponents, and so much more. But we have not always been able to get our European allies to join us in a more robust multilateral approach.

How would you approach that?

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. With respect to the Russians?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, I think this is a vital concern to the United States right now. I am sure someone is going to ask me sometime later about Nord Stream, and I see that I do not have much time to respond to that right now, but I believe that the malign activity of the Russians in the EU and the European region has been demonstrable.

I spent most of the last 10 years of my life in and out of Romania and Central and Eastern Europe, and their efforts are relentless. And they are intended to divide the EU and to divide the EU from us, and it is extremely dangerous. And it is extremely insidious.

I saw it throughout my time as Ambassador in Romania, especially on energy issues, and I think the first step in this regard is to build a unified position with respect to energy issues, but a lot more with respect to Europe. And so I intend to work very hard on that, and indeed, one of the main reasons I talked to the President and the now Secretary of State about wanting this job was because I saw the power that the EU can play on anti-corruption and energy security if all the players in the EU work together, and especially if the Central and Eastern European countries, as I call the borderlands, which are very much the targets of this effort.

And I want to work directly with them and directly with the leadership of the EU on all of these issues. That is why I want to be the U.S. Ambassador to the EU, and I hope you will confirm me.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate your answer.

I have questions for the other nominees, but in deference to our colleagues, I will turn to the ranking member.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Flake, let me say having known both you and your lovely wife, whoever made the decision to send her instead of you with the singing and dancing ambassadors made the right decision. So thanks to whoever made that decision.

Senator FLAKE. Well said.

Senator RISCH. On a much, much, much more serious note, this deterioration of the relationship between Turkey and the United States is—is just heartbreaking really for us. They have been a really good ally over the years, and we have done such good things with them. The country itself has made huge strides in its economy and everything else.

The S-400s, I guess, is the apex of our problems, but I hope you will put in your pocket a copy of the letter that Senator Shaheen and I delivered in Ankara in October of 2012, when Turkey was in the process of buying the kind of missiles they were looking for.

Both Erdogan and the many, many diplomats, ministers, and everything else we have met with from Turkey tell us, oh, no, we had to buy the S-400s because you would not sell us the Patriots.

Well, Senator Shaheen and I know better than that. We hand delivered that letter to the foreign minister in Ankara in his home and urged them, and the letter itself you can see urges them to buy those.

Why they have turned to Russia is actually beyond me, especially when you look at the history between those two countries that is centuries old and the problems and the animosity they have had. For whatever reason, just absolutely Erdogan—and I think this all comes down to Erdogan. Erdogan himself just has no interest in promoting this relationship with us and with NATO, which is absolutely stunning, given the fact that many, many, many nations on the planet would give a whole lot to be part of NATO. And here they are, tearing the relationship apart.

I have explained to him and others have explained to him that they cannot be part of the military actions that NATO takes or part of the defense system that we have had if they are putting S-400 missiles in their country. It just cannot be done.

And to show you how determined they are, they paid for 5 of the F-35s that are sitting here in the United States. The chairman and I will not allow those planes to be delivered. We have told them that as long as they got S-400s in the country, they cannot have the F-35s. And we are very determined on this, and not only that, they were making 900 parts for the F-35, and we pulled those back.

And so that is how determined they are on this. I do not understand it. I do not get it. And I have spent a lot of time talking with them, and maybe when you come back, you will have some answers for us.

But if I were you, I would take that letter along so when they try to tell you what the facts are, you can show them the facts are not as they say. So it is a real problem, and gosh, we would sure like to welcome Turkey back into the fold. But I think as long as Erdogan is there, I think we have got a serious problem.

So good luck, and we will help you as we can. Is that the letter you have in your hand?

Senator FLAKE. Thank you. I do have it right here.

Senator RISCH. Good for you. You got my vote, Senator. I appreciate that. Thank you.

Let us move over. Governor, China is seeking membership in the OECD, and gosh, we had a real disappointment when they were let into the WTO. And it is not getting any better that is for sure.

Tell me your thoughts about letting China into the OECD.

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you for the question.

One of the core strengths of the OECD is the shared values amongst the members, a commitment to democracy, a commitment to a market-oriented economic system. While there may be some who see the growth in OECD membership as a metric that matters, I do not. I think it is incredibly important that we continue to have allies who maintain those same values.

In fact, one of the real strengths of the OECD, the data that they put out, the research that they put out, is that they are very well

positioned to call out China on issues that matter, on the export—credit subsidies and the like. So I think we should have an incredibly high bar when it comes to accession into OECD membership, and that is the position that I will certainly be taking there and certainly something I look forward to consult with this committee on as well.

Senator RISCH. Well said. I think your description, too, of the requirements for membership is very clear, and it certainly does not describe China by not even close. So thank you for that.

Ambassador Gitenstein, you are going to a place where we, as Americans, have over the years unfortunately not fully appreciated our cousin's view of things and have not worked as hard as we should to keep this together. Things like the European strategic autonomy discussion is occurring, and I think that is tragic. There is no place on the planet that is closer to us on values and on culture than our friends in Europe.

So you have got your work cut out for you, but we need to convince them that with the dangers in the world, with the rising of China, with the malign activity of Russia, there is nothing more important than the strategic relationship between the United States of America and our European cousins. I hope you will work at that.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. I read your report on China, and I thought it was excellent. One of the first things I will do is encourage them to read that report because it makes a very strong case for the threat that China presents to the European Union and to Europe generally and that the notion of developing a common platform between the United States and the EU is important to both the United States and the EU to their strategic interests. And it is extremely important that we reach common ground on these issues, from regulatory issues to strategic issues.

And as I said earlier to the chairman's question, we cannot do anything on military strategic independence without carefully coordinating it with NATO.

Senator SHAHEEN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator Risch. Next, we have Senator Cardin on Webex.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

And let me thank all four of our nominees for their willingness to continue to serve our Nation, and I particularly also want to thank your families. This really is a day for the Senate family with Jeff Flake and Cindy McCain. So it is particularly gratifying to see both of you before us, and both of you stressed in your opening statements the importance of advancing American values and human rights in the posts that you have been nominated to.

Ms. McCain, I particularly appreciate your just desire to follow in the late Senator McCain's path in regards to advancing human rights, advancing his legacy, and building on his legacy. I miss your late husband and his passion in the United States Senate and his partnership in advancing so many important issues, including the Global Magnitsky law.

And Senator Flake, I very much appreciated our opportunity to have a conversation in regards to Turkey. As you have heard from many of us, Turkey presents enormous challenges through our relationship. We recognize the strategic importance of Turkey, and

we want to build on that relationship. We recognize the important partnership they have in NATO, but we cannot allow the security breaches that we have seen. You have already heard from our chairman and ranking member on that.

I want to drill down a little bit on human rights. As Senator Menendez said, they have more journalists in prison than any other country. You really cannot challenge the Erdogan Government and be safe from harassment or arrest.

What is your strategy to advance democratic values and human rights in Turkey as our representative in Turkey when you are confirmed?

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you.

This issue particularly of press freedom is one that has been an issue of mine for years during my time in the House and the Senate. I have spoken out on this on a number of occasions, and it is a concern. Turkey currently detains more journalists than any country but China. That is not consistent with the values that we all share in terms of plurality—or pluralism and religious freedom, press freedom, freedom of assembly. A number of issues come to mind.

But I think that I will, if I am confirmed, continue the practice of speaking truth to power, of speaking out and being frank, as our current Ambassador has done and as the State Department and our President has done on this issue. So that is what I intend to do is to be frank.

Senator CARDIN. As you know, you will have partners in this committee that will support your efforts and do whatever we can to help. We want our embassy to be welcoming to those that are speaking on behalf of human rights within Turkey.

Ambassador Gitenstein, I very much appreciated our conversation and your knowledge and commitment in a large part of Europe, particularly those in the developing democratic societies. We have two countries, in addition to Turkey, that are very much backsliding on democratic values and institutions in Hungary and in Poland.

Tell me what you have learned from Romania and how you would apply that to dealing with strengthening democratic institutions in those parts of Europe where we are seeing a backsliding.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, thank you for that question, Senator.

Well, first of all, I have discussed this extensively with the President over the last 5 or 6 years, and he knows about the work that I did in Romania. And he feels very strongly that one of the primary goals of his foreign policy is to stand up to autocracies wherever they occur. And as you and I discussed, if we cannot get this right in the EU, we probably cannot get it right anywhere.

And I think one of the most encouraging things that is happening within the EU is that they are conditioning their EU structural funds on reporting requirements as they relate to the rule of law and anti-corruption. And I saw in Romania how valuable that is because, as you know, Romania was admitted to the EU on condition, which is known as the cooperation verification mechanism, which is a benchmarking and reporting system that has worked

quite well in Romania, and it should work well in Hungary and Poland.

And this will depend entirely on whether the EU continues to press with the conditions they have set on those funds. And as an Ambassador, I will certainly argue for that.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. [presiding] Thank you very much, Senator Cardin.

Next, we have Senator Young on Webex. Actually, I am told he is not ready. So we will go to Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you. Excuse me, thank you, Madam Chair.

Let me just thank all four of you for your willingness to continue serving our Nation. We have known each other in various roles and various ways over decades or over years, and I know each of you to be a person of great skill and character and capability. You are going to places where we need you, and we need to continue to reinforce that America sends its best and brightest to represent us around the world.

I am excited to hear how you will work together with the EU and the OECD and, in partnership with our NATO Ambassador, will reinforce our values. And Senator Flake, you are going to have quite a challenge dealing with Turkey and trying to strike a balance between their dramatic backsliding on human rights and transparency and democracy, and our strategic relationship is still trying to bring them, as it were, back into the fold.

And Mrs. McCain, we have traveled to many countries together, African countries in particular, and I know your passion, your skill, and your determination has already earned the admiration of all of us here for your hard work combatting human trafficking, fighting for a better future for women and girls, and bringing American values that are rooted in our shared commitment to democracy to your advocacy around the world.

So I look forward to supporting all four of your nominations. If I could briefly, both for Ambassador Gitenstein and for Governor Markell, one of the most challenging issues for the global digital economy is determining the right balance, when law enforcement authorities should have access to citizens' personal data and balancing legitimate security concerns with individual privacy.

And in particular, the safety of human rights advocates and minority party politicians in increasingly repressive countries. We have referenced in your earlier conversations Hungary, Poland, and others.

The OECD has often excelled, Governor Markell, at finding sensible solutions and setting implementation standards for democratic governors, part of why I agree with you. We should be very cautious about China's engagement.

But on this issue, the OECD has hit a road block, and the EU has been reluctant to move multilateral talks forward. As Ambassador to the OECD, how would you work together with Ambassador Gitenstein at the EU to balance data privacy and security interests?

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you for the question, Senator Coons.

I will say this is one of those issues not only are there differences between the U.S. and Europe, there are some, frankly, philosophical differences even within our own country about how this ought to be addressed. Ambassador Gitenstein and I have actually talked a couple times about opportunities to work together. This is one of them.

This is actually also an area where I think it would be important to consult with this committee to get your sense of this particular issue. The OECD excels when it is focused on technical issues like standards, data, research, and reports that ensure that the policymakers can make the best possible decisions. But I do think this is one of those places where there is so much overlap between the work of the OECD, the influence of the European Union, as well as negotiations backdrop.

So Ambassador Gitenstein and I have developed an excellent relationship, and I know that on this particular issue it is one that we will engage with together frequently.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

And Ambassador Gitenstein, you referenced the EU–U.S. Trade and Technology Council convening in Pittsburgh. I am glad Secretaries Blinken and Raimondo and Trade Representative Tai will attend, and I am interested in hearing how you think we should move forward, both on that balance that Governor Markell was speaking to and how we work together on a raft of new regulations with the EU on AI and digital platforms as well.

I also think on climate and on a border carbon adjustment, we have an enormous opportunity with the EU. I would be interested to hear your views on these complex issues.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, I am as anxious as you are to see what happens in Pittsburgh tomorrow. You know, because I am not yet confirmed, I am not cleared on all the pre-decisional materials that have been prepared for that, but I can just speak as from my experience, which is I first got to know then-Senator Biden working on the FISA statute, Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which grew out of the work that I did on the Church committee. And I know how difficult it is to strike the balance between national security and privacy, but it has to be improved, and I think that statute needs to be improved.

And as the Europeans have begun to break new ground in this area with GDPR, I have some questions about how effective that is, and it needs—and you know, because of the Schrems decision, the Europeans are insisting, rightfully, I think, that there be some consolidation of positions between the EU and the United States on those issues. And I think they are going to be difficult issues to resolve, but I intend to put a lot of energy into that.

This is just on the digital privacy and security issues. We will work closely with Jack. Jack and I have become very good friends, and I hope we will meet regularly on this. But the OECD and the EU need to be on the same page, and I will certainly argue for that within the administration and within the EU.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Senator Flake, you are going to have a difficult balancing act. There is a lot of issues on which to hold Turkey accountable, from Cyprus to repression of religious minorities to the ongoing tense re-

lations with Greece, to the Armenian genocide recognition. There is lots of other things in addition to the S-400 and their human rights violations.

Are there any areas where you think we can actually increase our collaboration partnership and work with them in a positive way or hold that out as a carrot at the same time that you are holding to a tough line on CAATSA sanctions and on insisting that they pull back from their embrace of Russia?

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you.

As I mentioned in my remarks, there are areas where we have worked with them and continued to work closely with them. They have pushed back against Soviet—Russian aggression in Ukraine and with Georgia. They have supported those countries' aspirations to become members of NATO. So they have been useful there.

They help, to some degree, with the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Syria and were willing to help with regard to Afghanistan and the airport and were with us to the end there. So there are some things that we can build on. But as you mentioned, there are a lot of issues that are challenging, and we will work with them where we can, challenge them where we must.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

Mrs. McCain, the chairman, having returned, notes that I have taken great liberties with the time allowed for questioning—

The Chairman [Presiding]: Great liberties.

[Laughter.]

Senator COONS.—I look forward to talking with you separately about public-private partnerships and look forward to supporting your important work and the ambassadorship in Rome.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Van Hollen, I understand, is next on our list.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations, and thank you for your willingness to serve in these important capacities.

And I just want to endorse the comments my colleague Senator Coons made with respect to both our Ambassador to the EU and OECD. We do have to dramatically expand the cooperation between the United States and these two entities, and not just saying it, but taking the practical steps to implement it, especially with respect to the challenge from China around the globe and look forward to working with both of you on that.

Mrs. McCain, congratulations on your nomination. Look forward to supporting you in this important post.

Senator Flake, great to see you and appreciated the conversation that we had. As we discussed, I grew up in a Foreign Service family, spent many of my early years in Turkey. I have great affection for the people of Turkey.

But President Erdogan has taken Turkey way off track and in the wrong direction, both with respect to NATO commitments overall, as well as other actions, malign actions in the region, and undermining human rights at home. And some of them have already been mentioned. He doubled down just this weekend on national TV here on taking another round of S-400s. That means that we

will continue to discontinue any cooperation on the F-35s, given the security compromises that would exist.

We need to make sure we implement fully the CAATSA sanctions, and I understand that you have already said in this hearing that you would support an increase in CAATSA sanctions if they proceed with the next purchase. Is that correct?

Senator FLAKE. That is correct.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. You also know that Turkey is out to destroy the Syrian Kurds. Would you agree that the Syrian Kurds have been the tip of the spear for us in our fight against ISIS?

Senator FLAKE. They have been an effective partner with us in defeating ISIS, yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So here we have an erstwhile ally trying to destroy the major partner we had in the fight against ISIS.

I heard my colleagues raise the issue of the situation in Eastern Med and Cyprus. In Cyprus, President Erdogan is going backwards, right? They have now retreated from what had been the agreed-upon approach to the talks there, bizonal, bicomunal approach. And recently, would you agree that his actions in Varosha violated U.N. Security Council resolutions?

Senator FLAKE. Yes, most definitely.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. We also have seen him aiding and abetting the attacks against Armenia. And then, at home, an ongoing effort to actually disqualify and ban the HDP, which is the third-largest political party in Turkey, is it not?

Senator FLAKE. It is.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Okay. Senator Langford and I are going to be soon sending a bipartisan letter to the President raising concerns about these issues, but my question to you is this. President Erdogan has repeatedly taken these actions. He has said very publicly that he does not care what the United States says, does not care what we say. He said that just 6 weeks ago.

So really what matters is what we do. The CAATSA sanctions have gotten their attention, although they have not changed their conduct yet, but it is having an impact on their military. With respect to the HDP and actions on Cyprus, what do you propose that we actually do beyond words to get Turkey's attention?

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you. Thank you for the question.

And let me just say and commend this committee for pushing so hard for CAATSA sanctions, Section 231. When people say you guys talk but do not do anything, this committee and the Congress and the administration did. And it has had an impact, a significant impact on Turkey's economy because their defense industry is a big part of their economy. And being out of the F-35 program has hurt, and they know that.

With regard to other issues, obviously Cyprus, it was in violation—the action or the statements that were made in July with regard to Varosha, regard to a two-state solution. There is no two-state solution in Cyprus. As you mentioned, it needs to be a bizonal, bicomunal federation negotiated between the parties. That has been our consistent position, and it needs to continue to be.

With regard to banning of political parties and some of the other democratic backsliding, we need to make clear, as we have, and continue to make clear that that is inconsistent with democratic

values and inconsistent with commitments that have been made. And so I think that we will continue to speak out on those issues and continue to act with regard to new arms purchases with additional sanctions, and that has got their attention. It has hurt, and it needs to, and I want to commend this committee for doing it.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you. I just hope we will take those kind of actions with respect to these other activities that are being taken, and the EU has an important role to play in concert with the United States.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand Senator Young is with us virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, Chairman, thank you.

Ms. McCain, the Chinese Communist Party is actively seeking to use the U.N. standard-setting bodies to their own unique advantage. From telecommunications to international aviation and, yes, agriculture, the authorities in Beijing understand that the U.N.'s specialized agencies possess an outsized ability to help them reshape the global order.

If confirmed, how would you use your position to ensure that FAO is actually seeking to accomplish its core missions and that its activities are free from bias, including from its senior leadership?

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you. Thank you for the question, Senator.

First of all, if I am confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. leadership and partnerships will not falter on my watch. I am also concerned about their leadership positions and where they are damaging and undermining organizations with malign influences and nefarious practices.

I will be watching very closely to ensure that the FAO DG is following our leadership, which ensures our values and transparency, building coalitions to ensure our leadership remains strong, and I am also committed most definitely to food safety and its global impact. Best-case scenario in what I am saying is that I am watching.

Senator YOUNG. All right. Thank you for that answer.

So the FAO has been doing very important work for a number of years, staving off hunger for millions. And this has been due in large measure to the resources that it can bring to bear in moments and in places of great crisis. Its record in supporting and growing ag capacity and resiliency in the developing world is, however, less positive.

One overlooked dynamic at play is the success that regulators overseas, especially within the European Union, have had in keeping U.S.-led Ag tools like groundbreaking development of genetically modified crops out of the FAO's toolbox, even as they would potentially reduce the threat of drought in paths from crucial staple crops. If confirmed, how would you seek to ensure that the FAO embraces all possible means of supporting the resiliency of agricultural systems, including ones widely practiced in America?

In short, how would you seek to ensure that the FAO actually embraces science in furtherance of feeding those who are hungry?

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you for the question. Oh, sorry.

There, is that—can you hear me?

Senator YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. I apologize. Thank you for the question.

It is, indeed, an issue, and it is a problem. What I would do is, number one, as I mentioned earlier, is building coalitions and bringing in more of our technology and our biotech overall. And most of all, making sure that we keep track of not just what our leadership is doing, but how we can best strengthen our ability, our multilateralism, our advancement in other areas.

The science and technology are key to our ability to be able to help grow more food with less water, grow more food independently, build sustainable villages, and build sustainable crops. I am a very strong supporter of that. Without that, I do not see how we go any farther with it. We are not going to be able to feed the multitudes that we have unless we consider every option.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you for embracing that. It will require, I think, some robust and tenacious diplomacy to persuade some of our European friends of the merits of that position. But I suspect you are going to be doing that. So, thank you.

Ms. MCCAIN. Senator, I have been compared to a chihuahua before in that I bite the ankles and bark enough until people listen to me. And so you have my commitment to being not only determined, but one that will follow through and make sure people hear.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Ms. McCain.

I think I have 1 minute left, and so I will very quickly ask a question of Mr. Markell. Mr. Markell, the members of the OECD collectively produce 60 percent of the world's goods and services, and they account for 75 percent of global trade. As was indicated earlier, China is not a member, but you indicated I think they are seeking membership.

I understand that India may also be hesitant to join, as they are a large but still emerging economy. What would the consequences be for India becoming a member, and is this something you would advocate for?

Mr. MARKELL. Senator, I am not sure I—

The CHAIRMAN. I think you are good now.

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you. Senator, I could not understand the entire question. I think it had to do with the accession of other countries into OECD membership.

Senator YOUNG. India. Yes, India in particular.

Mr. MARKELL. Okay. So one of the real strengths of the OECD is that its members share a number of common values, not only democracy, not only a commitment to free market systems, but also to a level playing field. Things like a real commitment to anti-bribery, to intellectual property protections, and the like.

The bar for entrance for any new country, including India, is extraordinarily high, and my commitment is certainly to consult with this committee, but also to—should I be confirmed—to bring to my position at the OECD a real sense that we do have a very high bar which is only met through actions, not words.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member Risch.

And congratulations to this very finely qualified panel of nominees. I have the good fortune to consider three of you as friends.

Jack, you and I worked together as Governors, and you did such good work as a Governor and as chair of the National Governors Association.

Jeff Flake, you were a partner on so many initiatives on this committee, somebody I deeply admire and miss as a member.

And Cindy, we have worked together, and I had the pleasure of sitting with your husband, both on this committee and on the Armed Services Committee. And I will never forget the first time I traveled with your husband, Senator McCain, on a bipartisan delegation, and I think it was to the Middle East and the first press event we did. He said something, and I was stepping to the microphone to dramatically disagree with him. I had been in the Senate for about 2 months and wondered how he would take it.

So I said, "I am going to disagree with you." And he said, "Get up there and disagree with me. We need to show them that we are not all a monolith here." And we were fast friends from that moment.

So thank you all for your service. Ambassador Gitenstein, you are the only one with the good fortune not to have had to work with me in the past.

Let me ask to, Ms. McCain, the three food programs that are based in the U.N. that you will work in representing the United States, they have all faced major challenges because of COVID, which both affect donors, increase food insecurity, and then also make the task of delivery of programs more difficult. So if you could share a little bit about the challenges that this last 18 months has meant for these programs and, as you are starting in to contemplating the position, the kinds of things we should be thinking about from Congress' side to help get through this tough chapter.

Ms. MCCAIN. Well, first of all, thank you very much for the question. And I am glad you survived the trip to the Middle East we used to call the "McCain death march." So I am glad you made it through.

I would like the committee to know that I am very committed to keeping U.S. leadership within the World Food Program and others. That is of deep importance to me and I think also to the United States. And that has never been more present and more definitive than the fact that World Food Program won the Nobel Peace Prize as a result of the good work that they do.

But the U.S. is the largest donor by far. We have to continue to do more. We have to. Whether it is thinking outside the box, bringing new people in, putting together groups that we can discuss good ideas, bad ideas, whatever it may be. But I am committed to making sure that we talk to everybody and we understand issues and consider new ideas in all of this.

I also want to encourage new donors and more country involvement. We carry the load of this, which we do brilliantly, but I would like to make sure that we are able to bring in more people, more ideas, as I said, and more countries to be a part of this. It is important.

Our public-private partnerships have to be expanded as well, and they do a marvelous job. But I am very committed to making sure that we expand our public-private partnership options here.

And also to consider a push for diversity and inclusivity, which is the question—the prior question that you asked me, and more. And most of all, making sure within that diversity and inclusivity that we have a safe workspace for people to work in. And of course, pushing for more technology and innovation in all of this is part of what I feel is not only important, but it is imperative in what we do.

And I would like to get on the ground and really examine what is going on with the issues that you initially talked about and see what can be done, what changes can be made, if that is the case.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Ms. McCain. I think that you are very well suited for the position.

Senator Flake, the questions that I wanted to ask you have generally been covered by my colleagues. But I guess, you know, maybe big picture, here would be something I hope after some time there you might come back and educate us on.

I think we all share this frustration with the Erdogan and feel like there was some promise at the start, and then it has taken this turn in a number of ways that have been hostile to the United States. But friends of mine who are in Turkey basically say it is not that hard to understand Erdogan's position vis-a-vis the United States if you look at the Turkish population's attitude about the United States.

Now these things can self-reinforce, but you know, leaders are not going to be warm and fuzzy to the United States if the populations have a lot of anti-U.S. sentiment. And I do not know this as an expert on Turkey, but people I know who are experts point out to me a lot that the Turkish population's view of the United States is quite negative. And as an Ambassador, A, you would be in a position to dig in and find out if that is true and then share with us why, but also you will have a unique opportunity with your own diplomatic background from having been in the Senate to, having shared why, giving us strategies and undertaking efforts yourself to start turning that around.

We are not going to have a government that is going to really be a great ally of the United States if their population is very anti-U.S. in their public sentiment, and I would look forward to having that conversation with you, should you be confirmed—and I am confident you will be—down the road after you have been in Turkey for a while.

Thank you very much to the panel, and yield it back, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to each of our nominees this morning. We are especially delighted to see our former Senate family back here again.

I am going to begin with you, Mrs. McCain, and I would have identified you more as a Great Dane than a Chihuahua. So I have had Afghans since the takeover of the Taliban who have said to me that they really hope that the United States and the international community will not prevent humanitarian aid from going to the Afghan people because of our opposition to the Taliban. We know there are 14 million in Afghanistan who are food insecure, 2 million of them children who are malnourished.

Winter is coming. So the situation is only going to get worse. So can you talk a little bit about how you will work with the U.N., with the United States, to ensure that desperately needed food gets to those Afghans who are really in need.

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you for the question, and it is like many of you and all of you, I mean, having had two sons in Afghanistan, I have watched with great interest and many times great horror, seeing what is actually occurring and has occurred there.

Once again, our most vulnerable are being preyed upon, which is the usual drill in a lot of these countries. The U.S. is the largest single donor, though, to humanitarian assistance within Afghanistan and within the region as well. I commit that we will continue the lifesaving support that those need, if I am confirmed.

Most of all, if I am confirmed, I will support all efforts to ensure that humanitarian assistance and in Afghanistan benefits those that it is going to, which is, as you know, is about transparency and the ability to really have good partners on the ground. And I will also continue to monitor what is going on within the country. It is a dicey project, and I know you know that.

It is certainly an evolving situation as well, much like Yemen and Ethiopia right now, and we will continue to work on best practices in addressing the needs of the conflict zones in that area. And if I am confirmed, you have my commitment to do the best I can.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you very much for that answer, and if I can be helpful, please let me know.

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you. I would rely on the entire committee for help.

Senator SHAHEEN. Absolutely. I know that we are ready to help.

Senator Flake, tomorrow President Erdogan is supposed to meet with Vladimir Putin. They are ostensibly discussing cooperation in Syria, and yet given the surge of Turkish troops in Northwestern Syria to combat Russian airstrikes this week, is there still a threat of a Russian-Turkey joint offensive in Syria, do you think? And how should we respond to that in the United States?

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Senator.

I have not had classified briefing yet. I have not been confirmed. So I would defer questions to Department of Defense on the possibilities there.

But the meeting with Putin, obviously Ankara has had at least a transactional relationship with Russia on a number of issues. As we mentioned, the purchase of weapon systems. But they have also pushed back in a number of areas as well. Crimea, been consistent in saying that that is part of Ukraine territory and the selling arms to Ukraine and also supporting Ukraine and Georgia in their sovereignty.

So, yes, it is an interesting relationship. I will be very interested to see what comes out of that meeting, to the extent that we know. But with regard to Syria, I would defer to those who know more than I do right now.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, I hope when you get confirmed that that will be an area of focus.

Senator FLAKE. It will.

Senator SHAHEEN. Because, obviously, it is a very difficult situation in the country, as you know.

Governor Markell, as you are probably aware, we are having negotiations around tax policy right now, and it is an issue that the OECD has also been working on. They have had an ambitious framework for how to coordinate tax policy. How optimistic are you that their process can result in agreement, and what should we be thinking about with respect to that as we are looking at what we might do on taxation of income of multinational corporations?

Mr. MARKELL. Well, thank you very much for the question, Senator.

Since I have not been confirmed, I have not been read into all the details yet. My sense is that it is the Treasury Department that has really taken the lead in those negotiations, but the OECD has an important role to play because it provides so much of the technical assistance.

And so, should I be confirmed, obviously I will be supporting the position of the administration, and I look forward to consulting with this committee for your guidance as well.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you. I know of no other members seeking recognition. So I have one or two final questions before we close.

Ms. McCain, what you and I spoke about yesterday, the reality of in the context of food insecurity a disproportionate impact upon women and girls, 10 percent higher among women as of 2019. So will you make it part of your advocacy, upon confirmation, for women and girls who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic-related food insecurity?

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes, Senator. And may I say that from my experience around the globe and everything that I have done, and all too often our women and children are disposable. And that simply, in this case that I do not buy that, and it is not going to happen.

The CHAIRMAN. Fine, thank you.

And also I think you referred to some of your experiences on water and what not. But part of our challenge globally in terms of food supply chain is the question of climate change, which the Food and Agriculture Organization approaches in a national, regional, and global context using the Paris agreement as structure to which the entity collaborates with member nations.

I hope that as we—in the first instance, this program is about helping people in need, the emergent nature of it. But the question becomes once we have a population that we are directly feeding through these programs, there is an opportunity to also change and transform their lives and how we ultimately create more food, as you suggested, with less water. I hope that you will make that a significant part of your mission upon confirmation.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Finally, Governor, one of our former colleagues questioned you only about India, but I am more interested as well about the expansion of OECD membership. There are 38 members in the OECD, along with 5 partner countries and 6 countries vying to become full-fledged members. Two of those partner countries include

China and India. Russia has been trying to get in for several years but was basically shut out after their invasion of Ukraine in 2014.

What are your thoughts on the accession program for countries trying to join the OECD?

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you for the question.

There should be a very high bar. The OECD, unlike many other multilaterals, has characteristics and qualifications for membership, which are very much focused on a commitment to democracy, a commitment to market-oriented economic systems. And it has just never been more important that countries that share those values demonstrate that we can deliver better than those who have other approaches.

And so there are some who believe that increasing the membership of the OECD is a metric that we should care about. I do not agree with that. I think the OECD is extraordinarily valuable to its member countries. I think it is a great place for convening of like-minded countries, and so I think the bar to accession is extremely high.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I share your view. Expansion should be based upon those who can meet and share the same values, not just simply for the sake of expansion. So I appreciate that.

And the other point about the OECD, I am increasingly concerned that the United States is not well positioned to engage in economic statecraft for the 21st century, both including promoting U.S. jobs, business investments, engaging in development, financing for infrastructure, and setting standards for emergent technologies and the digital economy. These are all incredibly important areas, as well as that, you know, an American company goes abroad and has maybe got the best product, maybe they got the best performance, maybe they got the best delivery, but they cannot suborn that foreign government under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

Unfortunately, other countries in the world do engage in that process, including countries or companies within the European Union. How do you see, view your role in the OECD in both helping us in these different areas of economic statecraft?

Mr. MARKELL. Well, thank you for that question as well.

My view is that American businesses and American workers can compete successfully anywhere so long as there is a level playing field. And I believe that one of the most critical goals and pieces of the OECD mission is to ensure that there is, in fact, a level playing field.

The OECD's Anti-Bribery Convention is one of the most important things that the OECD has ever done. It ensures that not only member countries live up to those standards, but it sets a model for other countries as well. I know that Senator Cardin on this committee has done some really important work over the years, including the CROOK Act, which he has been pushing.

So whether it is things like anti-bribery, whether it is around issues of stopping the theft of intellectual property, whether it is making sure procurement opportunities are available to U.S. businesses, this is just one of the most important parts of what the OECD does, and I will—if confirmed, I will ensure that focusing on a level playing field is at the very top of my priority list.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And I will just call to your attention, I am sure you are familiar with this, adherence to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which is a key international framework on responsible business conduct, are required to establish a national contact point to help promote the guidelines to businesses and other stakeholders.

I hope that when you are confirmed, you will work to make that system strong and effective to deal with some of the challenges we have been talking about.

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

All right. I understand there are no other members seeking recognition.

With that, with our thanks to the nominees, the record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, Wednesday, September 29. To colleagues on the committee, please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than tomorrow, Wednesday, September 29.

To the nominees, there will inevitably be questions for the record. I would urge you to answer the questions expeditiously and fully so that your nominations can be considered before a full business committee.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. JACK A. MARKELL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Can you expand upon how you view your role at the OECD, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish US economic statecraft instruments?

Answer. The work of the OECD rests on the shared values of the member nations: a commitment to democracy, human rights, transparency, and open market based economic principles. If confirmed, I will work to coordinate U.S. Government agency engagement with the OECD to ensure the organization's recommended policies and regulations reflect those values and interests and will secure the agreement of other member nations. The resulting policies and regulations will, in turn, help create and expand legitimate investment and financing opportunities for U.S. business and promote U.S. job creation.

Question. Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

Answer. I see the most pressing challenge today is building back our economies and societies after the COVID-crisis in a better, more inclusive way. This brings with it opportunities to address the climate crisis, to ensure the gains of trade are shared by all, to manage the disruptive impact of critical and emerging technologies, and to find inclusive and equitable economic strategies consistent with our shared values. If confirmed, I will work to keep the OECD focused on its strengths of high-quality, unbiased data collection and evidence-based analysis to make policy recommendations in those areas. It is here where U.S. engagement and leadership can ensure the organization remains an effective institution that benefits the American people.

OECD Guidelines Review

Question. The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises are a pioneering set of standards that promote responsible business conduct. The guidelines were last updated in 2011, and the OECD is currently undertaking a stocktaking to see if they are still fit for purpose or need revision. Several stakeholders have identified

gaps in the guidelines, particularly in the areas of gender, environmental impacts, and protections of human rights defenders.

- How will you ensure that the potential updated guidelines are strengthened to further incorporate high standards in these areas?

Answer. I agree with you on the importance of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (Guidelines), a key set of recommendations from governments to businesses that promote responsible business conduct. I understand the ongoing stocktaking exercise will assess the guidelines, their implementation, and the OECD's overall work on Responsible Business Conduct. If confirmed, I will work with officials from the State Department and other U.S. Government agencies to take into account stakeholder input and consider ways to further strengthen the guidelines consistent with our shared values.

Question. How will you ensure that this review results in a strengthening—rather than a weakening—of the current standards?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with officials from the State Department and other U.S. Government agencies to take into account the input of all relevant stakeholders, including affected groups, and consider ways to further strengthen the Guidelines consistent with our shared values. I agree on the need to avoid a weakening of the guidelines.

Question. As the U.S. Representative to the OECD, how will you ensure that the NCP system is strong and effective to address business and human rights grievances?

Answer. The U.S. National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (Guidelines) serves an important role in promoting and implementing the Guidelines, and in facilitating the resolution of allegations brought against a company. The Guidelines provide important government recommendations to companies on responsible business practices, including with respect to human rights. If confirmed, I will work with the State Department and other agencies to review the current work of the U.S. NCP, consider feedback from concerned stakeholders, and take appropriate steps to ensure the mechanism we have in place is a meaningful one.

China

Question. As you know, this committee has been very focused on reframing our relationship with China through the lens of strategic competition—as evidenced by our bipartisan approach in passing the Strategic Competition Act. This historic, bipartisan legislation is clear-eyed about the challenges we face, and is designed to meet this consequential moment in U.S.-China relations.

- How do you plan on using your position at the OECD to effectively confront and compete with China?

Answer. I am deeply concerned by the People's Republic of China (PRC) actions in international organizations that aim to reshape the international order to align with its authoritarian system. If confirmed, I will keep at the forefront of my actions the focus that any OECD engagement with the PRC must support member nation interests and uphold the norms, high standards, and practices that underpin the rules-based global economic order. Additionally, I will work to leverage the OECD's role in developing best practices for global trade, digital economy policy, anti-corruption, infrastructure, and other policy areas to counter alternative models pushed by authoritarian states that undermine global values, rules, and norms.

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

U.S.-EU trade

Question. Economic ties between the United States and the EU were damaged under President Trump, particularly with the imposition of tariffs on EU food and beverage imports. These tariffs put additional financial strain on families in my home state of New Jersey, many of whom work in food processing, as well as many restaurants who tried to stay afloat during the pandemic. President Biden suspended these destructive tariffs in March 2021. How will you advance stronger trade ties between the United States and the EU as ambassador? Will you commit to seeking a permanent resolution of the large civil aircraft dispute so that con-

sumers, restaurants, and food importers have certainty in the U.S.-EU trade relationship?

Answer. The United States and the European Union represent the largest economic relationship in the world. The Transatlantic trade and investment relationship is vital for our mutual prosperity. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and member states to resolve or deescalate difficult bilateral issues, including in trade, with the EU and other partners. I will work together with our European partners to protect the rules-based global trading system—a system under threat from non-market economies. This includes resolution of the large civil aircraft dispute. In addition, I will work with our trade experts in the U.S. Government, in consultation with business, labor, and other stakeholders to support policies that advance our trade and investment objectives with the European Union for our mutual benefit.

China

Question. The United States has expressed strong support for the Three Seas Initiative as an alternative for Chinese investment plans like the 17+1 format. How do you plan to engage European members on Three Seas and other proposals to reduce Chinese malign influence in Europe?

Answer. I agree with Secretary Blinken that the Three Seas Initiative (3SI) is an important tool to bring the private sector to the table alongside governments to make infrastructure projects happen and to develop robust connections among our Central European Allies that link them closer to each other and to Western European countries. If confirmed, I will work with the EU to support resilient infrastructure in Europe, including through the 3SI and the Build Back Better World and Blue Dot Network initiatives. If confirmed, I will use all the tools at our disposal to work with our EU partners to promote an affirmative vision that is rooted in our shared values and promote high-quality, resilient infrastructure both in Europe and globally.

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

Question. Russia has been slowing its supply of natural gas through Ukrainian pipelines, which has left some EU members at an all-time low in pre-winter stores of fuel. These empty tanks have pushed energy prices in Europe up very high. EU energy regulations state that no single pipeline owner may supply more than 50 percent of the EU's energy capacity.

- Should the flow of Russian natural gas not return to normal before winter, do you believe that the EU will consider suspending or breaking its regulations with regard to Russian supplier, Gazprom, and allow it to provide more than 50 percent of its natural gas supply to fulfill the increased demand in the winter months?

Answer. I am concerned gas storage in Europe is low and the market is undersupplied compared to prior years. The lower-than-normal levels of gas storage illustrate the importance of diversified energy supplies and suppliers to meet Europe's energy security goals. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the European partners to enhance energy security for member states.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to calling on the European Union to implement the rules and regulations required by the Third Energy Package on Nord Stream 2 as well as on the Turk Stream 1 and 2 pipelines?

Answer. The Nord Stream 2 pipeline is a Russian geopolitical project that undercuts the energy security of a significant part of the Euro-Atlantic community. I understand the administration continues to work with Germany, Ukraine, and other European Allies and partners to reduce the risks of an operational Nord Stream 2 pipeline. This includes the package of measures detailed in the July 21, 2021 U.S.-Germany Joint Statement on support for Ukraine, European Energy Security, and our Climate Goals. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the European Union to apply Third Energy Package directives to ensure that all energy projects in Europe are implemented in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner that promote competition.

Question. Some leaders have been discussing the concept of strategic autonomy in Europe's security posture for almost a decade, and in recent years discussion of it has risen due to the perceived decline of American leadership in the world and a weakening of relations with Europe. Strategic autonomy has now become a major

topic of discussion among EU leaders following the U.S. surrender of Europe's energy security to Russia through the concession of Nord Stream 2, the disastrous Afghanistan withdrawal that exposed our allies' vulnerabilities in conducting security operations without close U.S. involvement, and the recent AUKUS deal, which, while a good move for our mutual interests in the Indo-Pacific, left a major ally feeling disenfranchised, overall sending a poor message on how the United States values its allies.

- Is it in the interests of the United States for EU nations to pursue strategic autonomy and develop a military that launch major operations outside of our transatlantic military alliances?

Answer. The administration is committed to re-engaging allies and partners and revitalizing our alliances. I welcome European efforts to strengthen European defense that would enhance Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and member states to ensure that this work is complementary to and not duplicative of NATO's efforts and strengthen practical participation by the United States in EU defense programs. I look forward to engaging with Allies and EU partners to reinforce the unparalleled value of Transatlantic cooperation and the NATO Alliance.

Question. How would strategic autonomy improve the issue of burden sharing in defense cooperation between the U.S. and EU members?

Answer. The EU and EU member states are important partners in addressing key foreign policy, security, and economic issues. A strong EU and strong EU member states committing more resources to defense contribute to the goal of enhanced Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to promote greater U.S. participation in European defense projects and ensure that EU Defense initiatives are coherent, interoperable, complementary to and not duplicative of NATO efforts. If confirmed, I will support continued NATO-EU cooperation and to ensure increased burden sharing by Allies.

Question. How would the formation of a European army open the door to the EU pursuing unilateral security interests that diverge from those of the United States?

Answer. A strong Europe, including EU member states should contribute to the goal of enhanced Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to ensure greater U.S. participation in EU defense initiatives and that these initiatives remain coherent, interoperable, complementary with, and not duplicative of, NATO efforts. Additionally, if confirmed, I will seek ways to support continued NATO-EU cooperation.

Question. Should the EU focus efforts more on expanding its membership, or more on helping current members improve their political and economic situations?

Answer. The EU is an important partner in addressing key foreign policy, security, and economic issues. Member states with durable and capable democratic institutions and strong economies enhance this partnership. Closer integration into key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has strengthened democratic institutions and rule of law in aspirant countries, contributing to political stability and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and member states to maintain a focus on governance, rule of law, anti-corruption reforms, independent media, and vibrant civil societies—in short, urging the EU to both support accession-related reforms in candidate states and help current members improve democratic governance and rule of law.

Question. What is the consensus in the EU about expansion, given that some members, such as Hungary, have seen democratic backsliding in recent years?

Answer. I am concerned about backsliding on democratic principles and institutions in some EU member states, including in, but not only in, Hungary. The transatlantic relationship is deeply rooted in the United States' and European Union's shared commitment to democratic values, including the rule of law, judicial independence, and media freedom. These values are an essential part of our relationship with the EU and a topic of frank discussions with member states; a demonstrated commitment to democracy and its institutions is also a prerequisite for EU accession. The administration supports the EU and EU member states' efforts to reverse democratic backsliding within the bloc, and we work alongside the EU to support democratic institutions and promote rule of law reforms in states working towards EU accession. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and member states to support and strengthen democracy across Europe.

Question. China has already been making inroads in Europe by laying debt traps in the Balkans, building the PEACE cable to France, buying stakes in major sea-

ports, and creating formats that divide Europe, like the 17+1. Fortunately, European nations have begun to recognize the threat that China poses and have shut down Chinese attempts to influence educational institutions and businesses.

- What are some concrete ways you will help the United States Government coordinate with and provide mutual support to EU members to combat China's influence?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with the EU and member states on collective approaches to challenging non-market policies and coercive economic practices that undermine the fair and transparent operation of the global economy, including those from the PRC. If confirmed, I will also work with the EU to support resilient infrastructure, including through the Build Back Better World and Blue Dot Network initiatives and the Three Seas Initiative. Finally, if confirmed, I will use all the tools at our disposal—including the U.S.-EU dialogue on China and the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council—to address the challenges posed by the PRC and promote rules of the road that reflect the democratic values shared by the United States and Europe.

Question. Do you believe that the United States should honor its earlier commitment to have the Development Finance Corporation invest \$300 million in The Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund?

Answer. I understand that U.S. International Development Finance Corporation continues to strongly support the Three Seas Initiative (3SI) and is engaged in promising discussions with the investment adviser of the 3SI Investment Fund. The relevant parties are working intensively on a vehicle to enable DFC to announce its support to the fund consistent with U.S. legal and regulatory requirements. DFC financing can serve as a catalyst in developing renewable and reliable energy networks that can drive development and growth across priority regions. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the EU to promote investments in quality infrastructure and exploring ways to align our respective infrastructure initiatives.

Question. Will you work to urge the European Union to increase its investments in eastern and southern European infrastructure projects (even those outside of the EU), improve its oversight of strategically-important asset sales?

Answer. The United States is committed to working through the G7's Build Back Better World initiative and the Blue Dot Network to support quality, inclusive, sustainable, and high-standard infrastructure development, including in Europe. We also are a strong supporter of the Three Seas Initiative. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the EU to promote investments in quality infrastructure and exploring ways to align our respective initiatives. Also, if confirmed, I will continue discussions on investment screening approaches under the framework of the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council.

Question. What strengths do you see in the European Union's recently-released EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific? What do you see as the main weaknesses in this Strategy?

Answer. The United States and EU share a vision of the Indo-Pacific that is inclusive and based on the rule of law and democratic values and that contributes to the security and sustainable development of the region. Both prioritize cooperation to promote secure, sustainable, free and open maritime supply routes and supply chains. I was glad to see the President and Secretary of State welcomed the EU's new strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the EU as we each implement our respective Indo-Pacific strategies to ensure our approaches are complementary, are rooted in our shared values, and support shared initiatives like Build Back Better World.

Question. The Balkans, as the poorest and least Euro-integrated region on the continent, have come under heavy pressure from Russia and China.

- How could greater integration with the rest of Europe help reverse and resist these outside forces that seek to use the Balkans as an inroads to Europe and establish a beachhead of influence on the continent?

Answer. Closer integration with key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has proven to contribute to political stability, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law and advancing economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will work to support the countries of the Western Balkans as they seek to join the Western community of democracies, including by undertaking the required reforms. These efforts will buttress them against malign actors who seek to undermine democratic principles, subvert the rule of law, and divert these countries from their Western paths.

Question. How great of an obstacle do good governance issues, such as corruption, rule of law, and electoral problems pose to Balkan integration into Europe?

Answer. Closer integration with key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has proven to contribute to political stability, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law and advancing economic prosperity. The people of the Western Balkans states deserve transparency, rule of law, multi-ethnic democracy, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will work to support their aspirations and support the reform process to help these countries maintain their paths toward the Western community of democracies.

Question. How would the efforts to improve corruption, rule of law, and economic issues in the Balkans benefit from an increase in effort from the EU to integrate the region?

Answer. Closer integration with key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has proven to contribute to political stability, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law and advancing economic prosperity. The people of the Western Balkans states deserve good governance, rule of law, multi-ethnic democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and economic opportunity. However, disillusionment with delays on the Western Balkans' EU path opens the door for harmful influences from our strategic rivals. If confirmed, I will work to support the Western Balkans' European aspirations and support the reform process to help these countries maintain their paths toward the Western community of democracies.

Question. In the wake of Brexit, the UK, Ireland and the greater European Union have been left to tackle the issue of the EU-UK customs border between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

- How will you engage in negotiations on this issue to ensure that U.S. trade interests are protected, and that the Good Friday Agreement is preserved?

Answer. The United States supports a close and cooperative relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, based on a shared understanding of democratic values, national security, law enforcement, and a broad range of other interests. The United States also wants to see a confident, forward-looking Northern Ireland with a prosperous economy that reflects the identity and aspirations of every tradition. If confirmed, I will encourage both sides to keep the door open to continued dialogue that will enhance the prospect for long-term, positive solutions and promote strong trade and investment ties with the EU, while preserving the Good Friday Agreement.

Question. Should the EU-UK customs border be formed along the border of Ireland and Northern Ireland, or between the island of Ireland and the island of Great Britain, with Northern Ireland receiving a special condition to maintain unity with the rest of the UK? Do you believe there is a better proposal for a solution to the customs border issue?

Answer. Recent unrest in Northern Ireland underscores the importance of safeguarding the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. If confirmed, I will encourage all parties to prioritize political and economic stability and to negotiate when differences arise. I would emphasize the need to ensure any Brexit outcomes do not undermine the progress made since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. If confirmed, I will support the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and welcome the provisions in both the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the Northern Ireland Protocol which help protect hard-won gains.

Question. In July 2020, the European Court of Justice struck down the Privacy Shield program, invalidating a critical mechanism for transferring personal data from the EU to the U.S. This has raised significant concerns about the continued viability of transatlantic data flows at an important moment for U.S. economic recovery, as data flows support more than \$245 billion in U.S. digital exports to Europe. There is an ongoing interagency effort to negotiate a successor privacy framework with our European partners, without which U.S. companies are likely to increasingly face barriers to engaging in cross-border digital commerce with Europe.

- If confirmed, will you prioritize the on-going negotiations to replace the Privacy Shield program?

Answer. I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

Question. Toward that goal, what steps do you plan to take to support a swift and successful conclusion to the efforts to produce a successor Privacy Shield framework?

Answer. I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

Question. This month saw the launch of the U.S.-EU Trade & Technology Council (TTC). While the TTC will cover a broad set of issues, it is well-suited to support U.S. engagement with the EU's proposed Artificial Intelligence Act. As with GDPR, the AI Act is likely to be enacted and set a global benchmark for AI regulation.

- If confirmed, will you seek to engage with your EU counterparts—both directly and through the Trade and Technology Council—as the EU's AI Act moves forward toward avoiding divergent regulatory approaches while supporting interoperability in AI governance?

Answer. The United States welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the EU on governance approaches to technology that advance innovation, take a risk-based approach that reflects our shared democratic values, and address shared global challenges. The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council is a key forum for joint efforts to foster trustworthy, secure, and responsible AI that reflects our shared values and commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of all our citizens. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing this effort and to ensure our respective regulatory frameworks maintain a risk-based, innovation-friendly approach.

Question. Given the importance of the EU-U.S. bilateral and the breadth of pressing tech-related issues, how will you seek to comprehensively balance the interests of U.S. businesses with the strategic goal of enhancing a steadfast relationship with our European allies?

Answer. Building on our shared democratic values and economic relationship—the world's largest—if confirmed, I will use my role as U.S. Ambassador to the EU to implement and inform an agreed interagency approach to achieve an appropriate and comprehensive balance between national security and economic security goals. In my previous experience as U.S. Ambassador to Romania, engaging with government officials and stakeholders from business, labor, and civil society was essential to build relationships and find common ground, even on tough issues.

Question. What are your thoughts regarding restarting the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) talks with Europe? What are your thoughts regarding completing free trade agreement talks with the U.K.?

Answer. The administration is reviewing its policies on trade agreements to ensure that trade supports middle-class jobs and labor. If confirmed, I will work with our trade experts in the U.S. Government, as well as business, labor, and other stakeholders to support policies that advance our trade and investment objectives with Europe our mutual benefit.

Question. The U.S. and the EU have, generally speaking, highly developed regulatory processes based on science that are intended to keep our people healthy and safe. As part of the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) talks under President Obama, exploratory efforts were made to find ways to better coordinate or to find equivalence in our respective regulatory processes. Studies conducted at the time of TTIP suggested significant potential cost savings to both sides through potential alignment on regulatory outcomes. Sometimes these savings were far greater than a simple tariff cutting trade agreement would have provided. In addition, to the extent the U.S. and EU could agree on common approaches to regulation, we together could set global standards for others to follow. What are your thoughts about strengthening engagement on the regulatory front between the U.S. and the EU? Is this a realistic goal to think we could create some convergence between us on the regulatory front? How would you contribute to pursuing it, if confirmed?

Answer. President Biden and his EU counterparts established the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council in June 2021 as a forum to shape the rules of the road for the 21st century economy and demonstrate how democratic approaches to trade, technology, and innovation can improve the lives of our citizens. The inaugural ministerial meeting took place in Pittsburgh on September 29. The two sides intend to discuss ways to avoid non-tariff barriers, particularly in emerging technology such

as artificial intelligence. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our respective regulatory frameworks maintain a risk-based, innovation-friendly approach.

Question. For decades, China has been underwriting steel production through cheap loans and other government interventions. Such Chinese Government support to Chinese steel has hurt the steel industry in the U.S. This overproduction has also injured many other countries as excess Chinese steel (produced according to political directives and not necessarily in response to market demand) is dumped, creating ripple effects throughout the rest of the world including in Europe. Europe should be a potential natural ally in forming a coalition to pressure China to reform its steel practices. What are your thoughts on how we might partner with Europe on countering such anti-market practices by China?

Answer. The United States and the European Union committed in May to enter into discussions that would address global steel and aluminum excess capacity and the deployment of effective solutions, including appropriate trade measures to preserve our critical industries. By working together with our allies to address excess capacity and non-market practices, we can support strong domestic steel and aluminum production, inputs in supply chains critical to our national security. If confirmed, I will support efforts to resolve or deescalate difficult bilateral issues with the EU and other partners and focus on the shared threat we face from non-market economies.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. MARK GITENSTEIN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

Question. What is the unify vision of the European Union?

Answer. The President has emphasized the United States' continued commitment to the goal of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. A strong relationship with a united European Union will be essential to face the challenges of the present and future. If confirmed, I will work to revitalize and raise the level of ambition in our relations with the EU to address the challenges we face and promote an affirmative vision rooted in our shared democratic values.

Question. Do you support a European Union having its own Army?

Answer. A strong Europe, including EU member states, should contribute to the goal of enhanced Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to ensure greater U.S. participation in EU defense initiatives, and that these initiatives remain coherent, interoperable, complementary with, and not duplicative of, NATO efforts. Additionally, if confirmed, I will seek ways to support continued NATO-EU cooperation.

Question. How do you plan to plan to foster a "transatlantic view" for security vs. the "Europe alone" attitude espoused by President Macron?

Answer. The EU is a vital partner in addressing key foreign policy, security, and economic issues. A strong EU contributes to enhanced transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to ensure that EU security and defense initiatives are coherent, complementary, and interoperable with and not duplicative of NATO efforts. If confirmed, I will seek ways to support and enhance continued NATO-EU cooperation to address the multiple and evolving security challenges confronting the United States, NATO Allies, and EU member states. There is strength in numbers. We are more effective in facing common threats if we work together and combine our resources and expertise than if we work separately.

Question. How can the EU work with NATO to advice the common interest of European Security?

Answer. The administration has committed itself to re-engaging European allies and partners. I welcome European efforts to strengthen European defense including by spending more on defense. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and EU member states to ensure that defense efforts should be coherent, complimentary, and interoperable with and not duplicative of NATO efforts. If confirmed I will seek to strengthen NATO-EU cooperation and work with Allies and partners to enhance Transatlantic security. Julie Smith, if confirmed, and I have committed to meet weekly in Brussels towards this goal.

Question. Would you say that Russia, not climate change is the biggest threat to European Security?

Answer. The administration has worked with the EU on strengthening our mutual ability both to resist Russian use of energy as a weapon and to combat climate change, and if confirmed I will continue to do so.

Question. How can the EU stand up to Russia when it continues to peruse Russian energy?

Answer. Europe's continued reliance on Russia for its energy supply remains a top threat to its energy security. Russia is the main EU supplier of crude oil, natural gas, and solid fuels. Russia's nuclear fuel supply monopoly in Central and Eastern Europe is also a matter of concern. The administration strongly supports diversification of energy supplies to diminish the role of geopolitics in energy markets, reduce consumer prices, and enhance energy security. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the European Union on enhancing energy security for member states and pushing back against Russia's attempts to use energy as a weapon.

Question. Would you oppose further European joint energy projects with Russia?

Answer. The administration strongly supports diversification of energy supplies to diminish the role of geopolitics in energy markets, reduce consumer prices, and enhance energy security. If confirmed, I look forward to working with European Union on enhancing energy security for member states and pushing back against Russia's attempts to use energy as a weapon.

Question. What should be the lesson the EU should learn from Ukraine who has had their energy turned off by Russia and now faces severe energy shortfalls this winter?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support the administration's efforts to work with our allies and partners to promote a more secure and sustainable energy future for Ukraine and frontline NATO and EU countries, and to push back against Russian attempts to use energy as a weapon.

Question. Do you see Turkey becoming an EU member in the foreseeable future?

Answer. Turkey will need to meet the EU accession conditions, including implementing reforms that ensure respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic institutions. To do this, Turkey will need to undertake reforms to reverse the democratic backsliding that has occurred. If confirmed, I will encourage both the EU and Turkey to continue to concretely advance a positive EU-Turkey agenda and to encourage Turkey, in coordination with our embassy in Ankara, to undertake the necessary reforms.

Question. What would have to change to make that happen or happen faster?

Answer. Turkey will need to meet the EU accession conditions, including implementing reforms that ensure respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic institutions. It will also have to make more technical reforms ranging from customs union modernization to migration cooperation. If confirmed, I will encourage both the EU and Turkey to continue to concretely advance a positive EU-Turkey agenda and to encourage Turkey, in coordination with our embassy in Ankara, to undertake the necessary reforms.

Question. How can the EU work with Turkey to manage the humanitarian crisis that is still ongoing in southern Europe?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with our partners in the European Union and member states on providing humanitarian assistance and diplomatic engagement with Turkey and other countries to respond to the humanitarian issues in the southern Europe. We have encouraged Turkey to maintain its close coordination with the EU and international organizations to promote coordinated, effective, and efficient humanitarian responses in southern Europe.

Question. If confirmed, will you prioritize the on-going negotiations to replace the Privacy Shield program?

Answer. I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

Question. What steps do you plan to take to support a swift and successful conclusion to the efforts to produce a successor Privacy Shield framework?

Answer. I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued

transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

Question. If confirmed, will you seek to engage with your EU counterparts—both directly and through the Trade and Technology Council—as the EU’s AI Act moves forward toward avoiding divergent regulatory approaches while supporting interoperability in AI governance?

Answer. Yes. The United States welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the EU on governance approaches to technology that advance innovation, take a risk-based approach, reflect our shared democratic values, and address shared global challenges. The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council is a key forum for joint efforts to foster trustworthy, secure, and responsible AI that reflects our shared values and commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of all our citizens. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing this effort and to ensure our respective regulatory frameworks maintain a risk-based, innovation-friendly approach.

Question. Given the importance of the EU-U.S. bilateral and the breadth of pressing tech-related issues, how will you seek to comprehensively balance the interests of U.S. businesses with the strategic goal of enhancing a steadfast relationship with our European allies?

Answer. Building on our shared democratic values and economic relationship—the world’s largest—if confirmed, I will use my role as U.S. Ambassador to the EU to implement and inform an agreed interagency approach to achieving an appropriate and comprehensive balance between national security and economic security goals. In my previous experience as U.S. Ambassador to Romania, engaging with government officials and stakeholders from business, labor, and civil society was essential to build relationships and find common ground, even on tough issues.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. JEFFRY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. The Azerbaijani military attacked ethnic Armenian positions using Turkish drones during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War. Satellite images showed Turkish F-16s at an airport in Azerbaijan, and Armenia claims that a Turkish F-16 shot down one of its planes in Armenian airspace in September 2020. Reports indicate that Turkey recruited and paid Syrian mercenaries to aid Azerbaijan’s military. What tools would you use as Ambassador to hold the Turkish Government accountable for its role in exacerbating international conflicts as it did in Nagorno-Karabakh?

Answer. Over the past several years Turkey has pursued a more independent foreign policy that has at times advanced American interests and in some cases has been unhelpful and destabilizing. If confirmed, I will work with counterparts in the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and the United States Congress to encourage and, if necessary, pressure Turkey to take actions in line with NATO and U.S. interests in the region. If confirmed, I will support efforts to engage bilaterally and multilaterally to advance conflict resolution and normalization in the Caucasus.

Question. Ever since the 2016 coup attempt, the Erdogan regime has engaged in increasingly systematic human rights violations, including through mass detentions, undermining elections, arbitrary arrests, indefinite detention, and in some cases, torture. President Erdogan has undermined the judiciary, attacked the free press, and repressed civil society and the political opposition. How will you use your role as Ambassador to highlight these abuses and put pressure on the regime to meet its values oriented commitments as a NATO ally?

Answer. It is in the U.S. national interest for Turkey—a key player on regional issues—to be a stable, democratic, prosperous, and reliable Ally and partner. If confirmed, I will reinforce the importance of democracy and human rights to our bilateral relationship and urge the Government to make the necessary reforms to reverse democratic backsliding. If confirmed, I will urge the Government of Turkey to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, uphold fair trial guarantees, enable civil society and independent media to operate, support the empowerment of women, and defend the rights of all. I will call for the immediate release of all those incarcerated for exercising their fundamental freedoms and participate in events that promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Question. As recently as last week, 22 Turkish fighter jets committed 17 violations of Greek airspace in the Aegean Sea. This behavior is emblematic of past Turkish

violations of Greek airspace, as well as forays into the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone. How will you engage the Turkish Government on these issues of aggression against U.S. allies and partners?

Answer. I understand the United States has been clear with Turkey that military flights through Greek airspace are unhelpful and provocative. If confirmed, I will encourage Ankara to respect the sovereign airspace of other countries and to operate state aircraft with due regard for the safety of navigation of civil aircraft. Where disagreements exist over the limits of a country's territorial airspace, I will urge coordination and discussion. Disagreements between Greece and Turkey should be resolved through diplomacy and engagement.

Question. Turkey's military efforts against the Syrian Kurds, including through Turkish-sponsored Syrian proxies, undermine U.S. counterterrorism objectives and serve as a major point of friction in what could be a more unified U.S. and Turkish approach to Syria. Previous administrations actively worked to manage and mitigate Turkish concerns with U.S. support to the Syrian Democratic Forces. If confirmed, will you pledge to reinvigorate diplomacy on this front, despite its role as a cross-Bureau issue within the Department?

Answer. Turkey is an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. If I understand correctly, the administration is cognizant of Turkey's long-standing concerns about U.S. cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the counter-ISIS campaign. The SDF's efforts were critical to collapsing ISIS's fraudulent "caliphate" and remain essential to further degrading the group. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States, its partners and allies. If confirmed, I pledge to fully engage with my counterparts across bureaus in the Department of State and in the Department of Defense to advance U.S. policy goals in Syria.

Question. The Turkish Government is actively seeking U.N. approval and cooperation to facilitate the return of Syrian refugees in Turkey to Syria, despite the unsuitable ground conditions for doing so. This reflects the efforts of select European nations, but poses an unacceptable humanitarian and political precedent. If confirmed, will you pledge to advocate against these actions with the Turkish Government, and work collaboratively to identify opportunities to reduce tensions associated with Syrian refugees communities in Turkey?

Answer. The administration appreciates Turkey's generosity in hosting four million refugees, 3.6 million of whom are from Syria, and acknowledges the challenges of doing so both for the Turkish Government and local communities. In line with U.N. assessments, the administration does not believe conditions in Syria at this time are conducive for any systematic or large-scale returns, and I agree. Consistent with international principles, refugee returns should be safe, dignified, informed, and voluntary. If confirmed, I will work with Turkey in line with these principles and explore ways to reduce tensions related to Syrian refugee communities in Turkey and reinforce the administration's position on returns.

Question. The maritime boundary agreement between Turkey and Libya is based on a flawed reading of international maritime law and infringes on the legitimate maritime claims of Turkey's Mediterranean neighbors, especially Greece. What will your message be to Turkey on this? Will you call on them to respect the legitimate claims of their neighbors?

Answer. It is my understanding that the United States generally does not take a position on other states' maritime boundary disputes and calls on all parties to refrain from all actions that risk heightening tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. If confirmed, I will consistently urge Turkey to resolve maritime delimitation issues with its neighbors peacefully through dialogue and in accordance with international law. In addition, consistent with my understanding of the administration's policy, if I see provocative action being taken I will not hesitate to call it out.

Question. Turkish-backed fighters in Libya pose a significant threat to that country's stability and its upcoming elections, as do Russian-backed fighters from Wagner. Will you urge Turkey to withdraw these Syrians and commit to Libya's political process?

Answer. The administration made public statements strongly supporting the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will call on the Turkish Government to use its influence to encourage all Libyan parties to establish the framework and constitutional basis for on-time national elections on December 24.

Question. The EMGF is a great consortium of regional energy players, but its focus on natural gas is not sustainable. In order to avoid the most catastrophic consequences of climate change, all countries need to reduce their reliance and usage of fossil fuels to ensure that global warming does not exceed 2 degrees Celsius. While natural gas is less polluting than oil and coal, it is not a sustainable alternative. How do you think the United States should leverage its role as an official observer to push this forum past an explicit focus on natural gas to one that is focused on a diverse and sustainable regional energy mix?

Answer. The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners. The Forum can help promote greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity throughout the region. If confirmed, I will build on the work between colleagues in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Energy Resources, and European and Eurasian Affairs to coordinate our engagement and am eager to learn more about the EMGF's announcement earlier this year that it plans to work with specialists to discuss and promote gas decarbonization. I will also take steps to encourage Turkey, which is not a member of the EMGF, to collaborate with regional partners in incorporating more renewable energy sources for their energy needs.

Question. Turkey is increasingly dependent on energy imports, especially fossil fuels. Turkey's nationally determined contribution (i.e. its Paris Agreement commitment) is critically insufficient to uphold the 2 degrees Celsius global warming limit outlined in the Paris Agreement. Turkey has not submitted an updated nationally determined contribution (required under the Paris Agreement) and their path to a 2 degree Celsius-aligned economy is unclear. How can the United States support lowering the carbon intensity of Turkish energy consumption and increase their climate ambition in line with the 2 degrees Celsius Paris Agreement target?

Answer. Turkey is a leader in renewable energy, producing almost half its electricity from renewable sources, especially hydropower. However, Turkey's current pledge to reduce levels of greenhouse gas emissions is weak and would still allow a doubling in the volume of Turkey's emissions over the next decade. If confirmed, I will engage with the Turkish Government and private sector to seek collaboration on technologies and investment in infrastructure critical to increasing Turkey's energy security and reducing emissions. I will urge Turkey not only to follow through on President Erdogan's very welcome announcement regarding its plan to ratify the Paris Agreement, but also to put forward a strengthened 2030 emissions reduction target consistent with achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

Anomalous Health Incidents

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

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

Answer. This is a sensitive ongoing investigation and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. I understand a major interagency effort is investigating what is causing the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports an anomalous health incident receives immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

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

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

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

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. JEFFRY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. Relations between Turkey and Greece have been strained in recent years, with exclusive economic zone disputes in the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, pressures from mass migration, and tensions over Cyprus. How would you work with the U.S. mission in Greece to take a coordinate approach to protecting U.S. interests affected by the Greco-Turkish relationship?

Answer. The administration has been clear that it supports all efforts to reduce tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean and welcomes exploratory talks between Greece and Turkey. The Biden administration has also made clear that it is committed to ensuring stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries should be respected and protected, and that disagreements in the region should be resolved through diplomacy. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with our Ambassador in Athens to pursue opportunities for the United States Government to encourage these two important NATO Allies to take the necessary steps to reduce tensions and resolve disputes.

Question. Since its initial intervention in January 2020, Turkey has deployed hundreds of troops and Syrian militia fighters to Libya in support of the then internationally recognized government, the Government of National Accord. After months of fighting between the Turkish-backed GNA and its eastern based rival, the Libyan National Army (LNA), which garnered support from Russia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) among others, a ceasefire agreement was reached in October 2020. Under the terms of the U.N. brokered agreement, both sides and their respective backers agreed to withdraw all foreign forces and mercenaries from the country. Despite the October 2020 ceasefire agreement, the U.N. Secretary General, in address to the Security Council remarked that thousands of foreign forces remained in Libya as of early September 2021, “with no discernible abatement of their activities.” Furthermore, there continues to be ongoing violations of the U.N. arms embargo on Libya by a variety of actors.

- Please provide your assessment of Turkey’s role in the conflict in Libya.

Answer. Turkey joins the United States and others in supporting the Libyan-led, U.N.-facilitated political process, including elections on December 24 this year. The administration also publicly and strongly supported the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will stress to our Turkish colleagues and all parties involved that it is essential to end the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and through ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

Question. Since its initial intervention in January 2020, Turkey has deployed hundreds of troops and Syrian militia fighters to Libya in support of the then internationally recognized government, the Government of National Accord. After months of fighting between the Turkish-backed GNA and its eastern based rival, the Libyan National Army (LNA), which garnered support from Russia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) among others, a ceasefire agreement was reached in October 2020. Under the terms of the U.N. brokered agreement, both sides and their respective backers agreed to withdraw all foreign forces and mercenaries from the country. Despite the October 2020 ceasefire agreement, the U.N. Secretary General, in address to the Security Council remarked that thousands of foreign forces remained in Libya as of early September 2021, “with no discernible abatement of their activities.” Furthermore, there continues to be ongoing violations of the U.N. arms embargo on Libya by a variety of actors. Please provide your assessment of Turkey’s role in the conflict in Libya.

Answer. The United States has been clear that all foreign fighters and forces need to withdraw from Libya, including Turkish forces. Turkey supports a staged, coordinated withdrawal of its forces that is matched to a withdrawal of other foreign forces in the country. Turkey joins the United States and others in supporting the Libyan-led, U.N.-facilitated political

process, including elections on December 24 this year. The presence of foreign fighters in Libya undermines U.S. goals of this Libyan-led political process to resolve the conflict. However, it is also the case that Turkey's intervention in 2020 secured Tripoli, preventing the fall of the Government of National Accord and averting a humanitarian crisis. As I understand, Turkey's foreign policy on Libya is aimed at cementing the position of an internationally recognized government in Tripoli that is friendly to Ankara's security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa.

If confirmed, I will stress to our Turkish colleagues and all parties involved that it is essential to end the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and through ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

Question. If confirmed, how do you propose to work with the U.N. to advance efforts to ensure Turkey's fully complies with the October 2020 ceasefire agreement?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) to ensure Mission Turkey informs and advances U.S. policy in Libya. In coordination with my colleagues in NEA and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, I will also work with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya to create the conditions for successful elections in Libya in December of this year.

Question. What are the prospects for a full Turkish withdrawal from the country to include its troops, mercenaries, and military equipment?

Answer. I understand the United States supports UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts across the State Department to ensure Mission Turkey informs and advances U.S. policy in Libya.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

Question. What are the prospects for a full Turkish withdrawal from the country to include its troops, mercenaries, and military equipment?

Answer. While I am not able to comment on a hypothetical, as I understand, Turkey believes that its direct military intervention helped enable the then U.N.-recognized interim Government of National Accord (GNA) to repel a Russian-supported offensive. Turkey has also claimed credit for the de facto ceasefire since June 2020 that enabled a U.N.-led political process to take hold and the formation of a unity government.

However, the presence of foreign fighters in Libya undermines our goal of a Libyan-led political process to resolve the conflict. Turkey supports a staged, coordinated withdrawal of its forces that is matched to a withdrawal of other foreign forces in the country. We stand ready to facilitate such an agreement, and if confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts across the State Department to ensure Mission Turkey informs and advances U.S. policy in Libya.

Question. In your view, what interest does Turkey have in remaining involved in Libya?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to call on Turkey to operationalize UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and support an end to the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

Question. In your view, what interest does Turkey have in remaining involved in Libya?

Answer. Turkey's foreign policy on Libya aims to cement the position of an internationally recognized government in Tripoli that is friendly to Ankara's economic and security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa. Turkey also hopes to secure a new Arab ally, preferably with an Islamist outlook, in a region where it has few. If confirmed, I will continue to call on Turkey to operationalize UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and support an end to the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

Question. Do you see Turkey's interest in remaining involved in Libya changing over the next year?

Answer. The administration made public statements strongly supporting the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will continue to call on all parties to support the U.N.-facilitated, Libyan-led political process to ensure free, fair, and credible elections.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

Question. Do you see Turkey's interest in remaining involved in Libya changing over the next year?

Answer. The administration made public statements strongly supporting the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. Current U.S. outreach to Turkey on Libya is focused on pressing Ankara to use its influence with Libyan parties to get them to reach an agreement on an electoral framework that would enable on-time national elections in December 2021. If confirmed, I will continue to call on all parties to support the U.N.-facilitated, Libyan-led political process to ensure free, fair, and credible elections.

Question. Turkey's objectives in northeast Syria run counter to U.S. interests, particularly with respect to the so-called Operation Peace Spring Zone, which it seized following an offensive in 2019, while we tacitly support their activities in the northwest.

- How do we reconcile these two contradictory policies?

Answer. The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to 3.6 million Syrian refugees in Turkey and for being a critical partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance, including through the continuation of cross-border assistance in northwest Syria. Turkey has also been an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies, to include through a limited military presence in northeast Syria. The Syrian Democratic Forces remain a capable and effective partner to U.S. forces on the ground. If confirmed, I will ensure we consult Ankara on Syria policy and seek areas for understanding while also making clear the United States' enduring security interests where we disagree.

Question. To what extent do you feel we share overlapping objectives in Syria?

Answer. The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to 3.6 million Syrian refugees and for being a critical partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance, including through the continuation of cross-border assistance in northwest Syria. Turkey has also been an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies.

Question. Please provide your assessment of how Turkish-Russian cooperation in Syria impacts U.S. national security objectives, including with respect to the fight against terror.

Answer. Turkey worked with Russia to maintain the ceasefire in northwest Syria agreed to in March 2020. The maintenance of this ceasefire supports U.S. efforts to advance the political process as outlined in UNSCR 2254. The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to 3.6 million Syrian refugees who fled the conflict. Turkey is also an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies.

Question. What are your plans for navigating our relationship with Syria given Turkey's longstanding concerns with respect to U.S. Syrian Kurdish partners?

Answer. The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. It is my understanding that the administration continues to consult Ankara on Syria policy and seeks areas for cooperation. Additionally, the United States recognizes Turkey as an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS while being cognizant of Turkey's long-standing concerns about U.S. cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the counter-ISIS campaign. The SDF is the primary counter-ISIS partner of the United States in Syria. The ef

forts of the SDF were critical to collapsing ISIS's fraudulent territorial "caliphate" and remain essential to degrading the group. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies. If confirmed, I will continue to work together with Turkey and local Syrian partners for the safety and security of U.S. forces, partner forces, and civilians.

Question. In your view, can the U.S. find a way to balance Syria-Turkish policy short of reaching a solution to the Kurdish issue?

Answer. If I understand correctly, the administration's view is that stability in Syria, and the greater region, is best served through a political process that produces peaceful outcomes in Syria. The United States has committed to working with allies, partners, and the U.N. to ensure that a durable political solution remains within reach. I will continue work to address Turkish concerns while advancing critical U.S. national security interests.

Question. How do you plan to work with Turkey to ensure the continued delivery of humanitarian aid to Syria?

Answer. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to millions of Syrian refugees who fled the conflict. Turkey has also remained an important partner in ensuring Syrians in Syria have access to life-saving assistance. This includes the facilitation of humanitarian assistance to those in need. Turkey was instrumental in the recent passage of UNSCR 2585, allowing for cross-border access for humanitarian aid to Syria. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Turkey to expand humanitarian access to reach those in need.

Question. To what extent are you concerned about allegations of human rights abuses carried out by Turkish backed forces, including HTS, in Syria?

Answer. I am gravely concerned by continued reports that some Syrian groups that Turkey supports are violating the law of armed conflict and committing human rights abuses in Syria. On July 28, the United States imposed sanctions on Ahrar al-Sharqiya - an armed Syrian opposition group known to be receiving support from Turkey - for committing human rights abuses. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor these reports and would urge Turkey to reconsider its relationships with any groups that commit human rights abuses, use its influence to press them to cease human rights abuses, hold perpetrators accountable, and take steps to prevent any such abuses.

Question. Can you commit to working with Turkey to ensure unfettered access to the areas under its control?

Answer. Turkey has remained an important partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance. This includes the facilitation of humanitarian assistance to those in need inside Syria and helping to support Syrian refugees living in Turkey. If confirmed, I will work to ensure those in areas under Turkish control in northwest Syria have unfettered access to critical humanitarian assistance.

Question. In many ways, the growing rivalry between the United Arab Emirates and Turkey has played a key role in reshaping the Middle East and North Africa region, while simultaneously having a notable impact in countries across Africa as well.

- Please provide your perspective on the role the United States should play in mediating tensions between Turkey and our Gulf partners?

Answer. I think I can safely say that the United States would welcome and support efforts by Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to decrease tensions and strengthen cooperation. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Turkey to increase prosperity and security between the two countries and across the wider region.

Question. To what extent do you see this rivalry as having negative implications on U.S. national security interests?

Answer. I think I can safely say that tensions and rivalry between Turkey and the UAE only benefit our adversaries. The United States welcomes efforts to improve the relationship between Turkey and the UAE. If confirmed, I will encourage our NATO Ally Turkey to resolve disagreements in the region through diplomacy.

Question. The security relationship between the United States and Turkey has been at an impasse over the issue of Turkey's purchase and deployment of Russian S-400 missile launchers. How will you communicate to the Turkish Government that while we value Turkey as an ally, there is a limit to the anti-alliance behavior the U.S. will tolerate?

Answer. Turkey is a NATO Ally with which we have many common interests, as well as disagreements. Turkey had the opportunity to buy Patriot surface-to-air missile systems but chose to acquire and test the Russian S-400. This action resulted in significant negative impacts to Turkey, including the imposition of CAATSA sanctions and Turkey's removal from the F-35 program. If confirmed, I will be crystal clear that Turkey should not retain the S-400 system and that any new Russian arms purchases risk triggering new CAATSA sanctions in addition to those already imposed.

Question. Turkey is in increasingly difficult economic straits. Meanwhile, in 2019 and 2020, there was much talk of a U.S.-Turkey trade deal as a potential piece of a larger agreement to smooth over the issues in the bilateral relationship.

- Do you see the realization of a U.S.-Turkey trade deal as a realistic possibility in the next three years?

Answer. I see significant opportunities for the United States and Turkey to continue strengthening our trading relationship. If confirmed, I will seek to promote high-level trade and investment engagement with Turkey, including under the umbrella of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

Question. Do you believe that a trade deal with Turkey would be beneficial to the United States?

Answer. I believe that enhanced trade and investment ties with Turkey will help the United States and our business community by creating new trade opportunities for our companies, in particular through reducing barriers to market access. If confirmed, I will work with our trade experts in the U.S. Government and business leaders to ensure that any trade arrangements with Turkey are in the best interests of the United States and our business community.

Question. Do you believe that a trade deal with Turkey would be beneficial to Turkey?

Answer. I believe that enhanced trade and investment ties with Turkey will be beneficial to Turkey by lowering market barriers between our countries, which will be critical to encouraging businesses on both sides to explore new commercial opportunities.

Question. Three current or (now) former locally-employed staff in our embassies and consulates in Turkey currently face restrictions on their freedom of having allegedly taken part in the 2015 coup against Erdogan in some small way. These allegations have very little substance to back them up, and these men are either in prison or unable to leave their home or the country.

- If confirmed, do you commit to be increasingly vocal with the Turkish Government about its role in this abuse of power and to advocate for the full release of these men and an end to their persecution?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the ongoing legal proceedings, imprisonment, or controls targeting of U.S locally employed staff—Metin Topuz Mete Canturk and Hamza Ulucay—in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties. It is my understanding that the United States Government remains deeply concerned by the prosecutions and detentions and follows their cases closely. If confirmed, I will advocate with the highest levels of Turkish officials for the immediate cessation of all judicial processes and restrictions targeting our locally employed staff s.

Question. Such realities are certain to have had an impact on the morale of locally-employed staff at Mission Turkey, and may have even impacted the Mission's ability to hire and retain good staff.

- What is your understanding of morale in Mission Turkey, particularly among LES?

Answer. It is my understanding that the administration has repeatedly expressed concerns regarding Turkey's continued unjust legal proceedings and judicial controls targeting local staff working for our diplomatic mission in Turkey. If confirmed, I will reiterate to Ankara the importance of the immediate cessation of all judicial processes and restrictions targeting our locally employed staff. And if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of State remains focused on this issue.

Question. How do you intend to improve morale across the Embassy and Consulates?

Answer. If confirmed, I will build on the work of my predecessor, along with the rest of the leadership team of the Embassy and Consulates, to be a firm advocate for the welfare, safety and security of all staff members of Mission Turkey, and es-

pecially for the locally employed staff. I will, if confirmed, convey clearly to all members of the Mission Turkey team that the safety and well-being of the staff are my highest priorities.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will immediately assess the situation that prevails across Mission Turkey, review and update the Mission's priorities, strategy, and activities in full alignment with the strategy and priorities of the President and the Secretary of State. As Chief of Mission, I will continually maintain security, morale, well-being, productivity, and effectiveness across all of Mission Turkey -- Embassy and Consulates equally - throughout my tenure.

Question. If confirmed, how will you engage with the Turkish Government to push for significant human rights reforms, including rights for religious minorities and women and girls?

Answer. If confirmed, I will publicly and privately urge the Government of Turkey to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, enable the participation of civil society and independent media, uphold fair trial guarantees, support the empowerment of women and defend the rights of all, including freedom from gender-based violence. If confirmed, I will also host and participate in events that promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is in the U.S. national interest for Turkey to be a stable, democratic, prosperous, and reliable Ally and partner. Although Turkey has withdrawn from the Istanbul Convention on the prevention of violence against women, I will urge them to honor their commitments made in that treaty. If confirmed, I will work with Turkey on areas of mutual concern, reinforce the importance of democracy and human rights to our bilateral relationship, and urge the Government to make the necessary reforms to reverse democratic backsliding.

Question. In the 2021 State Department Human Rights Report, Turkish authorities were described as using "antiterror laws broadly against opposition political party members, human rights activists, media outlets, suspected PKK sympathizers, and alleged Gulen movement members or groups affiliated with the Gulen movement, among others, including to seize assets of companies, charities, or businesses."

- Please describe your engagements, if confirmed, to address these egregious human rights concerns in Turkey?

Answer. The July 2016 coup attempt was a deeply traumatic event for Turkey. I understand and appreciate the Government of Turkey's need to bring the alleged perpetrators of the 2016 coup attempt to justice, but the quality and impartiality of justice matters. Strong judicial independence and respect for the rule of law must accompany any investigation, legal process, or detention to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will urge Turkey to revise its antiterrorism laws in line with the recommendations outlined by the United States during Turkey's 2020 Universal Periodic Review and in accordance with international standards. Strong democratic institutions and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms would expand our potential for partnership in Turkey and around the world.

Question. If confirmed, what steps can the United States Government take to hold Turkey accountable for their excessive numbers of unlawfully held detainees?

Answer. If confirmed, I will call for the immediate release of all those incarcerated based on limited or dubious evidence or on a seemingly arbitrary basis, such as in connection with exercising their fundamental freedoms. Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtas are two such cases. I will also urge the Turkish Government to reduce pre-trial detention lengths and revise their antiterrorism laws to meet international standards. Prosecutions must be based on evidence, respect the rule of law, and be consistent with Turkey's domestic and international commitments and obligations to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Question. Open source reporting has indicated Turkey is abusing the INTERPOL red notice system to target individuals who dare to criticize or belong to a movement the Government does not agree with. Turkey's abuse of an international organization to subvert fundamental human rights cannot stand. What actions will you take, if confirmed, to demonstrate this practice is not tolerated?

Answer. I understand and appreciate the Government of Turkey's need to bring the alleged perpetrators of the 2016 coup attempt to justice, but the quality and impartiality of justice matters. If confirmed, I will urge Turkey to conduct any investigation, legal process, or extradition against individuals alleged to be involved in

this crime, or any other, in a manner that respects human rights, due process, and the rule of law.

Prosecutions and extraditions must be based on evidence, respect the rule of law, and be consistent with Turkey's domestic and international obligations to human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will also urge third-country partners to resist pressure and follow due process standards in cases where Turkey seeks politically motivated deportations, removals, or expulsions that may violate international norms or agreements.

Question. According to the 2021 State Department International Religious Freedom Report and Human Rights Report, Turkey has very little tolerance for religious freedom, a fundamental human right. How will you continue to bolster religious freedom in country and work with civil society to increase understanding?

Answer. I understand the Turkish Government maintains several restrictions on the exercise of freedom of religion or belief of concern to the United States. These include limitations on the rights of members of religious minority groups.

If confirmed, I will publicly and privately urge the Government of Turkey to respect freedom of religion or belief and the rights of members of religious minority groups. I will also advocate for issues of top importance to religious minority leaders, such as free and fair religious foundation board elections and the reopening of the Greek Orthodox Halki Seminary.

Question. Internet freedom, or the ability to use the internet without state-sponsored censorship, is limited in Turkey. What can you do, if confirmed, to support this crucial tool for civil society?

Answer. I also have concerns about the Government of Turkey's use of censorship and overly broad terrorism and insult laws to silence critical voices. The Turkish Government's efforts to restrict freedom of expression online, including on social media, run counter to democratic values.

If confirmed, I will convey my firm belief that freedom of expression - including online - strengthens democracy and needs to be protected. I will also urge the Government to revise existing laws to meet international standards, ensure appropriate judicial oversight on media or online regulations, and to refrain from passing new laws that further restrict the freedom of expression online.

Question. President Erodgan's involvement in the Cyprus issue is increasingly concerning. If confirmed, what actions will you take to promote peace and potential reunification between the Republic of Cyprus and the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus?"

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to make clear to Turkey and Turkish Cypriots the U.S. position in support of a Cypriot-led comprehensive settlement to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicomunal federation consistent with U.N. Security Council resolutions to benefit all Cypriots and the wider region. Calls for a two-state solution are unhelpful and will not find an audience in the international community. We appreciate the U.N. Secretary-General's efforts to facilitate the relaunch of political discussions. The status quo is unacceptable, and we hope both sides will engage with the U.N. Secretary-General and his team with openness, flexibility, and compromise to find common ground to restart formal talks. Ultimately though, the responsibility for finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves.

Question. Turkey jails more journalists than any other country on earth. If confirmed, what steps will you take to advocate for freedom of the press in country?

Answer. I understand Turkey remains second only to China in numbers of incarcerated journalists, and uses censorship, insult, and antiterror laws widely to silence critical voices. If confirmed, I will make clear to the Turkish Government the integral role a free and independent press plays in any democracy. I will urge the Government of Turkey to revise laws or regulations that restrict media freedom and urge that they refrain from passing additional, restrictive laws. I will also engage with Government of Turkey interlocutors to encourage the release of all media workers incarcerated in connection with exercising their fundamental freedoms. I will also engage with media workers and civil society in Turkey to listen to and elevate their concerns on media freedom.

Question. If confirmed, will you work with the Turkish Government to end the practice of forcible repatriation of Uyghurs to China?

Answer. President Erdogan referred to the PRC repression targeting Uyghurs in Xinjiang in 2009 as a genocide. I understand that Turkey currently hosts between 30,000-60,000 Uyghurs. Turkey has welcomed Uyghurs for more than two decades

under a variety of visa and immigration statuses. If confirmed, I will continue the administration's efforts to meet regularly with the Turkish Government to discuss Turkey's continued support for Uyghurs in the face of PRC pressure.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. In April of this year, President Biden formally recognized the Armenian genocide, something that I, and others, welcomed as it has been an overdue action that I have advocated for years for. However, more work needs to be done. We should continue to press countries that still deny this genocide, like Turkey and Azerbaijan, to end their denials and take the steps necessary to accept responsibility for this crime.

- In your opinion, do you recognize the Ottoman Empire's actions against the Armenians in 1915 as a genocide?

Answer. Yes. President Biden's statement for Remembrance Day this year noted that the United States mourns the one and a half million Armenians who were victims of the Armenian genocide during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. We welcome efforts by Armenians and Turks to acknowledge and reckon with this painful part of their histories, which is a critical step towards building a foundation for a more just and tolerant future.

Question. If confirmed, what actions will you take to press the Turkish Government, and others, to stop denying the Armenian genocide?

Answer. If confirmed, I will implement the administration's policy, honoring the victims of the Armenian genocide and encouraging Turkey to acknowledge and reckon with this painful part of its history.

Question. Turkey has been a NATO member since 1952. However, under President Erdogan, Turkey has not lived up to the values of the NATO Alliance. Its dismal human rights record, purchase of the Russian S-400 missile system despite U.S. objections, and its aggression towards other U.S. allies, like Cyprus, Greece and Israel suggest that Turkey is more of an adversary than a partner to the United States.

- Do you believe that Turkey may be more of an adversary?

Answer. Turkey is a NATO Ally with whom we have many common interests, as well as profound disagreements. If confirmed, I will work with you to encourage and, if necessary, pressure Turkey to take actions in line with U.S. interests in the region and its responsibilities as a NATO Ally. If confirmed, I will continue to collaborate with Turkey in areas of common interest including in Central Asia, Syria, the Black Sea, and others. Working with Turkey to address some of its legitimate security concerns will assist us in that effort. I will also speak clearly and frankly when Turkey's actions or words run counter to our interests.

Question. What is your opinion of the state of democracy in Turkey?

Answer. Turkey is a key NATO Ally and critical regional partner, and the United States is committed to improving the relationship between our two countries. It is in our interest to keep Turkey anchored to the Euro-Atlantic community. We work together closely to confront the serious challenges that face both of our countries. While we may have differences of opinion on some topics, I want our Turkish partners to understand that U.S. concerns come from an Ally and friend that seeks to preserve and deepen our relationship in every dimension.

The United States continues to emphasize the importance of the Turkish Government's adherence to policies and actions that build public trust in the country's democratic institutions and the rule of law, as well as upholding human rights commitments. If confirmed, I will publicly and privately urge the Government of Turkey to make meaningful reforms that ensure human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those of speech and assembly, are guaranteed in accordance with Turkey's own constitution. I will urge the U.N. to restore judicial independence, uphold fair trial guarantees, respect the rule of law, and enable civil society and independent media to function freely.

Question. If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to improve Turkey's interactions with other NATO members?

Answer. Turkey's relations with NATO member countries run the gamut between close cooperation to outright antagonism. As the second largest military in NATO,

host of the NATO Land Component Command, and a regular contributor of forces to NATO regional missions, Turkey plays a major role in keeping NATO's collective defense credible. If confirmed, I will encourage additional Turkey-NATO collaboration in areas of common interest, including in Central Asia, Syria, and the Black Sea. I will also speak clearly and frankly when Turkey's actions or words run counter to NATO's interests and work with my fellow Ambassadors in other NATO member countries to do so.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. JEFFRY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

Question. Last year, a Turkish court sentenced several locally-employed staff of our diplomatic mission to Turkey to lengthy prison sentences for allegedly supporting groups opposed to the Erdogan Government. If confirmed, what will be your strategy for supporting these individuals, including seeking their prompt release and supporting their family?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the ongoing legal proceedings and controls targeting U.S. locally employed staff in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties on behalf of our Government. If confirmed, I will support and defend our locally employed staff. In my understanding that the U.S. Government remains deeply concerned by the prosecutions and detentions and follows their cases closely. If confirmed, I will work to ensure all judicial processes, including movement restrictions, are lifted for Metin Topuz, Mete Canturk, and Hamza Ulucay. It is my understanding that the United States Government continues to consult with our locally employed staff and their families and to advocate with the highest levels of Turkish officials for their immediate release from all judicial processes.

Question. How will you ensure that Turkish nationals who directly assist our diplomats are off-limits to the Government's own brand of justice?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the ongoing prosecution, imprisonment, or legal controls targeting U.S. locally employed staff—Metin Topuz, Mete Canturk, and Hamza Ulucay—in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties. It is my understanding that the U.S. Government remains deeply concerned by the prosecutions and detentions and follows their cases closely. If confirmed, I will advocate with the highest levels of Turkish officials for the immediate cessation of all judicial processes and restrictions targeting our locally employed staff. The safety and security of all employees of U.S. Embassy Ankara and our consulates in Istanbul and Adana will be my highest priority, if confirmed.

Question. Erdogan has made the production, use, and export of highly capable combat drones a pillar of his country's defense industry and security partnerships throughout not just the region, but the world. The Turkish military has utilized and advised on the use of drones in Iraq and against Nagorno-Karabakh, in many cases drawing no separation between legitimate military targets and civilians. If confirmed what steps should we take to rein in this behavior?

Answer. Turkey is one of the top producers and exporters of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in the world. As Turkey is a relatively cost-effective supplier of advanced drone technology, NATO Allies such as Poland and partners such as Ukraine have sought to purchase Turkish UAVs. Turkey has sold UAVs to countries with whom we would not share this technology. If confirmed, I will stress the importance of Turkey using its capabilities to bolster NATO efforts and to advance mutual U.S. and Turkish goals.

Question. How does Turkish drone proliferation affect our own security partnerships in the region?

Answer. Turkey is one of the top producers and exporters of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in the world, specializing in the production of cost effective unmanned aerial systems. Turkish UAVs in most cases do not directly compete with more advanced U.S. platforms. Turkey's willingness to sell UAVs to countries with whom we would not share our own technology has at times been problematic for regional security. If confirmed, I will stress the importance of Turkey using its UAV capabilities to bolster NATO efforts and to advance mutual U.S. and Turkish goals. This approach would support our policy of preventing state or non-state actors from gaining capabilities that would undermine the safety and security of the United States and our allies and partners.

Question. What have the intervening two years taught us about both the limits of our diplomacy towards Turkey, but also how we must adapt to secure our national interests?

Answer. Over the past several years, Turkey has pursued a more independent foreign policy that has at times advanced U.S. interests but which in some cases has been unhelpful and destabilizing. If confirmed, I will commit to working with colleagues in the executive branch and Congress to find ways to continue strengthening our longstanding relationship with Turkey, while not shying away from identifying and addressing the areas where we disagree.

Question. How have the past several years instructed your views on the appropriateness of our continued military presence at Incirlik Air Base? Should we refocus that presence elsewhere within NATO?

Answer. Our military presence in Turkey, including at Incirlik Air Base, allows for a better defense of NATO's Southern flank and for supporting United States interests in the region. The United States benefits from our presence at Incirlik, and, if confirmed, I will not seek to relocate or reduce this presence. At the same time, the U.S. should continue to maintain and pursue new security partnerships with our Allies throughout the region.

Question. In his interview with CBS this weekend, President Erdogan noted that his Government's preference would be that the United States withdraws all of our troops from Syria, who are active in our efforts to fully defeat ISIS. Given Turkey's own continued presence in Syria, and especially considering the speed and indiscriminate nature of its invasion in 2019, how do you interpret Erdogan's desire for our withdrawal?

Answer. As I understand, Turkey has long-standing concerns about U.S. cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces, which Ankara views as tied to Kurdistan Workers Party. The United States has an interest in advancing the campaign against ISIS, to include through preserving a limited military presence in northeast Syria. The Syrian Democratic Forces remain a capable and effective partner to U.S. forces on the ground. If confirmed, I will ensure we consult Ankara on Syria policy and seek areas for understanding while also making clear the United States' enduring security interests.

Question. What do you believe is Erdogan's goal for Syria?

Answer. The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syrian civil war. We will continue to consult Ankara on Syria policy and seek areas for cooperation. Turkey is an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. I understand that the administration's view is that stability in Syria, and the greater region, can only be achieved through a political process that represents the will of all Syrians and that the United States is committed to working with allies, partners, and the U.N. to ensure that a durable political solution remains within reach.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Conflict & Food Insecurity

Question. Today, conflict drives the top ten worst food crises in the world. Food insecurity in conflict-affected countries continues to deteriorate, and people there rely more and more on the U.N. food agencies to provide food relief.

- How can the World Food Program improve its work in conflict-affected countries? What should it do to expand the reach of its food assistance?

Answer. Armed conflict is the primary driver of acute food insecurity globally, impacting eight of the ten worst food crises in the world. U.N. Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018) emphasizes the link between armed conflict and food insecurity and lays out clear expectations regarding the need for unfettered and unhindered humanitarian access. If confirmed, I will work to ensure concerted and collective diplomatic pressure to enable humanitarian access in conflict-affected countries.

Question. How can the U.N. food agencies increase the effectiveness of their aid efforts in the face of national government actions that hinder humanitarian access and deliberately perpetuate food insecurity?

Answer. National interference in aid operations and the obstruction of humanitarian access are unacceptable. If confirmed, I will apply strong diplomatic advocacy

on behalf of the Rome-based agencies, including in coordination with like-minded countries, to exert pressure on United Nations Member States denying humanitarian access to their citizens. If confirmed, I will work with our colleagues across the respective U.S. Missions to the United Nations, interagency partners in Washington, and other United Nations Member States to leverage diplomatic engagement and demand full access in conflict-affected and food insecure countries.

Question. How would the principles, priorities and recommended approaches detailed in the Global Food Security Strategy influence your work, if confirmed, at U.N.-FAO?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. engagement continues to be aligned with the principles and priorities outlined in the Global Food Security Strategy. The U.S. commitment to invest \$10 billion domestically and internationally toward transforming food systems to be more effective and inclusive was a first step and clear demonstration of U.S. leadership in accelerating progress toward global food security.

Afghanistan

Question. How can U.S. leadership at the U.N. food agencies promote sustained international engagement in Afghanistan to ensure that millions of people are not pushed to the brink of starvation?

Answer. All three Rome-based food security agencies—FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and WFP—have continued their operations in Afghanistan and are working in at least 28 of the country's 34 provinces. U.S. diplomatic and financial leadership has proven critical to these operations. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to enable the Rome-based agencies to carry out their life-saving work, ensure that aid reaches the most vulnerable, and pursue burden-sharing with allies and partners to ensure sustainability.

Question. You have been a fierce advocate for women and girls throughout your life. If confirmed, how do you plan to advocate for the women and girls who have disproportionately been impacted by pandemic-related food insecurity?

Answer. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically and disproportionately impacted women and girls: the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity is 10 percent higher among women than men, compared with 6 percent in 2019. If confirmed, I will work with FAO, WFP, and the Rome-based International Development Law Organization (IDLO) to ensure implementation of their gender action plans, and the delivery of concrete results that advance gender equality. If confirmed, I will also continue U.S. support for the innovative partnership between FAO and the IDLO focused on ensuring women and girls' access to affordable and nutritious food even as countries adopt emergency measures in response to health crises.

Question. How can FAO facilitate collaboration across U.N. organizations (like the U.N. Environment Program, UNICEF, and U.N. Development Program) to promote adaptation and resilience in developing countries' agricultural and food production sectors?

Answer. FAO's recently approved Strategic Framework (2022–2031) elevates climate change and prioritizes climate action in the food and agriculture sectors, noting in particular the need to increase adaptation activities. The FAO also plays a key role in implementing the One Health approach, which takes as a whole human health, animal health, and environmental health through a formal tripartite agreement between FAO, WHO, and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) with U.N. Environment Program (UNEP) participation. FAO, WFP, and IFAD conduct regular Rome-based agency coordination on climate change and other topics. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that FAO works with WFP, IFAD, and other U.N. agencies to match science and evidence-based solutions to national development plans, as part of the follow-up to the U.N. Food Systems Summit held on September 23.

Question. What role should FAO have in assisting member nations in developing their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)?

Answer. As the lead U.N. agency for agriculture, FAO provides expert guidance to countries on the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors in their NAPs. Through targeted guidelines, FAO plays a pivotal role in assisting members in reducing vulnerability of the agriculture sectors to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacities and resilience, addressing agriculture in the formulation and implementation of NAPs, and enhancing the integration of adaptation in agricultural development policies, programs and plans. If confirmed, I will work to

ensure that FAO continues to integrate climate change adaptation into all of its programs and provides better climate-adaptation evaluations and data.

U.S. Leadership & Donor Engagement: Donor investments to U.N. food agencies increased in 2020, but the increase did not match the surge in global food needs, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Up to 161 million more people faced hunger in 2020 compared to 2019. As you know, humanitarian appeals, including those focused on food assistance, often remain grossly underfunded. The United States is the largest financial contributor to the U.N. food agencies.

Question. How much funding do you think the United States should provide to the U.N. food agencies in Rome?

Answer. The United States is the largest single financial contributor to the Rome-based agencies, and our generosity to this partnership has saved millions of lives. With the generous bipartisan support of the Congress, U.S. financial contributions have remained relatively steady over the last few years. The United States needs to continue to press others to do their share in shouldering their financial obligations to support these agencies. If confirmed, I will continue to press other countries and stakeholders for an equitable division of funding responsibility and burden sharing to fulfil humanitarian and development needs.

Question. If confirmed, you will help lead donor engagement. In what ways can the agencies improve their outreach efforts given that current engagement has not resulted in adequate fundraising?

Answer. It is critically important that other countries and non-state actors step up to match the incredible generosity of the American people. Humanitarian needs are increasing globally, and they will continue to rise if we continue to see growing conflicts, pandemics, and climate shocks. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Rome-based agencies apply a focused and coordinated approach towards resource mobilization and financing throughout each organization. If confirmed, I will also press the agencies to identify new sources of revenue and will urge other donor countries to maintain or increase their contributions in the face of increasing needs.

Climate

Question. In 2010, FAO launched climate-smart agriculture designed to help develop technical, policy, and investment conditions to achieve sustainable and secure agriculture development under climate change.

- Should the United States increase its technical and financial contributions to support this initiative?

Answer. The FAO's Climate Smart Agriculture initiative is an important part of the U.N.'s commitment to address climate change, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the FAO to ensure that the initiative advances our climate change goals. Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that U.S. leadership, led by the Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Partnership Initiative recently announced by Secretary Vilsack, will guide FAO's work in this initiative.

Agriculture

Question. Agriculture, including forestry, fisheries, and livestock production, generate around a fifth of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. The Mitigation of Climate Change in Agriculture (MICCA) program generates technical knowledge, working on the ground to monitor, assess, and implement mitigation strategies.

- How can this program be strengthened?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that farmers have access to available tools and scientific advancements, especially new technologies for sustainable, climate-smart agriculture. In particular, USDA's new Climate-Smart Agriculture Partnership Initiative can provide guidance to the Rome-based agencies to enhance and create new markets and streams of income for farmers while strengthening rural economies and improving tracking and monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration.

Question. How should FAO engage to address global agriculture's contribution to the climate crisis (i.e., reducing agriculture's carbon footprint and increasing the capacity of Agricultural activities to capture carbon) and prioritize climate mitigation?

Answer. FAO has a key role in ensuring the development of agri-food systems that produce more food with more socio-economic benefits, but less impact on the environment and natural resources. If confirmed, I will ensure FAO continues to support countries to enhance capacities to implement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change

through evidence-based programs and projects related to the agriculture, land, water, and food sectors.

Question. How should FAO approach aquatic resource protection and better integrate marine-based foods (seafood) into its programming?

Answer. Seafood from fisheries and aquaculture are a vital source of food and nutrition in the diets of many around the world—supplying both critical protein and high-quality nutrition to billions—and they are crucial components in sustainable development and developing climate-resilient food systems. If confirmed, I will strongly support efforts by the FAO to recognize the unique role of fisheries and aquaculture in the global food system and promote actions to protect the important contributions of fisheries and aquaculture to global food security.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Humanitarian Assistance

Question. Long-established humanitarian principles suggest that food aid should be “agnostic,” meaning that it should be targeted toward those with the greatest need regardless of their affiliation. Unfortunately, there is also a long history of food aid being used by malign actors as a weapon against those it is meant to help.

- If confirmed, are you prepared to halt aid deliveries to areas where it is being manipulated by malign actors?

Answer. The World Food Program has significant experience programming humanitarian assistance in conflict settings and continues to strengthen its systems of oversight to ensure that assistance is not misused. With U.S. support, the World Food Program (WFP) has developed robust systems for beneficiary identification and risk mitigation and has stopped distributions in Yemen, Syria, and elsewhere when it determined food risked being stolen or diverted. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that assistance is delivered to those who most need it and is not manipulated by malign actors.

The World Food Program takes a blended approach in its food aid programs: it provides commodities in areas where food is scarce and market-based assistance (electronic transfers, vouchers, etc.) where food is available but inaccessible. When providing commodities, the agency often has to provide “blanket” feeding. When providing market-based assistance, there is room to target assistance more deliberately. There are benefits and risks associated with each of these approaches. If confirmed, it will be your job to find ways to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks associated with each of these approaches, so that the WFP can reach the right people with the right support in the right place at the right time.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to advocating for the use of biometrics within the World Food Program and across other U.N. agencies, particularly when providing market-based assistance, in order to more effectively target assistance, verify beneficiaries, and eliminate duplication and waste?

Answer. If confirmed, I will advocate for the implementation of effective and context appropriate accountability and monitoring mechanisms, in addition to coordinated needs assessments, to ensure that food assistance reaches the people who need it most. Biometrics is an appropriate accountability tool in contexts with the requisite technology, and if confirmed, I will support the implementation of the most effective accountability tools.

Question. Beyond biometrics, are there other ways in which you would seek to enhance the WFP’s efficiency and effectiveness, so we can stretch U.S. food aid dollars farther and save more lives?

Answer. The U.S. Government and WFP work closely together to refine methods for beneficiary targeting and identification, to seek efficiencies in the transport and delivery of food, and to monitor and evaluate programs to improve impact and minimize opportunities for waste, fraud, abuse or diversion. The United States has partnered with WFP to advance technical solutions and innovations, in order to ensure more efficient delivery of assistance. If confirmed, I will take an active interest in further enhancing our collaboration to ensure the most efficient use of taxpayer funds to reach the largest possible number of people in need.

Balanced Assistance

Question. The United States works both bilaterally and through multilateral institutions - including the United Nations food and agriculture agencies in Rome—to ameliorate humanitarian conditions, promote food security, and catalyze agriculture-led economic growth in developing countries.

- In your view, what is the appropriate balance between U.S. bilateral and multilateral assistance for food aid and food security?

Answer. Given the growing complexity and number of global humanitarian crises, the flexibility to use the right tool in each intervention and to work with a range of implementing partners is critical. The U.S. Government relies on U.N. partners, including the U.N. World Food Program and the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, as well as a number of NGO partners to implement food and nutrition programs around the globe. Each crisis calls for a unique blend of partners and assistance modalities to ensure that beneficiaries are reached with the right assistance. Both bilateral and multilateral assistance is critically important, and the appropriate balance varies across countries and contexts. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that we utilize appropriate, accountable, and cost-effective humanitarian assistance mechanisms to meet food security needs.

Question. Are there instances when U.S. bilateral assistance might be more appropriate than assistance delivered through the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture?

Answer. The United States provides robust bilateral and multilateral assistance through USAID. USAID works with a range of implementing partners, including U.N. agencies and NGO partners, to carry out its mission of saving lives and reducing food insecurity. If confirmed, I am committed to evaluating and supporting effective, efficient, and accountable delivery of food assistance through the most appropriate means, whether bilateral or as delivered through the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture.

Question. What role could or should the private sector play in promoting food security and catalyzing agriculture-led economic growth?

Answer. Improving U.N. food security agencies' agility in terms of creative and innovative partnerships, including with the private sector, has been a long-term U.S. policy priority. The United States consistently emphasizes the need to integrate private sector views, expertise, and resources during the U.N. Food Systems Summit planning process. This includes the need to account for the aspirations and daily concerns of farmers themselves. If confirmed, I will not support the private sector as an indispensable part of the solution to today's challenges and will its critical role in advancing food security and agriculture-led economic growth.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to advancing science-based approaches to promoting food insecurity at the Food and Agriculture Organization, including through the use of innovative agricultural technologies?

Answer. Advancing science-based approaches is at the core of this administration's policies on addressing food insecurity. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture and other United Nations Member States to press for science-based decision making and greater acceptance of biotechnology.
