

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., via Video-conference, Hon. Brian Schatz presiding.

Present: Senators Schatz [presiding], Cardin, Murphy, Booker, Van Hollen, and Hagerty.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN SCHATZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII

Senator SCHATZ. Good morning. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here to consider four important nominees—Ambassador Laura Holgate to be the U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the U.N. and the U.S. Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency; Caryn McClelland to be the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam; David Young to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi; and Claire Pierangelo to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros.

Congratulations to the four of you on your nominations. Our thanks for your willingness to serve and to the members of your families because this is a family sacrifice as well.

I understand that our distinguished former colleague Senator Nunn is here to introduce Ambassador Holgate this morning. So we will turn to him first before any opening statements.

Senator Nunn?

STATEMENT OF HON. SAM NUNN, FORMER U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Senator NUNN. Thank you very much, Chairman Schatz. Can you hear me okay? I am not—

Senator SCHATZ. We can hear you fine.

Senator NUNN. Great. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, Senator Cardin, and others on the Foreign Relations Committee.

I am honored to present Laura Holgate to this committee, and I strongly recommend that she be confirmed as our Nation's Ambassador to the Vienna Office of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Chairman, our Nation is fortunate to have a nominee with the experience, the knowledge, and the diplomatic skills that Laura would bring to this important role if confirmed by the Senate.

Laura has served more than 30 years in critical national security positions, both inside and outside government. She has broad experience. She has skilled leadership. Laura has sound judgment, and she has an international reputation as a very capable diplomat and persuasive advocate of U.S. priorities.

She also brings a background and spirit of nonpartisanship. I know that firsthand, Mr. Chairman, because I have worked closely with her, and she has worked so closely with Senators and staff over the years.

So, Mr. Chairman and Senator Hagerty, I have known Laura for almost all of her professional career. She was part of the Ash Carter Harvard University team that worked closely with my partner Senator Dick Lugar and with me to persuade Congress to create what became known as the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program.

Laura later led this program at the Pentagon and was part of the team that achieved one of the most significant global security steps of our era—Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine getting rid of all of their nuclear weapons and joining the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. So Laura has been at the forefront of policy innovation as well as implementation to reduce nuclear, biological, and chemical threats for really her entire career.

When the Nuclear Threat Initiative was created in the year 2001 by Ted Turner and by me, I knew Laura was one of the most capable people that we could ever find. So I persuaded her to become one of the first employees of NTI. Laura's strong relationships with colleagues in the U.S. departments and agencies on Capitol Hill and really around the world helped her work with others to improve nuclear security and keep weapons and weapons-usable material, most important, out of the hands of terrorists globally.

At NTI, Laura led a number of international threat reduction projects that helped make the world safer, and I am just going to mention a couple. In 2001, she directed NTI's important role in the removal of two bombs' worth of highly enriched uranium from a poorly secured facility in Serbia. This project, led by the U.S. Government with cooperation from Serbia, Russia, and the IAEA, laid the foundation for the U.S. Government's program known as the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

Most recently, she helped produce our NTI's Nuclear Security Index, which is recognized globally, I believe, as the premier open source resource and tool for tracking and improving the security of some of the deadliest materials in the world.

Importantly, Mr. Chairman and Senator Hagerty, Laura has continued her lifelong commitment to broadening the number of talented women in the nuclear security field, enhancing our national and our global security. Laura knows that giving women a fair shake strengthens our national security and also strengthens our Nation.

Laura served from 2009 to 2016 at the National Security Council, where she exhibited strong leadership in coordinating U.S. Government efforts to reduce weapon of mass destruction threats and prevent catastrophic terrorism. In particular, she led preparations for the four nuclear security summits under President Obama,

which made significant progress in securing nuclear materials globally.

We do not get much encouraging news, but Mr. Chairman, over the last 20 or so years under both parties, both Presidents, Republicans and Democrats, we have moved from 50 nations with nuclear material known as highly enriched uranium to 23 nations. Still a lot of challenges, but Laura has played a huge role in all of that.

In conclusion, Chairman Schatz and Senator Hagerty and members of the committee, I am confident that Laura is fully prepared to serve in this critical role. I strongly support her nomination by President Biden, and I urge the committee's support. And of course, I urge strongly her confirmation by the full Senate.

So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Senator Nunn, and thank you for your public service and leadership over many, many years.

We will now turn to my opening remarks, followed by Senator Hagerty.

Ambassador Holgate previously served as the U.S. Representative to the IAEA and Vienna Office of the U.N. in 2016. She also served as Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction, Terrorism, and Threat Reduction on the NSC, where she led the preparation of four nuclear security summits. The IAEA is facing a number of challenges to one of its core missions, ensuring that states comply with their nonproliferation treaty commitments to maintain only peaceful nuclear programs.

Iran is currently blocking IAEA access to many of its nuclear facilities, and North Korea moves ahead with its nuclear capabilities. Ambassador Holgate brings a wealth of experience to this important role, and we look forward to hearing about how she plans to engage the IAEA on nonproliferation matters and the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology to solve today's challenges, including climate change.

Pleased to see Caryn McClelland, a career Foreign Service officer, nominated as our next Ambassador to Brunei. In her distinguished career at State, she has served in senior-level positions in the Indo-Pacific and Europe as well as on oceans and international environmental issues and commercial and business affairs, all of which position her well for this assignment.

In particular, her background working energy issues, as we seek to work with Brunei to transition its economy to a zero-carbon future, is invaluable. I look forward to hearing her thoughts on that issue today.

I am also interested in her views on Brunei's approach to trafficking in persons and LGBTQ issues under Sharia law, issues this committee continues to monitor closely.

Next, we have David Young. David Young is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. He currently serves as the charge d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Lusaka, Zambia, and previously served as the charge d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa, and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria. His extensive experience in Southern Africa will serve him well if confirmed as our next Ambassador to Malawi.

At a time when many African countries are experiencing democratic backsliding, Malawi stands out as having achieved a democratic transition, thanks to the vigilance of its citizens and the independence of its institutions. Still, Malawi faces serious challenges, including widespread poverty, corruption, and the threat of climate change and natural disasters, such as Cyclone Idai in 2019.

And despite meeting its goals to control HIV/AIDS, Malawi still has one of the world's 10 highest HIV prevalence rates. I look forward to hearing how, with sufficient engagement and assistance, the United States can help Malawi turn its recent democratic success into long-term stability and prosperity.

Lastly, Claire Pierangelo is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. She currently serves as Principal Officer at the Consulate General in Lagos, Nigeria. Madagascar is facing difficult circumstances, and our Embassy urgently needs an experienced diplomat like Claire Pierangelo. High-stakes competition between political elites has dangerously destabilized Madagascar, with alleged coup and assassination plots pushing the country to the brink of a political crisis.

Even more alarming is Madagascar's vulnerability to climate change. Southern Madagascar is on the edge of a deadly famine, one of the first to be caused by climate change rather than man-made conflict, according to the U.N.

The Union of the Comoros, where Ms. Pierangelo would also represent the United States, if confirmed, faces governance challenges such as corruption and authoritarianism. It is becoming vulnerable to climate change, which is spurring irregular migration and affecting access to food and to water. I hope to hear how the United States can help these two countries to confront these challenges.

So while the four of you have a number of challenges ahead, I am confident that your knowledge and experience will serve you well as you take them upon confirmation.

I now turn to the ranking member, Senator Hagerty, for his opening comments.

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

Senator HAGERTY. It is an honor to be with both of you. Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank the nominees for being here today. As you said, it is a great commitment, and it is a family commitment, and I appreciate and congratulate all of you for your nomination.

I would like to start with the nominee for Representative of the United States to the International Energy Agency. This position has a unique responsibility in advancing the security of the United States by promoting the safe, secure, and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

I would like to share just a little bit of my own background from this perspective. Not long after my arrival in Tokyo as the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, North Korea tested a thermonuclear weapon, highlighting for me the continued challenges and threats that we face from nuclear proliferation around the world.

The United States and our allies need to work very closely together on this, and I look forward to hearing from the nominee

about how best to prevent states from diverting their civil nuclear energy programs to military purposes as we approach the 21st century.

Next, I would like to turn to the nomination to be the Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. The United States and Brunei work closely together on a bilateral and regional agenda to tackle some of the most pressing issues, particularly in light of Brunei's role in ASEAN. I look forward to hearing from Caryn on ways to advance the U.S.-Brunei relationship. I have had the opportunity to work with Caryn in the past. I look forward to hearing from her today.

I would also like to turn to the nominee to be Ambassador to Malawi. The United States continues to partner with Malawi in order to advance accountable democratic governance, to foster private sector growth, and to advance health, education, energy, and environmental sectors in Malawi. I am interested in hearing from the nominee on these subjects when we get to them.

Last, I would like to focus on the nominee to be the Ambassador to Madagascar. And as Madagascar continues to play—transition toward a free democracy, the United States will play a critical role as one of the largest providers of assistance to Madagascar. I look forward to hearing from our nominee about ways to bolster the partnership between the United States and Madagascar.

Mr. Chairman, I yield my time back to you. Thank you.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Senator Hagerty.

All of our nominees will be provided an opportunity to give their testimony. We asked them to be as brief as possible. We are about to enter into a series of five votes to keep the Government open. So that if we can do this expeditiously, we will not have to hand the gavel back and forth.

So we will start our testimony from our nominees. We ask you to summarize your statement in 5 minutes or even less. All of your full statements will be included in the record without objection, and we will proceed in the order that you appear on the hearing notice, beginning with Ambassador Holgate.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE OF VIRGINIA,
NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC EN-
ERGY AGENCY, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, AND TO
BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH
THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Ambassador HOLGATE. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today to serve—as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and other international organizations in Vienna.

I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence that they have placed in me, and I am especially grateful to Senator Nunn for his mentorship over the years and for his generous remarks this morning.

This is a critical moment for the United States' interests in the IAEA and other U.N. offices in Vienna. Iran, nuclear energy, space,

cyber crime, climate change, the opioid epidemic—none of these challenges can be adequately met by the United States acting alone. We helped create the U.N. system to align the interests and combine the strengths of multiple nations to address global challenges, and I firmly believe that these institutions are more necessary today than ever.

My experience inside and outside the United States Government has prepared me to play this vital role in Vienna. If I am confirmed in this position, I pledge to strengthen and broaden the partnerships with other member states and with the Vienna-based U.N. agencies and further develop the coalitions that we need to achieve U.S. priorities.

Key among these goals is to work to make sure the IAEA has the mandate and the capacity to address evolving challenges and the greater demands being placed upon it. The IAEA must have the technical, human, and financial resources it needs to implement global safeguards, including in critical areas such as Iran and to be prepared to return to North Korea should a monitoring agreement be reached there.

The IAEA's Directorates of Nuclear Energy, Safety and Security, and Safeguards must work better together to guide and monitor the safe and secure expansion of next-generation nuclear energy in a way that helps address climate change without increasing nuclear risk.

If confirmed, I will press international organizations in Vienna to continue to make progress on management reforms, transparency, and accountability. I will encourage intensified efforts towards achieving greater gender and regional diversity and greater representation of U.S. citizens, especially at senior and policymaking levels. And I will revitalize the International Gender Champions chapter, which I helped found during my previous appointment.

The achievement of these and other U.S. priorities will face the growing influence of Russia and China in multilateral organizations, and I believe the U.S. must be even more present, active, and visible at these fora. And if confirmed, I will strengthen the essential relationships with traditional diplomatic partners and work hard to build new connections with countries who are eager to see U.S. leadership on the issues they care about.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to return to the post I held so briefly and optimistic about the opportunities to re-engage the diplomatic and U.N. community, many of whom I know well. I am grateful to this committee for its attention and to my family, friends, and colleagues observing these proceedings online for their love, support, and inspiration as I pursue a return to public service.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Holgate follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee: I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (U.N.), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other International Organizations in Vienna. I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

This is a critical moment for the United States' interests in the IAEA and the other U.N. offices in Vienna. Establishing confidence that Iran's nuclear activities are solely peaceful and remain so, strengthening the global nuclear architecture that promotes security of nuclear materials and facilities, supporting the safe and secure expansion of nuclear energy and other peaceful nuclear technologies, promoting effective efforts to combat transnational crime and corruption, and supporting innovative peaceful applications of space science demand active, focused leadership and engagement by the United States to promote our national interests and advance our contributions towards shared global priorities. Indeed, none of these challenges can be adequately met by the United States acting alone—we helped create the U.N. system to align the interests and combine the strengths of multiple nations to address global challenges, and I firmly believe that these institutions are more necessary today than ever.

My experience inside and outside the United States Government has prepared me to play this vital role in Vienna. I have focused on reducing nuclear, biological, and chemical threats since 1989, when I wrote my MIT masters thesis on chemical weapons destruction. From the Pentagon to the Energy Department to the White House, and—briefly—in Vienna, I have spent over 15 years designing, leading, and coordinating federal programs to reduce and eliminate nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In my 12 years at the nongovernment Nuclear Threat Initiative, I have developed and piloted creative solutions to nuclear challenges, many of which have been adopted by the United States and the IAEA.

Mr. Chairman, it was my distinct honor to have been supported by this committee and confirmed by the Senate in 2016 to the position for which I am now again being considered, and I served for six months in that role, leading UNVIE's talented team of Foreign Service Officers, locally engaged staff, and civil servants from multiple U.S. agencies.

If I am confirmed in this position, I pledge to strengthen and broaden the partnerships with other member states and with the Vienna-based U.N. agencies, and further develop the coalitions that we need to achieve U.S. priorities. Key among these goals is to work to make sure the IAEA has the mandate and the capacity to address evolving challenges and the greater demands being placed on it. The IAEA must have the technical, human, and financial resources it needs to implement global safeguards, including in critical areas such as Iran, and to be prepared to return to North Korea, should a monitoring agreement be reached there. The IAEA's Directorates of Nuclear Energy, Safety and Security, and Safeguards must work better together to guide and monitor the safe and secure expansion of next-generation nuclear energy in a way that helps address climate change without increasing nuclear risks. The IAEA's Directorates of Technical Cooperation and Nuclear Sciences and Applications must strengthen initiatives to safely and securely provide the benefits of nuclear technology to all, including innovations to speed the diagnosis of pandemic health threats.

If confirmed, I will press international organizations in Vienna to continue to make progress in management reforms, transparency, and accountability. I will encourage intensified efforts toward achieving greater gender and regional diversity, especially at the senior and policy-making levels, and revitalize the International Gender Champions chapter, which I helped found during my previous appointment.

The achievement of these and other U.S. priorities will face the growing influence of Russia and China in multilateral organizations. I believe the U.S. must be even more present, active, and visible in these fora and if confirmed, I will strengthen the essential relationships with traditional diplomatic partners and work hard to build new connections with countries who are eager to see U.S. leadership on issues they care about.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to return to the post I held so briefly, and optimistic about the opportunities to reengage the diplomatic and U.N. community, many of whom I know well. I am grateful to this committee for its attention, and to my family, friends, and colleagues observing these proceedings on-line for their love, support, and inspiration as I pursue a return to public service.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.
Ms. McClelland?

**STATEMENT OF CARYN R. MCCLELLAND OF CALIFORNIA, A
CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE,
CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AM-
BASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Thank you very much.

Chairman Schatz, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to be here today before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee to advance U.S. interests in Brunei.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues whose support and guidance has been critical throughout my career. Most importantly, I want to recognize my daughter, Marlowe, who has shared this adventure with me for the last 13 years, and my parents, Robert and Catherine. Without their constant love, support, and encouragement, I would not be here today.

The U.S.-Brunei relationship has flourished over the years as we continuously work together to promote a more stable, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. We have enjoyed more than 170 years of close cooperation since our countries signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation in 1850. The United States was also among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Brunei after it became fully independent from the United Kingdom in 1984.

Our partnership with Brunei and our support for ASEAN centrality remain a cornerstone of our Indo-Pacific policy. The United States works closely with Brunei, especially during its role as the ASEAN chair in 2021. Brunei's time leading ASEAN coincided with the two most acute challenges to face ASEAN since its inception, the coup d'état in Burma and COVID-19.

Brunei has been a steady and constructive partner on both issues. Our shared commitment to addressing some of the region's most pressing challenges will continue to yield cooperation, including on pandemic response, confronting the climate crisis, and resolving the conflict brought on by the coup and violence in Burma.

The robust security, economic, and people-to-people ties between our two countries are at the core of our relationship with Brunei. Our defense relationship is described in our Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation, and our military-to-military ties have become a cornerstone of the U.S.-Brunei bilateral relationship.

Prior to the pandemic, Brunei conveyed a strong desire to increase participation in military exercise and engagements with the United States, particularly with respect to enhancing maritime domain awareness. While many in-person defense exchanges have either been postponed or canceled due to the COVID-19 restrictions, Brunei remains committed to our defense partnership, as witnessed by its recent purchase of U.S.-origin defense equipment and its continued participation in our bilateral maritime exercises.

We have a shared interest in maintaining peace and stability, unimpeded lawful commerce, and respect for international law, including freedoms of navigation and overflight and other lawful ac-

tivities in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to strengthen our partnership in these areas with the Bruneian government and work with Brunei to uphold the rules-based international order that has underpinned the region's security and prosperity.

We have also fostered a positive economic relationship with Brunei and enjoy a robust trade in goods such as aircraft, machinery, technology, iron, steel, and others. U.S. goods and services trade with Brunei totaled an estimated \$262 million in 2020.

We have frequently worked with Brunei and other regional economies to lower barriers to trade and investment across the Indo-Pacific region, leveling the playing field for U.S. companies and supporting job growth at home. If confirmed, I hope to further expand our bilateral trade relationship and advance an economic agenda that promotes shared prosperity, leverages economic potential, and builds inclusive and resilient economies, especially as the entire region works toward pandemic recovery.

If there is one thing the past year and a half has taught us, it is the true value of personal relationships. Our cultural, educational, and people-to-people ties with Brunei are critically important to advance both mutual understanding between our nations and our bilateral relationship. In a country with limited exposure to the United States, engaging the next generation of Bruneian leaders and change-makers is vital.

Prior to the pandemic, approximately 50 Bruneians participated annually in U.S.-sponsored exchange programs, including the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, the International Visitor Leaders Program, and Fulbright Program, and other professional and academic exchanges. The U.S. Embassy in Brunei also maintains a robust network of more than 300 alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs and works regularly with Bruneian civil society to collaborate on addressing issues of mutual concern, such as empowering women, promoting entrepreneurship, and protecting the environment, among other issues. If confirmed, I intend to leverage these exchange programs and other initiatives to broaden our people-to-people ties in the future.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear here today, and I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McClelland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARYN R. MCCLELLAND

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to be here before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for placing their confidence in me to serve the United States in Brunei. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee to advance U.S. interests in Brunei.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues, whose support and guidance has been critical throughout my career. Most importantly, I want to recognize my daughter Marlowe, who has shared this adventure with me for the last 13 years, and my parents Robert and Catherine. Without their constant love, support, and encouragement, I would not be here today.

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United States was also among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Brunei after it became fully independent from the United Kingdom in 1984.

Our partnership with Brunei and our support for ASEAN centrality remain a cornerstone of our Indo-Pacific policy. The United States works closely with Brunei, especially during its role as the ASEAN Chair in 2021. Brunei's time leading ASEAN coincided with the two most acute challenges to face ASEAN since its inception—the coup d'état in Burma and COVID-19. Brunei has been steady and constructive partner on both issues. Our shared commitment to addressing some of the region's most pressing challenges will continue to yield cooperation, including on pandemic response, confronting the climate crisis, and resolving the conflict brought on by the coup and violence in Burma.

The robust security, economic, and people-to-people ties between our two countries are at the core of our relationship with Brunei. Our defense relationship is described in our Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation, and our military-to-military ties have become a cornerstone of the U.S.-Brunei bilateral relationship. Prior to the pandemic, Brunei conveyed a strong desire to increase participation in military exercises and engagements with the United States, particularly with respect to enhancing maritime domain awareness. While many in-person defense exchanges have either been postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, Brunei remains committed to our defense partnership as witnessed by its recent purchase of U.S.-origin defense equipment and its continued participation in our bilateral maritime exercises. We have a shared interest in maintaining peace and stability, unimpeded lawful commerce, and respect for international law, including freedoms of navigation and overflight and other lawful activities in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to strengthen our partnership in these areas with the Bruneian Government and work with Brunei to uphold the rules-based international order that has underpinned the region's security and prosperity.

We have also fostered a positive economic relationship with Brunei and enjoy a robust trade in goods such as aircraft, machinery, technology, iron, and steel, among others. U.S. goods and services trade with Brunei totaled an estimated \$262 million in 2020. We frequently work with Brunei and other regional economies to lower barriers to trade and investment across the Indo-Pacific region, leveling the playing field for U.S. companies and supporting job growth at home. If confirmed, I hope to further expand our bilateral trade relationship and advance an economic agenda that promotes shared prosperity, leverages economic potential, and builds inclusive and resilient economies—especially as the entire region works toward pandemic recovery.

If there is one thing the past year and a half has taught us, it is the true value of personal relationships. Our cultural, educational, and people-to-people ties with Brunei are critically important to advancing both mutual understanding between our nations and our bilateral relationship. In a country with limited exposure to the United States, engaging the next generation of Bruneian leaders and changemakers is vital. Prior to the pandemic, approximately 50 Bruneians participated annually in U.S. Embassy-sponsored exchange programs, including the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), the Fulbright Program and other professional and academic exchanges. The U.S. Embassy in Brunei also maintains a robust network of more than 300 alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs and regularly works with Bruneian civil society to collaborate on addressing issues of mutual concern, such as empowering women, promoting entrepreneurship, and protecting the environment, among other issues. If confirmed, I intend to leverage these exchange programs and other initiatives to broaden our people-to-people ties in the future.

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

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Ms. McClelland.
Mr. Young?

STATEMENT OF DAVID JOHN YOUNG OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

Mr. YOUNG. Chairman Schatz, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear

before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi.

I appreciate the confidence the President and my colleagues at the Department of State have shown in me through this nomination, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress and staff to advance U.S. interests in Malawi.

As I appear before you today, I wish to acknowledge the steadfast support I have received throughout my career from my wonderful life partner, my wife, Diane Weisz Young; and our children, Paul and Sarah; as well as my brothers, Keith and Terry; and in-laws Howard, Ann, and Gregg Weisz. The inspiration and love I have received from my family have inspired my public service across 32 years working for the Department of State.

The United States has a wide range of overlapping interests in Malawi, from strengthening democracy and promoting respect for human rights to support for market economics and inclusive growth, from investments in health and education to support for the country's peacekeeping efforts across the African continent. Our assistance programs mirror these interests, and our governance programming bolsters the country's democracy and helps our Malawian partners promote respect for human rights, combat corruption, and promote better performance by government agencies. Our bilateral trade and investment engagements hold promise to help lift Malawians out of poverty and to help American companies interested in investment.

Malawi today stands at a high point in its international profile and regional leadership. Its independent judiciary overturned the flawed 2019 presidential election, and the victory of President Lazarus Chakwera in 2020 marked only the second election re-run on the continent and the first to unseat an incumbent. The peaceful transition of power that followed was a testament to Malawians' commitment to democratic ideals.

A primary responsibility of any Ambassador is the protection of American citizens and American interests. In Malawi, that now includes joining the global fight to combat the spread of COVID-19. And for decades, we have supported Malawi's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. In so doing, we have saved millions of lives, and we have become the partner of choice for health programming. I was pleased to see the recent arrival in Lilongwe of more than 300,000 U.S.-provided Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine doses.

Malawi's heavy dependence on agriculture offers opportunities for U.S. Government and private sector engagement. American expertise can invest and advance efforts towards crop diversification, generate greater revenue, and fight poverty through improved yields.

Having worked on African issues for the past decade, and with more than 5 years' service in Southern Africa, I am also cognizant of the worker exploitation occurring in this sector. If confirmed, I will work with Malawian, American, and international partners to combat human trafficking and other human rights violations.

The United States has enjoyed decades of close collaboration with the Malawian military, and their defense force's apolitical posture following last year's—the 2019 election had a huge impact on the

transition to democracy. Malawian soldiers contribute to peacekeeping operations in some of the world's most dangerous places, and if confirmed, I hope to find new ways for Malawi to further enshrine itself as a net exporter of security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be honored to answer any questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Young follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID J. YOUNG

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi. I appreciate the confidence the President and my colleagues at the Department of State have shown in me through this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other members of Congress and staff to advance U.S. interests in Malawi.

As I appear before you today, I wish to acknowledge the steadfast support I have received throughout my career from my wonderful life partner, my wife Diane Weisz Young, and our children Paul and Sarah, as well as my brothers Keith and Terry, and in-laws Howard, Ann, and Gregg Weisz. The inspiration and love I have received from my family have inspired my public service across 32 years working for the Department of State.

The United States has a wide range of overlapping interests in Malawi—from strengthening democracy and promoting respect for human rights to support for market economics and inclusive growth, from investments in health and education to support for the country's peacekeeping efforts across the African continent. Our assistance programs mirror these interests. Our governance programming bolsters the country's democracy and helps our Malawian partners promote respect for human rights, combat corruption, and promote better performance by government agencies. Our bilateral trade and investment engagements hold promise to help lift Malawians out of poverty and to help American companies interested in investment. The U.S. encourages Malawi to move along a sustainable development trajectory that curves toward expanding trade as a means to increase prosperity. Our investments in Malawi's human capital help to build a healthy, educated, and self-reliant population.

Malawi today stands at a high point in its international profile and regional leadership. Its independent judiciary overturned the flawed 2019 presidential election, and the victory of President Lazarus Chakwera in 2020 marked only the second election re-run on the continent and the first to unseat an incumbent. The peaceful transition of power that followed was a testament to Malawians' commitment to democratic ideals. President Chakwera assumed leadership of the 16-member Southern African Development Community in August and in this role is helping contribute to pro-market, good governance reforms in Malawi and across the region. If confirmed, I will work to expand our partnership with President Chakwera's Government to advance these mutual interests.

The primary responsibility of any ambassador is the protection of American citizens and American interests. In Malawi, that now includes joining the global fight to contain the spread of COVID-19. For decades we have supported Malawi's efforts to combat HIV/AIDs. In doing so we have saved millions of lives, and we have become the partner of choice for health programming. I was pleased to see the recent arrival in Lilongwe of more than 300,000 U.S.-provided Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine doses. If confirmed, I will serve as a faithful steward of these investments to ensure and expand the impact of our citizens' unmatched generosity.

Malawi's heavy dependence on agriculture offers opportunities for U.S. Government and private sector engagement. American expertise can advance efforts towards crop diversification, generate greater revenue, and fight poverty through improved yields. Having worked on African issues for the past decade, and with more than five years' service in southern Africa, I am also cognizant of the worker exploitation occurring in the sector. Malawi must do more to combat human trafficking, including protecting vulnerable workers and prosecuting those responsible for forced labor. If confirmed, I will work with Malawian, American, and international partners to support these efforts.

The United States has enjoyed decades of close collaboration with the Malawian military. The Malawian Defense Force's apolitical posture following the annulment of the 2019 elections and the subsequent transfer of power speaks to the strength

of its independence and its unshakeable commitment to democracy. Malawian soldiers contribute to peacekeeping operations in some of the world's most dangerous places. Like others, I mourn the death of a Malawian peacekeeper killed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in May this year. If confirmed, I hope to find new ways for Malawi to further enshrine itself as a net exporter of security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be honored to respond to any questions.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Young.
Ms. Pierangelo?

STATEMENT OF CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NONMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNION OF THE COMOROS

Ms. PIERANGELO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros.

Please let me thank my family and my friends who have supported me throughout my career. My parents, the late Dr. Anthony and Mrs. Rose Cobino Pierangelo. My beloved sons, Luca and Nicholas, who have been my intrepid travel companions and my most avid supporters. And my brothers and their families and my friends, who have always made sure that we had a welcoming home to come home to.

Mr. Chairman, I have served across four continents. I have led teams working on economic reform, public health crises, violent extremism, radicalism, terrorism, and the challenges posed by the lack of democratic institutions and the rule of law. As a San Diego native, I was an avid student of the challenges of wildlife conservation through the work of the San Diego Zoo Global Wildlife Alliance, and I have carried that passion with me throughout my career.

If confirmed to be concurrently Ambassador to Madagascar and Ambassador to the Union of the Comoros, I will safeguard U.S. interests, and I will strengthen our relationship with the peoples and governments in these nations. We enjoy positive relationships with Madagascar and Comoros as we partner with them to address their many domestic, regional, and global challenges.

We have an opportunity in the next few years to support the Malagasy and Comorian people in their upcoming presidential elections in order to reinforce democratic principles, to advocate for full and open political participation, and to press for the protection of human rights. Strong democratic institutions and stability are the precursors to resilient and sustainable development.

If confirmed, my team and I would support the independent democratic aspirations in Madagascar and Comoros and would seek to counter malign influences and disinformation.

These two nations sit at the maritime crossroads between the Indian Ocean, Africa, and the Atlantic, and they deserve our in-

creased strategic attention. The sea lanes linking these regions are an important geostrategic maritime transit route. The region's largest deep-water port is situated at the northern tip of Madagascar. Oil and gas reserves in the area, including potential large reserves off of the coast of Madagascar, have attracted interest and investment from countries who do not always prioritize these nations' long-term security interests.

Stability in the region is also threatened by climate change, creating serious humanitarian, economic, and environmental crises. An extended drought in Southern Madagascar has thrown 1.4 million people into food insecurity and has caused internal migration that threatens unique ecosystems. COVID-19 has brought significant health and economic challenges, and there is an urgent need for additional vaccine doses.

Of course, if confirmed, encouraging U.S. trade, protecting U.S. investment, and promoting greater economic self-sufficiency would be top priorities. We have robust development assistance programs and collaborate closely with other international partners.

If confirmed, I can commit to advancing these efforts, as well as combatting threats to Madagascar's biodiversity. I would look forward to working with the Peace Corps to resume its historically vibrant programs in Madagascar and in Comoros.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today. If confirmed, I would serve proudly as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros. I welcome advice from you and your staff on United States' interests in this region.

And one of the highlights of my Foreign Service career has always been facilitating the visits of Members of Congress in the countries where I served, and I would hope to host you and/or your staff in the future.

And I welcome any questions. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Pierangelo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CLAIRE PIERANGELO

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank my family and friends who have supported me throughout my career: My parents, the late Dr. Anthony and Mrs. Rose Pierangelo, who lived their lives helping others and who would have been thrilled to be here today. My beloved sons Luca and Nicholas Pierangelo, who have been my intrepid travel companions and my most avid supporters. My brothers and their families and my friends who always made sure we had a welcoming home upon our return.

Mr. Chairman, I have served across four continents, from Cold War Europe to a newly independent Haiti to a Southeast Asia in transition and now in a challenged West Africa. These were often tough, sometimes dangerous environments. I have led teams working on economic reform, public health crises, violent extremism and terrorism, and the challenges posed by lack of democratic institutions and rule of law. I have worked closely with our Department of Defense colleagues on disaster management, maritime security and as an assistant professor at the National War College. As a San Diego native, I was an avid student of the challenges of wildlife conservation through the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and I have carried that passion throughout my career.

If confirmed to be concurrently Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and Ambassador to the Union of the Comoros, I will safeguard U.S. interests and

strengthen our relationships with the peoples and governments in these nations. We enjoy positive relationships with Madagascar and Comoros as we partner with them to address their many domestic, regional and global challenges.

With the upcoming presidential elections in Madagascar in 2023, and in Comoros in 2024, we have an opportunity to partner with the Malagasy and Comorian people to reinforce democratic principles, to advocate for full and open political participation, and to press for the protection of human rights. Fair and transparent electoral processes would strengthen democracy and support stability, a precursor to fostering resilient and sustainable development. If confirmed, my team would support the independent democratic aspirations in Madagascar and Comoros and would seek to counter malign influence and disinformation.

These two nations sit at the maritime crossroads of the Indian Ocean, Africa and the Atlantic and deserve our increased strategic attention. The sea lanes linking Madagascar, Comoros and East Africa are an important geostrategic transit route for tankers and other maritime traffic. The region's largest deep-water port is situated at the northern tip of Madagascar. Oil and gas reserves in the area, including potential large reserves off western Madagascar itself, are attracting interest and investment from countries who do not always prioritize these nations' long-term security.

Stability in the region is also threatened by climate change, creating serious humanitarian, economic, and environmental crises. Southern Madagascar has suffered an extended drought, throwing more than 1.4 million people into food insecurity and causing internal migration that threatens unique ecosystems. COVID-19 has brought significant health and economic challenges to Madagascar and Comoros and there is an urgent need for additional vaccine doses to protect their populations and combat this threat to the global community.

If confirmed, encouraging U.S. trade, protecting U.S. investment, and promoting greater economic self-sufficiency would be top priorities. The U.S. Mission to Madagascar, largely through USAID, has robust development assistance programs, and collaborates closely with other international partners. Our efforts are focused on providing basic healthcare, primary education, and emergency food aid in the south; combatting wildlife trafficking and corruption; and promoting good governance, and economic development. If confirmed, I commit to advancing these efforts, as well as combatting threats to Madagascar's biodiversity, including illegal fishing, deforestation, and unsustainable harvesting of its unique flora and fauna. I would look forward to working with the Peace Corps to resume its historically vibrant programs in Madagascar and Comoros.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. If confirmed, I would serve proudly as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and the Union of the Comoros. I welcome advice from you and your staff on the United States' interests in Madagascar and Comoros. One of the highlights of my Foreign Service Career has been facilitating the visits of members of Congress to the countries where I served and I hope to host you or your staff in the future. I welcome any questions.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you to all of our testifiers.

Before I start my own questions, I have some general questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch. I would like to 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?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Do you commit to keeping the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation when policies are being developed, and not just providing notification after the fact?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

My first question is for Ambassador Holgate. Ambassador, one of the most difficult issues that the IAEA has to manage is verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear program. The Director General of the IAEA said in a recent report that Iran is stonewalling its investigation into past activities and jeopardizing important monitoring work. Can you talk about how the United States can best support the IAEA's effort to monitor Iran?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I agree that this is a critical requirement and important mission of the U.S. team, both here in Washington and in Vienna. And I know that the team has been working very closely with Director General Grossi to be sure he has everything he needs to do that in the way of political as well as financial and technical support.

I think it is critical, too, for—if I were to be confirmed, for the U.S. Ambassador in Vienna to lead coordination with the other diplomatic community there in Vienna and to provide support and information as requested by the agency to help them do their work. This is obviously a whole of government effort that is led here in Washington. I have not been fully briefed on the details of the U.S. policies and decision-making there, but I know what it is like to be the Vienna face of those policies, and if confirmed, I am fully ready to play that role.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

The IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative has helped more than 150 countries harness nuclear science to address real world challenges. We have seen radiotracers help track marine plastics, radiolabeled molecules help to improve vaccines against infectious diseases, and climate is another area where there is a lot of potential not just in terms of nuclear energy. Can you talk about how the IAEA can help countries to use nuclear science and technology to combat the climate crisis?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Mr. Chairman, I think that is a really important and fascinating topic. When I was in Vienna before, that was my very first visit offsite was to the U.N.'s—the IAEA laboratory in Seibersdorf outside Vienna, where they are undertaking this research, and the U.S. has been at the forefront of raising funds to update that laboratory. The new so-called renewals lab is now operating and has significantly increased its capability to train member states' representatives in some of the technologies that you

have described, whether sterile insect technique or isotopic tracing or the full range of application of nuclear science.

I am proud that the U.S. Government has been supportive of this effort through the Peaceful Uses Initiative and through its voluntary contributions to the technical cooperation budget. And if confirmed, I would continue to advocate for such contributions and to make sure that those who receive the contributions understand that they come from the United States and that they represent support by the United States of their development ambition.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Chairman Schatz.

And I would like to come back to the first question that you brought up with Ms. Holgate pertaining to Iran and their malign behavior. The Biden administration is seeking to rejoin the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. It is an agreement that did not receive the advice and consent of the United States Senate. It is an agreement that I feel is deeply flawed.

Since 2018, the IAEA, which is the world's nuclear watchdog, has continued to investigate new evidence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran. In 2019 and in 2020, the IAEA found evidence of undeclared uranium particles in three sites in Iran, which could indicate potential covert Iranian nuclear activities.

So far, Iran has stalled the IAEA's investigation, including their access to nuclear science. Iran has removed and covered up evidence, and Iran has provided so-called explanations that the nuclear watchdog deems not technically credible.

Under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Iran is required to declare to IAEA inspectors its use of nuclear material, its sites where it uses such material, and sites where it carries out sensitive nuclear activities. And I want to be clear here, Iran's obligations to the IAEA are completely separate from the nuclear deal, and they endure regardless of what happens with the Iran nuclear deal status.

So, Ambassador Holgate, I would like to come back and just be clear. Do you agree that Iran is actively frustrating, even stonewalling, the IAEA's ongoing investigation of undeclared Iranian nuclear activities?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Ranking Member Hagerty, I do understand that that is the case.

Senator HAGERTY. I am glad you agree. Do you believe that Iran is in compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty?

Ambassador HOLGATE. I think the issues that are going on with both current and historical activities create grave concerns about Iran's commitment to safeguards and to peaceful uses, and that is why the United States has been supporting Director General Grossi's efforts to return Iran to a compliance state with its safeguards requirements.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I certainly think what you are saying is that they are not in compliance. They certainly cannot be in compliance if they are not willing to answer IAEA questions on undeclared nuclear activities. Would you agree with that?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Sir, I have not been briefed on the intelligence details of the current concerns about Iran. So I would hesitate to draw a strong conclusion on that.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, let us move on. The IAEA's Director General has issued several reports on Iran that make it clear that that IAEA has serious outstanding concerns regarding possible undeclared nuclear material and the activities that are taking place in Iran today. Due to Iran's lack of cooperation, the fact that Iran is limiting verification and access by international nuclear inspectors, the IAEA's Director General has reported that the agency is having a difficult time ensuring that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful.

And in a recent development, the IAEA said last Sunday that Iran has failed to honor the terms of a deal struck 2 weeks ago to let international nuclear inspectors into Iran to access and repair equipment for monitoring nuclear materials and activities. Again, activities that likely are being diverted to military purposes.

Iran and the IAEA have made this recent deal as Iran faced the prospect of a formal censure by the IAEA Board of Governors for its obstructionism. So, Ambassador Holgate, if you are confirmed, do you commit to advocating for the United States to use its voice and vote on the 35-nation IAEA Board of Governors in order to hold Iran accountable for its ongoing noncompliance with its nuclear obligations and to censure Iran for repeatedly frustrating the international watchdog's ongoing investigation of Iran's undeclared nuclear activities?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Senator Hagerty, I can certainly say that, if confirmed, I will use the U.S. voice and vote in the Board of Governors to promote a full return of Iran to IAEA safeguards compliance and to make sure the Director General has the tools he needs to do that.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate that. I think it is incumbent upon the United States to hold egregious proliferators like Iran accountable. The position that you will be going into will provide that opportunity, and I certainly hope and expect that you will use every bit of United States influence to make certain that we hold actors like Iran and their malign behavior to full account.

Thank you, and I yield my time back, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

And to all four of our nominees, thank you for your careers of public service. We very much appreciate your willingness to continue to serve our country. You all are certainly very well experienced and qualified for the positions that you have been nominated to.

Ms. Holgate, I am going to continue with the IAEA for one moment, if I might? In July, I did have an opportunity to be in Vienna, and I did meet with the Director General Grossi. And I must tell you, I am impressed by his leadership at the IAEA. But I want to come at this from a little bit different position.

He made an interesting observation, and I want to get your view on this. That the IAEA itself, you talk about having the capacity to deal with, for example, the JCPOA, and he pointed out that the

IAEA was constructed based upon member countries being friendly or cooperative to how the IAEA would operate, that they would be willing partners.

Well, obviously, Iran is not a willing partner. So my question to you, and this follows up a little bit on Senator Hagerty's point. Do we need to look at some changes at the IAEA, recognizing that Iran is not an honest broker here, that they will never be an honest broker, and that we need to have the authorities within IAEA that would not necessarily be needed in a country that is more cooperative?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Thank you, Senator Cardin. That is a very interesting question and one that I have not yet discussed with the State Department colleagues that I would be working with, if confirmed.

The IAEA is nested within the broader U.N. system, and the responsibilities for actions, mandatory actions are sited with the U.N. Security Council. The IAEA Board of Governors has the opportunity to refer issues to the Security Council when they are not available to be addressed within the mandate of the agency.

I think there are interesting opportunities with the upcoming Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference to consider whether the underlying treaty that governs these issues can be strengthened and accountability tools can be added or improved. And I would look forward to participating in any conversations around those topics, if I am confirmed in this role.

Senator CARDIN. Would you commit to this committee that when you are confirmed, that you will come back to us with your evaluation as to the capacity of the IAEA to be able to enforce agreements in regards to Iran so that we have an honest—it can be done in an open or closed session, but that you would share with us your belief as to how effective the IAEA can be under its arrangement under United Nations in monitoring the activities of Iran?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Senator, if I am confirmed, I would be happy to make that commitment to you and the committee.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Ms. Pierangelo, I want to talk a little bit about Madagascar and also Comoros. Both countries have significant corruption problems. President Biden has indicated that corruption is a core national concern of the United States, a national security interest concern of the United States.

We are asking those missions that are in countries that have significant challenges on corruption to build up their internal capacity within the mission to deal with corruption. So do we have your commitment that this will be a high priority, if you are confirmed, to be able to have the capacity within your mission to understand the challenges in the countries and to be able to provide technical help and assistance for anti-corruption measures?

Ms. PIERANGELO. Senator Cardin, I would look forward to that, if confirmed. You know, fundamentally accountable institutions sustained by a commitment to the rule of law, transparency are essential to creating a climate whether you are talking about political stability or economic stability. We need to have that as a precursor.

So our mission I know is working very diligently on this issues, and sir, we would welcome any additional resources. And I cer-

tainly would commit that once I am on the ground, if confirmed, I will do my own personal assessment with my team to assess what we need and how we would deploy it.

So, thank you, sir. That would be very welcome.

Senator CARDIN. And I will just end on this. There is legislation that our committee has already acted on that would require our missions to rate how well countries are doing in regards to fighting corruption based upon a tier rating system similar to what we use in trafficking in humans. I would ask that you help us and support us in getting that type of legislation to the finish line.

I recognize you will not have a direct role to play in this. Believe me, I understand that. But if we had that in place, then it makes it easier in your bilateral relationship to point out that this is a policy requirement that requires attention in every country that the United States have missions.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back my time.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Senator Cardin. Do we have Senator Van Hollen online?

[No response.]

Senator SCHATZ. Senator Booker?

[No response.]

Senator SCHATZ. Any other members of the Foreign Relations Committee wishing to ask the nominees any questions?

[No response.]

Senator SCHATZ. Ranking Member Hagerty, anything else?

Senator HAGERTY. I would just applaud your chairmanship today, Senator Schatz. I appreciate all the candidates being with us.

I am going to submit a number of additional questions through the QFR process, and I want to congratulate you on a very well-conducted hearing.

Thank you.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much. Pleasure to work with you, and thanks to the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as well as my staff and everybody for being willing to serve, and especially their families.

If there are no more questions for our witnesses, the record will remain open until the close of business on Friday, October 1 for questions. I would urge the nominees, if you get questions for the record, to answer them fully and expeditiously so that we can consider your nominations at a business meeting and get you marked up and get you confirmed as quickly as possible.

With the thanks of the committee for your willingness to serve, this hearing is adjourned.

Ambassador HOLGATE. Thank you very much.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Thank you, sir, and to all the members of the committee, thank you for your time.

[Whereupon, at 10:46 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

Question. Serious concerns have been raised about the ability of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to verify and monitor Iran's comprehensive safeguard agreement. Iran continues to stonewall the IAEA's investigation into undeclared nuclear materials and activities that were uncovered in 2018 and is refusing to allow the IAEA to access critical monitoring equipment. The Joint Statement between Iran and IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi issued on September 12th, 2021 was wholly inadequate in addressing these issues.

- How is Iran's stonewalling of the IAEA, which it has suffered no penalty for, impacting the credibility of the agency?

Answer. I believe the IAEA is highly credible in the implementation of its verification "watchdog" mission and it is in the U.S. interest that it remain so. For that reason, if confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions.

Question. What impact is Iran's refusal to cooperate with the IAEA having on the global non-proliferation regime?

Answer. IAEA safeguards are implemented for the purpose of providing assurances regarding the peaceful use of nuclear energy and are an essential element of maintaining the credibility and effectiveness of the global nonproliferation regime. Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. Iran's failure to provide substantive or technically credible responses to the IAEA's questions related to possible undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran is cause for serious concern because of both what it suggests for Iran's intentions and its implications for the global non-proliferation regime. Thus, it is vital that Iran provide such responses to the IAEA, and if confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors without delay.

Question. Iran is currently denying IAEA requests for access to nuclear sites and is resisting providing the IAEA with a complete nuclear declaration. Do you think other states will follow Iran's example?

Answer. Article III of the Non-Proliferation Treaty requires all non-nuclear weapons states to accept IAEA safeguards in order to ensure that nuclear material is not diverted for non-peaceful uses. If confirmed, I will continue the United States' long-standing support for the IAEA and its mandate to ensure that all countries, including Iran, adhere to their safeguards obligations.

Question. Why was a resolution criticizing Iran's unwillingness to cooperate with the IAEA withdrawn before the last IAEA Board of Governors meeting?

Answer. As I was outside of government at the time of the last IAEA Board of Governors meeting, I am not in a position to comment on any internal deliberations among Board members regarding potential actions related to the IAEA's ongoing attempts to engage Iran on unresolved questions related to its safeguards agreement. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

Question. In your opinion what impact are Iran's limitations on the IAEA having on the agency's ability to monitor and verify Iran's nuclear program?

Answer. I share the concerns reported by IAEA Director General in September that Iran's decision to stop implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, including the Additional Protocol, is seriously undermining the IAEA's verification and monitoring activities. If confirmed, I will work to press Iran to provide the IAEA with full and immediate cooperation as it seeks to both monitor and verify Iran's JCPOA nuclear commitments as well as resolve ongoing questions related to Iran's safeguards agreement.

Question. The IAEA monitors Iranian compliance with the July 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) provisions. Some the provisions of the nuclear

agreement require addition IAEA access beyond those of Iran's comprehensive safeguards agreement. Tehran has stopped complying with many of these provisions while at the same time vastly expanding its nuclear program.

- Do you believe the United States should rejoin the JCPOA if Iran refuses to allow a full IAEA investigation into the undeclared nuclear materials and activities it uncovered in 2018?

Answer. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and that the JCPOA is still the best diplomatic option for addressing the threats posed by Iran's nuclear activities. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions.

Question. Is the current gap in IAEA monitoring of Iranian centrifuge activities increasingly the level of uncertainty around how many and what types of centrifuges Iran has produced and assembled this year?

Answer. The IAEA Director General reported in September that lack of access to the IAEA's monitoring equipment is seriously compromising the IAEA's ability to maintain continuity of knowledge over Iran's nuclear-related activities. If confirmed, I will work to press Iran to provide the IAEA with full and immediate cooperation as it seeks to both monitor and verify Iran's JCPOA nuclear commitments as well as resolve ongoing questions related to Iran's safeguards agreement.

Question. Do you agree that Iran over the last 12 months has made significant technical progress in key nuclear areas? If so will this progress require alterations to the JCPOA in order to sustain the original objective of a 12 month breakout time?

Answer. Iran's continued efforts to advance its nuclear program, and in particular its uranium enrichment capabilities, are a cause for serious concern. Although I defer to the intelligence community on questions related to the impact of Iran's nuclear advances on its fissile material breakout timeline, the Biden administration has been clear that such advances make it more difficult to restore the nonproliferation benefits originally achieved by the JCPOA. If confirmed, I will work with Special Envoy Malley and his team to ensure the strongest possible IAEA verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear program.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLTGATE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. Iranian officials have recently sexually harassed and intimidated female IAEA inspectors. What should we do if this behavior continues?

Answer. I am very concerned about reports that IAEA inspectors are experiencing inappropriate treatment at the hands of Iranian security personnel. Such behavior and any attempt to intimidate IAEA inspectors is unacceptable and, if confirmed, I will work in close coordination with other members of the IAEA Board of Governors to ensure that the Board takes appropriate action in the event that the Director General reports additional incidents. The IAEA Director General and the Secretariat will have the United States' full support on these matters.

Question. On 9/26/2021, the IAEA said Iran had failed to honor the terms of a deal struck two weeks ago letting IAEA inspectors in to service monitoring equipment in the country. Iran and the IAEA had made this recent deal as Iran faced the prospect of a formal censure by the IAEA Board of Governors.

- Given Iran's failure to abide by this agreement, should the U.S. use its voice and vote to pursue a formal censure by the Board of Governors?
- Why or why not?

Answer. The Biden administration has been clear that Iran must follow through on the commitments it made in the September 12 Joint Statement with the IAEA, including by providing the IAEA with needed access to service its monitoring equipment and inviting the Director General to Tehran for discussions related to unresolved safeguards issues. If confirmed, I will work in close coordination with Special Envoy Malley as well as the IAEA Board of Governors to insist that Iran provides full and immediate cooperation with the IAEA as it seeks to verify both Iran's safeguards agreement as well as its JCPOA nuclear-related activities.

Question. The IAEA said in a September report, “Since 23 February 2021, the Agency’s verification and monitoring of activities have been seriously undermined as a result of Iran’s decision to stop the implementation of its nuclear related commitments.” Given this statement, how much confidence can we have in present Iranian negotiations and statements?

Answer. I share the concerns reported by IAEA Director General in September that Iran’s decision to stop implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, including the Additional Protocol, is seriously undermining the IAEA’s verification and monitoring activities. If confirmed, I will work to press Iran to provide the IAEA with full and immediate cooperation as it seeks to both monitor and verify Iran’s JCPOA nuclear commitments as well as resolve ongoing questions related to Iran’s safeguards agreement.

Question. Will you commit to supporting a thorough IAEA investigation in Iran to ascertain the nature and status of its nuclear program, including necessary requests for access to military sites, personnel, and documentation, to ensure the end of Tehran’s nuclear weapons program and activities?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA’s ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material, including all requests for information and access deemed necessary by the Director General and the Secretariat. As the IAEA Board of Governors has made clear, Iran must provide full cooperation with the IAEA without further delay.

Question. What would you do to encourage the IAEA to investigate Iran’s potentially ongoing nuclear weaponization work, which the nuclear archive indicates Tehran hid and dispersed at research institutes, universities, and military sites after 2003?

Answer. Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA’s verification and monitoring activities in Iran, including the IAEA’s ongoing efforts to investigate questions related to undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran.

Question. Considering Iran’s failure to address the IAEA’s questions on undeclared nuclear materials and activities, do you believe Iran is in compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty?

Answer. I have serious concerns about Iran’s compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in light of the IAEA’s ongoing safeguards investigations and Iran’s failure to provide the IAEA with the cooperation necessary to resolve them. Iran must engage and cooperate fully with the IAEA in a way that leads to credible, concrete progress and toward resolution of these issues. I have full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any indications of undeclared or diverted nuclear material that could contribute to any renewed Iranian pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

Question. Do you think the Biden administration should commit to not lifting or waving sanctions on Iran until Iran—among other demands—fully and credibly complies with the IAEA’s requests to resolve the outstanding issues on undeclared nuclear materials and activities?

Answer. I share the views of the Biden administration and the IAEA Board of Governors that Iran must provide full cooperation with the IAEA without further delay. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA’s ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and will work closely with our partners and allies as well as the IAEA to ensure that Iran provides the IAEA with the necessary cooperation.

Question. Is it possible for the IAEA Board of Governors to truly hold Iran accountable, if the Board’s main recourse is snapping back all U.N. sanctions on Iran and ending JCPOA—a deal that the Biden administration has said it hopes to revive?

Answer. The IAEA Board of Governors has the ability to hold Iran accountable to its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA and its NPT-related safeguards obligations, including through authorities it has under the IAEA Statute with respect to safeguards compliance and its actions in support of the JCPOA participants. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the IAEA makes full use of its authorities as it works to monitor Iran’s implementation of its JCPOA nuclear-related commitments and continues its investigation of questions related to undeclared nuclear material in Iran.

Question. Doesn't the desire to revive the JCPOA actually create a dynamic that discourages IAEA Member States from taking Iran's safeguards violations to the U.N. Security Council?

Answer. Iran's legal obligations under its safeguards agreement with the IAEA are separate from its JCPOA nuclear-related commitments. Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions.

Question. What would you do to end Iran's use of extortion—escalating to take threatening and dangerous actions, then demanding concessions from the U.S. to solve and problem it created?

Answer. Iran's nuclear escalations have implications for both its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA and its legal obligations under its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that our response to Iran's actions with respect to its nuclear program is informed by timely and detailed reporting from the IAEA.

Question. What is your position on the use of the snapback mechanism at the U.N.? Does the U.S. have the authority to call for its use?

Answer. The snapback mechanism was designed to provide leverage to help ensure Iran performed its commitments under the JCPOA. The Trump Administration invoked snapback in a way that was never contemplated by the deal, namely after unilaterally exiting it. Virtually none of our allies or partners recognized this invocation of snapback. The Biden Administration believes that the United States will be in a stronger position to counter the full range of threats posed by Iran, including its nuclear program, by working in close concert with our allies and partners. On specific questions related to the legal authority available to the United States in connection with the snapback mechanism under U.N. Security Council resolution 2231, I would defer to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations as well as the Department's Office of the Legal Adviser.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. Iran has made a number of breaches of its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) after President Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the agreement in 2018 and re-imposed sanctions. In your view, is a diplomatic resolution or the use of military force the most effective and lasting way to prevent a nuclear armed Iran?

Answer. The administration believes that diplomatic efforts to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA are the best path forward at this time to prevent Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Question. On Sept. 15th, the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia announced AUKUS—a trilateral security agreement that will supply Australia with nuclear propelled submarines. As the U.S. Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), will you encourage Australia to adopt the Additional Protocol to its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and/or take other steps that require strong nonproliferation standards for other non-nuclear weapon countries who may seek a nuclear propulsion program of their own?

Answer. Australia was the first country to bring into force an Additional Protocol to its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, doing so in December 1997. As President Biden said in announcing this partnership: "Our governments will now launch an 18-month consultation period to determine every element of this program . . . We'll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency." As announced, over the 18-month consultation period, the shared objective of maintaining the strength of the non-proliferation regime and Australia's exemplary non-proliferation credentials will be central to the three countries' discussions. If confirmed, I will work to reinforce this effort.

Question. I am concerned about press reports that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is moving quickly to master the early stages of the nuclear fuel cycle with coopera-

tion from China and outside IAEA safeguards. If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to encourage Saudi Arabia to rescind its Small Quantities Protocol and adopt the Additional Protocol?

Answer. Saudi Arabia is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a strong security partner of the United States. Under the NPT, it is obligated not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept IAEA safeguards to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material to weapons purposes. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that Saudi Arabia continues to abide by these important nonproliferation obligations and encourage Saudi Arabia to take further steps, including rescinding its Small Quantities Protocol and bringing into force an Additional Protocol.

Question. Given Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's statement in 2018 that "if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible," what concerns, if any, do you have that a maturing Saudi Arabia nuclear program would remain exclusively peaceful?

Answer. Saudi Arabia is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a strong security partner of the United States. Under the NPT, it is obligated not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept IAEA safeguards to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material to weapons purposes. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that Saudi Arabia continues to abide by these important nonproliferation obligations and encourage Saudi Arabia to take further steps, including rescinding its Small Quantities Protocol and bringing into force an Additional Protocol.

Question. As the Senior Director on the National Security Council in the Obama administration, you served as the "Sherpa" or organizer for the Nuclear Summit process that saw roughly fifty countries eliminate and secure fissile material from their civilian stocks. Given the difficulty to reach consensus in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cutoff treaty, would you support an ad hoc convening of countries, modeled on the Nuclear Security Summit process, to lead countries to make commitments that secure and reduce highly enriched uranium and plutonium, and perhaps weapons, from their non-civilian stocks?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to cooperate with countries aimed at securing and eliminating excess weapon-usable nuclear material, including by encouraging additional subscribers and actions under IAEA Information Circular (INFCIRC) 912 "Joint Statement on Minimizing and Eliminating the Use of Highly Enriched Uranium in Civilian Applications" and related INFCIRCS, such as INFCIRC/908 "Joint Statement on Mitigating Insider Threats" and INFCIRC/909 "Joint Statement on Transport Security of Nuclear Materials," that resulted from the Nuclear Security Summit process. I will also support the IAEA's convening additional International Conferences on Nuclear Security and Review Conferences of the Amended Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, which create opportunities for countries to make pledges regarding their voluntary application of IAEA nuclear security guidelines to non-civilian nuclear materials. Similarly, national reporting under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 offers a platform for national statements regarding non-civilian nuclear materials. If confirmed, I would encourage states to follow the lead of the United States in reporting on their measures for securing and reducing non-civilian nuclear materials.

Question. If confirmed, in what ways will you work to educate Members of Congress and the American public about the technical advances of the International Monitoring Stations (IMS) and the International Data Centre since the U.S. Senate last considered a resolution of ratification of CTBT in 1999? Based on your experience, what degree of confidence does the United States have that it can detect a low-yield nuclear explosion and how would unlocking the on-site inspection provision of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), through entry into force, assist with verification?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to highlight the significant technological advances in both the U.S. National Technical Means (NTM) as well as the capabilities of the International Monitoring System (IMS) that the CTBT establishes. The IMS is now nearly 90 percent complete, composed of more than 300 facilities, employing four separate technologies, that provide data and analytical products to the CTBT signatory States. While no remote monitoring system has the capability to detect nuclear explosions with extremely low yield, once in force the treaty's on-site inspection capability will allow the deployment of inspectors using a broad array of close-in techniques and equipment to look for evidence of a nuclear explosion.

Question. If North Korea has observed a moratorium on nuclear test explosions since 2017 but it remains one of the eight Annex II countries who have yet to ratify

the CTBT required for the treaty to enter into force. Should North Korea's adoption of the CTBT be priority in future U.S. negotiations with North Korea on its nuclear program, and if not, why not?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration believes that a global, legally binding ban on nuclear explosive testing is in the national security interest of the United States. Entry into force of the CTBT will enhance our efforts to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. The administration will take all appropriate opportunities to encourage ratification by the remaining Annex 2 states, including North Korea.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. Since 2007, it has nearly always been the position of the United States that Iran is not a member in good standing within the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Even pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran would not have returned to being a member in good standing until the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reached a "Broader Conclusion" (BC) verifying the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. In April 2019, then-nominee to be Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed in writing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "given Iran's past noncompliance with both its safeguards agreement and its NPT obligations, its failure to fully address IAEA questions related to past activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device, and the emergence of new questions surrounding Iran's motives for retaining and concealing documents, equipment, and personnel related to its past nuclear weapons program, Iran's standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as 'good.'"

- Do you agree with Mr. Eberhardt's assessment? If not, why not?

Answer. The United States has, including in the 2021 Compliance Report, indicated concern with regard to Iran's compliance with Article III of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Given Iran's past non-compliance with its obligations under the NPT and Iran's NPT-required safeguards agreement and its present failure to fully address the IAEA's current questions related to implementation of that safeguards agreement, Iran's standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as "good."

Question. Do you consider Iran's past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and if confirmed, I will help implement U.S. policy to support the IAEA's work to monitor and assess Iran's compliance with its NPT-required safeguards agreement. Iran must cooperate fully with the IAEA to address the serious, outstanding issues related to potential undeclared nuclear material in Iran. As a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT, Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons. Under the JCPOA, Iran reaffirmed this commitment, and if confirmed, I will work to prevent Iran from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Question. Do you consider Iran's past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Iran's long history of denial and concealment regarding its past nuclear weapons program is of serious concern. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran. I am committed to preventing Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Question. Do you believe that Iran should be entitled to the use of civilian nuclear technology even if they are not a member in good standing of the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligations under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

Question. Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

Question. Do you consider Iran to be specifically entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

Question. In 2015, you testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. When asked about the issue of Iran's possible military dimensions, you responded: "the JCPOA is focused on the future rather than the past." In 2017, you wrote, "The unusually intrusive verification measures contained in the JCPOA are a specific response to Iran's decades of deception regarding its nuclear activities,"

- Given we do not have a comprehensive accounting of Iran's PMD program, and taking into consideration Iran's decades of deception to the IAEA on its nuclear program, how is it possible to have an accurate appraisal of Iran's activities as they evolve, when the international community lacks a baseline for verification efforts?

Answer. The IAEA has reported significant concerns regarding potential undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and we have full confidence in the Agency to pursue its critical verification and monitoring responsibilities there. It is essential that Iran fully comply with its legally binding obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA to resolve these important matters without further delay. If confirmed, I will support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran.

Question. Despite the Board of Governor's December 2015 Final Assessment, which closed the chapter on PMDs in order to move forward with implementation of the JCPOA, the issue of Iran's possible military dimension remains outstanding.

- If confirmed, do you plan to reopen the PMD file? If not, why not?

Answer. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that the IAEA can provide the strongest possible assurance that all nuclear materials in Iran remain in peaceful uses, and that Iran is not undertaking any undeclared nuclear activities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

Question. Under the new AUKUS partnership, the United States and United Kingdom will help Australia construct and operate nuclear-propelled submarines. This initiative presents an opportunity to set a strong precedent for establishing a system of IAEA safeguards on naval nuclear reactors under the jurisdiction of non-nuclear weapon states party to the NPT. Such a system should balance the need to protect sensitive military technology and facilities with the need to ensure against the diversion and misuse of nuclear materials used in naval propulsion.

- Would the supply of fabricated naval nuclear fuel by the United States or United Kingdom pose less of a proliferation risk than the development by Australia of indigenous enrichment and fuel fabrication capabilities designed to produce its own naval nuclear fuel?

Answer. As President Biden said in announcing the AUKUS partnership: “Our governments will now launch an 18-month consultation period to determine every element of this program . . . We’ll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.” As announced, over the 18-month consultation period, the shared objective of maintaining the strength of the non-proliferation regime and Australia’s exemplary non-proliferation credentials will be central to the discussions. If confirmed, I will support the United States’ longstanding policy of seeking to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies around the world because of the proliferation risks those technologies pose.

Question. Would the reapplication of IAEA safeguards on spent fuel once discharged from naval nuclear reactors help address proliferation risks?

Answer. As President Biden said in announcing the AUKUS partnership: “We’ll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.” As the three partners have committed to engage with the IAEA throughout the coming months, and if confirmed, I will be fully committed to setting a high standard for international verification and implementing all obligations to the IAEA under our respective safeguards agreements.

Question. Do you believe the use of seals and other black-box safeguards equipment and techniques would help the IAEA maintain “continuity of knowledge” over the naval nuclear fuel cycle while protecting classified or sensitive military information and facilities?

Answer. As President Biden said in announcing this partnership: “We’ll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.” As the three partners have committed to engage with the IAEA throughout the coming months, and if confirmed, I will be fully committed to setting a high standard for international verification and implementing all obligations to the IAEA under our respective safeguards agreements.

Question. A longstanding objective of United States nonproliferation policy has been to make universal the adoption of the Additional Protocol (AP) and to establish it as a condition of international nuclear supply. There has been considerable progress on this front, and currently 137 states and Euratom have in force an AP with the IAEA.

Nevertheless, there remain major holdouts who have evinced little interest in bringing into force an AP with the IAEA. Brazil and Argentina possess significant nuclear infrastructures and enrich uranium indigenously, while Egypt and Saudi Arabia are looking to expand their own nuclear programs. Moreover, Russia and China are engaging in nuclear commerce with countries that do not have APs in force.

- What enticements and sticks can we use to encourage these holdouts to bring into force APs with the IAEA?

Answer. Achieving universal adherence to the Additional Protocol (AP) is a high priority for the United States. Zimbabwe recently brought the number of APs in force to 138. The United States raises this objective at all levels, including the Secretary of State, in diplomatic engagement on nonproliferation. In particular, the United States raises it in bilateral engagement with countries that have not yet

brought an AP into force, including those mentioned here. If confirmed, I will continue to stress that implementation of the AP would build confidence and facilitate cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear technology, and I will support the Department of Energy's active program to help states implement comprehensive safeguards agreements and APs. This assistance helps states that have limited technical capacity and helps dispel concerns and misconceptions about the AP.

Question. A longstanding objective of United States nonproliferation policy has been to make universal the adoption of the Additional Protocol (AP) and to establish it as a condition of international nuclear supply. There has been considerable progress on this front, and currently 137 states and Euratom have in force an AP with the IAEA.

Nevertheless, there remain major holdouts who have evinced little interest in bringing into force an AP with the IAEA. Brazil and Argentina possess significant nuclear infrastructures and enrich uranium indigenously, while Egypt and Saudi Arabia are looking to expand their own nuclear programs. Moreover, Russia and China are engaging in nuclear commerce with countries that do not have APs in force.

- How can we make progress on establishing the Additional Protocol as a condition of international nuclear supply?

Answer. The United States is committed to establishing the Additional Protocol (AP) as a condition of nuclear supply and plays a leading global role in stressing the AP as an instrument that facilitates increased peaceful nuclear cooperation. If confirmed, I will continue to work with nuclear suppliers to highlight the importance of the AP as a condition of nuclear supply both bilaterally and multilaterally, including in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. In 2015, the Iran nuclear deal artificially closed the IAEA's investigation into the "possible military dimensions" of Iran's nuclear program in 2015. But in 2018, the importance of re-opening this investigation became clear and obvious after Israel's revelation to the world that Iran possessed a massive secret archive on its efforts related to making nuclear weapons. If confirmed, will you commit to supporting an in-depth IAEA investigation in Iran to ascertain the nature and status of its nuclear program, including any necessary requests for access to military sites, to nuclear scientists and other personnel, and to documentation, in order to ensure the end of Iran's nuclear weapons program and Iran's activities related to nuclear weapons capability? Please begin your response with a yes or no.

Answer. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that the IAEA can provide the strongest possible assurance that all nuclear material in Iran remains in peaceful uses, and that Iran is not undertaking any undeclared nuclear activities.

Question. Many United Nations agencies that deal with international drug trafficking and other international crimes are headquartered in Vienna, including the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Narcotics Control Board, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the U.N. Transnational Organized Crime Convention Conference of States Parties, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Illegal narcotics, particularly fentanyl and related substances, are taking a dramatic toll on American youth. Much of this can be attributed to China, including fentanyl precursors and expertise to manufacture these substances. When you previously held this position, how did you leverage these organizations to fight this scourge of fentanyl and related substances, including holding China and other nations accountable for their actions in fueling it? If confirmed, how would you use policy, budget, and personnel decisions by these agencies to address the fentanyl crisis and opioid overdose epidemic? Do you commit, if confirmed, to using every possible measure at these organizations to combat the fentanyl production and smuggling that is affecting every state, and to keeping me and other committee members informed of your efforts?

Answer. The United States supports initiatives implemented by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its associated bodies that provide member states with guidance, resources, and tools to address the challenge of synthetic drugs and reduce global trafficking in synthetics and precursor chemicals. During my previous

tenure, the United States led a successful global effort to place two of the main precursor chemicals used to produce fentanyl under international control and urge countries to take innovative national action against fentanyl and its precursors. If confirmed, I will further cooperate with the Vienna-based organizations and other member states to enhance member state capacity and collective action to counter the threat these substances pose, as well as engage with Congress to keep them informed.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO CARYN R. MCCCELLAND BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. If confirmed, one issue that you will immediately confront is China's inroads into Brunei and China's malign influence throughout Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Brunei sits on the South China Sea, much of which China falsely claims. Although Brunei has not been involved in the frequent incidents that some other South China Sea claimants have, it is an active participant in negotiations between ASEAN and China over these issues and over a possible Code of Conduct for parties in the region, especially as this year's chair of ASEAN. How would you characterize Brunei's approach to the disputes in the South China Sea? If confirmed as Ambassador, would you encourage Brunei to play a more active role in diplomacy in the South China Sea? Do you believe Brunei is willing to play such a role?

Answer. Like other South China Sea littoral states, Brunei's maritime claims overlap with the PRC's expansive and unlawful maritime claims. Both the United States and Brunei have a clear national interest in the peaceful resolution of disputes, unimpeded lawful commerce, and compliance with international law, including freedoms of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea. Brunei has been an active participant in ASEAN activities related to the South China Sea, including the ongoing negotiations of an ASEAN-China Code of Conduct. If confirmed, I will support Brunei's efforts to advocate for its rights and those of other Southeast Asian claimants in the South China Sea.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID JOHN YOUNG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Corruption continues to be a major challenge for Malawi, with recent administrations facing high-profile corruption scandals and with low-level corruption being a daily reality for regular Malawians. What anti-corruption activities is the United States currently supporting in Malawi? Are they adequate in your view? If confirmed, in what areas will you advocate the U.S. focus its anti-corruption investments?

Answer. U.S. Mission programs, including a recently launched program with the Malawian Police Service, work to combat Malawi's endemic corruption. Training programs through the Public Affairs Section and other offices highlight the corrosive effect of corruption on Malawi's investment climate. USAID provides technical assistance to the Malawian government, including embedded advisors who work hand in hand to combat corruption and pursue asset recovery. USAID works with local governments to put in place more accountable and transparent use of government resources. If confirmed, I plan to seek further avenues to combat corruption and improve governance at all levels.

Question. Like many countries in Africa, Malawi is facing a massive youth bulge. According to some estimates, more than half the population under the age of 18. Are there adequate educational and employment opportunities for Malawi's youth population? What U.S. assistance programs are focused on addressing any gaps in such opportunities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that U.S. assistance programs adequately address the potential destabilizing economic and political impacts the youth bulge can have in the face of inadequate economic opportunities?

Answer. Malawi faces major challenges in educating its youth, and illiteracy is widespread. USAID funds a wide variety of education programs benefitting students at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. USAID has helped every primary schoolchild in Malawi have access to a schoolbook for the first time in the country's history. We partner with U.S. universities to expand digital online learning for all Malawi's public universities, particularly focusing on women students and those from marginalized communities. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that U.S. assist-

ance programs address the challenges of the youth bulge, so that young people have path to improved educational and employment opportunities.

Question. What areas of U.S. assistance have been particularly impactful in Malawi with regards to economic diversification and growth? If confirmed, what areas will you recommend for increased U.S. investment?

Answer. Malawi completed a \$350 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact in 2018 that improved the enabling environment for economic growth through increased capacity to build, operate, and regulate the power sector. USAID is working through a variety of programs to diversify the economy away from subsistence agriculture to more valuable cash crops. USAID works to aggressively engage and strengthen the private sector to create greater economic opportunities, including in aquaculture, fisheries and ecotourism. If confirmed, I will advocate strongly for the introduction and expansion of projects like these that seek to diversify and grow Malawi's economy and raise Malawians out of poverty.

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

Answer. While in Zambia as Chargé d'Affaires, I led our Mission's efforts to support a free and fair election in August 2021. This involved major coordination across 20 months, and we played important roles behind the scenes to push back against ruling party harassment, press for a result that reflects the will of the people, and help independent media stay in business. I have played roles in helping obtain prisoner releases of LGBTQI+ individuals in Zambia on two occasions, and while in Hanoi, I helped secure the release of two dozen Vietnamese prisoners who had been detained on political and religious grounds. During my tenure in Abuja, I helped intervene to prevent the arrest of the speaker of the national assembly in Nigeria.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Malawi? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Over the past year, the Chakwera administration has made significant gains restoring Malawi's democratic trajectory and implementing good governance reforms. However, endemic corruption, lack of local capacity, and insufficient funds impede the implementation of President Chakwera's anti-corruption agenda. Pre-existing patronage networks now seek to stall ongoing reform efforts, and declining development assistance from the United Kingdom and likeminded missions has imperiled the efforts of independent accountability institutions. Fortunately, the United States remains Malawi's partner of choice on these issues, and if confirmed, I will advocate strongly for further efforts towards democratic reforms and institutionalization.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Malawi? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I hope to press the ruling government to appoint and confirm heads of watchdog agencies including the Financial Intelligence Agency and the Office of the Auditor General. I also hope to expand our efforts to professionalize the institutions that uphold Malawi's democracy, including the Electoral Commission, media outlets, and democracy activists. I have seen firsthand the significant impact of trainings from U.S.-based institutions like the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Solidarity Center, and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), and if confirmed I plan to advocate for these organizations' continued engagement in Malawi.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to identify and support reputable Malawian and international partners who share our commitment to helping Malawi build an inclusive, responsive, and resilient democracy. As I have done in my other leadership roles, I plan to ensure our Mission has strict accountability measures in place for the disbursement, monitoring, and evaluation of bilateral assistance. I will seek to ensure that all staff are held to the highest possible standards and equipped with the most up to date training and tools. I will also prioritize assistance that bolsters

Malawi's ability to push back against the corrosive forces of corruption and the malign influence of strategic competitors, including the People's Republic of China.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Malawi? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes. Nongovernmental and civil society organizations play a critical role in upholding democracy, especially in developing countries. During my decade of work on African issues I have worked closely with NGO counterparts to solicit information, raise awareness, and advance U.S. objectives. We do our best work when we hear from all actors on the ground, so I plan to maintain my open-door policy for Malawian activists and encourage my colleagues at Embassy Lilongwe to do the same. If confirmed, I also hope to find ways to use the wealth of American and international expertise to build capacity for heroes of democracy in Malawi.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes. Inclusivity—both for frequently marginalized groups and opposition parties—is a cornerstone of my personal leadership style and Department policy more broadly. The United States has a vested interest in the promotion of inclusive, resilient democracy in Malawi and across the continent. If confirmed, I will work closely with our State Department, interagency, international, and Malawian partners to advance these efforts. In Malawi, this will mean further U.S. support to key institutions like the Electoral Commission and Malawi's historically independent judiciary. It will also mean advocating for American and international support for the civil society groups and watchdog institutions that uphold government accountability.

Question. Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with Malawi on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Malawi?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you and your Embassy teams actively engage with Malawi on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Malawi, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. Yes.

Question. What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Malawi?

Answer. Members of the LGBTQI+ community in Malawi face many of the same pressures felt by their counterparts throughout southern Africa. Societal pressure, stigma, and discrimination create a climate of fear for many members of these communities, and many LGBTQI+ individuals justifiably believe that they cannot freely express their sexual preferences, gender identity, or true selves. There continue to be laws that criminalize consensual same-sex sexual activity as "unnatural offenses," even though they are not actively enforced. An ongoing lack of access to justice means that members of this community are unable to adequately seek justice when they become victims of discrimination or persecution.

Question. What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Malawi?

Answer. If confirmed, I will commit to meet regularly with members of the LGBTQI+ community in Malawi and learn from them how the U.S. Mission can best be helpful in the local context they face. As I have learned from my work in Zambia and Nigeria, it is critically important to be in touch with LGBTQI+ leaders in a

country to know how to be helpful and not to do harm. If confirmed, I will make inclusive programming a core tenet of the Mission's internal and external ethos, and I will work with interagency, international, and Malawian partners to support LGBTQI+ champions and expand U.S. funded programming that supports members of the community.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Malawi?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID JOHN YOUNG BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. In November 2020, I published Senate Foreign Relations Committee Majority Report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Malawi and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The U.S. Mission in Lilongwe works closely with likeminded European partners, to support Malawi's democracy through investments in the electoral commission, judiciary, civil society, and accountability institutions. If confirmed, I will work with likeminded partners to counter malign influence, promote free market and democratic values, and support the rule of law and anti-corruption efforts. Further efforts to combat corruption will improve the investment climate and advance our goals of fiscal transparency. If confirmed, I will work closely with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation to support U.S. private sector opportunities in Malawi and to ensure Malawi has active U.S. alternatives to Beijing-based creditors.

Question. Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

Answer. Actions by a President in power to change the laws to allow him or her to remain in office extralegally pose an inherent threat to any democracy's health. A healthy democracy abides both by the will of its people and the underlying legal foundations upon which it rests. This requires the active participation of all citizens to safeguard democracy.

Question. If confirmed, how would you respond to Malawi doing something like this?

Answer. Any effort that might seek to upend the existing democratic order would undermine the legitimacy of Malawi's democracy. If confirmed, in such a scenario I would work with colleagues in Washington and local and international partners to defend democracy and push back against extralegal efforts to thwart the will of the people.

Question. What lessons will you draw from your experience as Chargé d'affaires in Zambia in your role as U.S. Ambassador to Malawi, if confirmed?

Answer. The recent democratic Presidential election in Zambia shows that U.S. Government programming, combined with activist U.S. private and public diplomacy, can help support and safeguard democratic values. These efforts played an important role in the Zambian political transition and the election of President Hakainde Hichilema. Zambia, like Malawi, has a comprehensive program to combat HIV/AIDS through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and there are many similarities between the programs in the two countries. The two U.S. Missions in Zambia and Malawi also work to expand two-way trade and investment and strengthening the private sector in both countries is a key goal.

Question. Do you agree that democracy and governance programming is an essential element of an assistance portfolio? Why?

Answer. Yes. The United States has a vested interest in advancing democracy around the world. As President Biden said in his address before the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, democracy remains the best tool we have

to unleash our full human potential. Democracies value and protect the intellectual, social, and economic contributions of their citizens. Democracies are also inherently more stable and responsive to the demands and expectation of their polities. Investments in democracy programming ensure the longevity and impact of our assistance programs across all sectors.

Question. What opportunities as U.S. Ambassador to Malawi do you envision for yourself, if confirmed, in supporting democratic processes and the development of resilient democratic institutions in Malawi?

Answer. If confirmed, I will press the ruling government to appoint and confirm heads of watchdog agencies including the Financial Intelligence Agency and the Office of the Auditor General. I will also expand our efforts to professionalize the institutions that uphold Malawi's democracy, including the Electoral Commission, media outlets, and democracy activists. I have seen firsthand the significant impact of trainings from U.S.-based institutions like the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Solidarity Center, and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). If confirmed, I will advocate for these organizations' continued engagement in Malawi.

Question. Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

Answer. Election observer missions play a critical role in our efforts to support democracy, especially in developing countries. Independent observers provide critical quantitative and qualitative insight about the functioning of electoral processes. This data allows the United States and our international partners to determine whether an election is free and fair, and whether electoral results in a country accurately reflect the will of its people. By supporting these efforts, we communicate the centrality of democracy promotion and support in our foreign policy.

Question. Would you support such a mission for Malawi's next general election?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to working closely with the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (OGAC) at the U.S. Department of State to ensure that the U.S. country team in Malawi's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS are efficient, effective, aligned and complementary to the work of OGAC?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you work to ensure that each of the agencies operating under Chief of Mission authority—notably USAID and CDC—meaningfully contribute to, but also adhere to, PEPFAR's Country Operating Plan (COP) process?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you also ensure that each of the agencies operating under Chief of Mission authority in Malawi uphold their commitments to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that all future funding for the Secondary Education Expansion for Development (SEED) program will be derived from funds appropriated for basic and secondary education, rather than for PEPFAR?

Answer. Yes.

Question. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Malawi?

Answer. The isolation, hardship, and fear caused by COVID-19 have had a particularly adverse effect on our overseas Missions, including in Malawi. The current lull in local infection rates, seasonal rotation of staff, and the lifting of government-imposed lockdowns have improved morale. Nevertheless, remote work in a developing country is a distinctly difficult and isolating experience for American and Malawian staff alike.

Question. How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Malawi?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to make staff morale a central focus of my tenure. American diplomats and our interagency colleagues in the field make incredible sacrifices to advance our nation's objectives. If confirmed, I will begin by building trust with all levels of the Embassy's staff and soliciting local ideas for how we overcome our shared challenges and more effectively accomplish our mission.

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

Answer. Throughout my career I have upheld a "One Team" approach that values the contributions, voice, and role of every individual. Effective and responsive management is critical in this effort. American and Malawian managers should be

equipped with the most effective tools and held to the highest standards. The follow-on effects of COVID-19 have accelerated isolation at our overseas missions, and if confirmed, I hope to make interagency relationships a central focus of my tenure.

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I believe strongly in a One Mission, One Team approach, and in my leadership roles over the past decade in Missions in Africa, I have sought to put this principle in practice. I have worked to set up cross-cutting interagency teams to advance our shared interagency Mission goals, including working groups that have advanced our democratic and electoral goals in Nigeria and Zambia, and our Northeast Working Group in Nigeria. I believe strongly in 360 communication, empowering and listening to all team members, and working closely with Locally Employed Staff, who provide the continuity and ongoing capacity of our Missions' work.

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

Answer. No.

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

Answer. Having served in leadership roles at multiple Missions in Africa, including three times as a deputy chief of mission, I am deeply committed to empowering and supporting the deputy chief of mission to help improve the work of the Mission. The relationship between the chief of mission and deputy chief of mission is critical to the success and morale of a Mission. If confirmed, I will build a relationship based on honesty, accountability, and collegiality, and I will equip my deputy to act decisively on the wide array of policy, security, and management issues we face.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will sit down immediately with my deputy chief of mission and jointly work with him or her to develop a collaborative plan for how we lead the Mission together. In general, I would seek to have the deputy chief of mission serve as the "chief of operations" of the Mission, ensuring that the Mission implements and executes the goals of our work together as a Mission team. I hope to work with the deputy chief of mission to identify issue areas where the deputy would take lead in policy development, public outreach, and performance management. This could focus on a variety of agency programs, but I believe it important that the two of us jointly assess the particular areas once we are on the ground working together.

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

Answer. Yes.

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

Answer. Yes.

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

Answer. In the countries where I have served, I have come to appreciate the importance of in-person relationships. I prioritize such these engagements, and I have been committed throughout my career to wide ranging work in this area. I recognize that diplomats around the world face many challenges to their safety and security, and we must mitigate the risks as we do our jobs outside the embassy walls. Security and health concerns have restricted diplomats' ability to safely move around outside the embassy walls in some countries. I applaud the contributions of the members of Diplomatic Security, the United States Marine Corps, and others who keep us safe overseas.

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

Answer. If confirmed, the safety of American and locally engaged personnel under my purview will be my top priority. I will lead by example in accessing local populations, and I will encourage my colleagues to expand our in-person access across all of Malawi. That said, we will of course remain cognizant of the particular logistical and security challenges our Mission faces in Malawi. Prioritizing staff

training and the procurement of safe and reliable housing and transportation equipment will advance these efforts.

Question. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Malawi? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

Answer. Malawians are eager to learn more about and engage with the United States. Malawi's low internet penetration rate requires a reliance on radio broadcasting and in-person travel. Embassy events receive significant attendance and local coverage. Public diplomacy staff have strong professional relationships with members of public and privately owned media outlets. The advance of high-speed cellular service through Malawi will broaden our reach, especially with Malawi's outsized youth population.

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

Answer. Effectively conveying our public diplomacy messages requires fluency in both U.S. policy and best practices on the ground. Achieving both takes intentional work at all levels of the Mission. In my previous leadership roles, I have prioritized forging relations with my Washington-based colleagues, and I have encouraged my staff members to do the same. I have also advocated within the Department for the unique role played by Mission staff members, who have unmatched contextual knowledge of what strategies are most effective. These relationships pay dividends as we work to shape and deliver effective messages.

Question. In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Malawi was identified as Tier 2 due to inadequate government efforts to address sex trafficking, reporting, or identifying victims or traffickers by the Government, and more. How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize our work to combat human trafficking as one of my top policy emphases. I will immediately and frequently communicate the importance of combatting human trafficking through private and public diplomacy. I have worked extensively on human trafficking issues in each leadership position I have held over the past decade, and I have found that offering solutions is a necessary companion to identifying problems. The U.S. Government and U.S.-based institutions offer a wealth of expertise, and if confirmed, I hope to connect Malawian partners with experts who can offer support on how to prevent trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and protect victims.

Question. In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Malawi was identified as having community tension regarding religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Malawi boasts a long history of interreligious tolerance, though within communities there are societal pressures to adopt locally dominant religious practices. If confirmed, I plan to draw upon my experience in previous assignments to advance religious freedom. I served as Director of the Office of International Religious Freedom and deeply value the shared advocacy that Missions and Washington colleagues do on behalf of religious freedom. In Nigeria, we developed programs of Christian-Muslim dialogue and peacebuilding to address widespread farmer-herder violence in the Middle Belt of the country. The support and expertise of Department principals, including the Ambassador-at-Large, are crucial to these efforts.

Question. In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Malawi was identified as having significant human rights abuses including harsh and life-threatening prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest or detention; significant acts of corruption; lack of investigation and accountability for violence against women; and criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. In my prior positions, I have found that offering solutions and support is the most effective approach to advancing our objectives. Malawi faces serious human rights challenges, many of which derive from a lack of local capacity to uphold laws and the enshrined rights of individuals. To address these concerns, if confirmed, I will work to identify the key institutions that warrant our support. The U.S. Mission in Lilongwe has preexisting programming with some of these, including the Malawian Police Service, and if confirmed I hope to expand these programs. Malawi also needs significant legal reform to protect the rights of all citizens, including women and persons in same-sex relationships.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead the U.S. Mission team in continuing to strengthen close relationships with civil society organizations and to maintain an open-door policy for our Malawian partners. These individuals frequently have unparalleled access, relationships, and information, and they can play a key role in advancing human rights and a wide range of our objectives.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID JOHN YOUNG BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. Malawi is among the poorest countries in the world, and our bilateral relationship is heavily focused on development issues. The challenges women and girls face are particularly crucial to address. On September 28, I introduced legislation, along with a group of senators that includes Senators Rubio and Portman from this committee, to formalize the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) initiative. W-GDP—which was established in February 2019 as a groundbreaking, whole-of-government approach to advancing women's economic empowerment—reached 12 million women worldwide during its first year and seeks to reach 50 million women by 2025. This legislation would advance women's economic empowerment by removing educational and skills barriers to female participation in the workforce; promoting women's entrepreneurship and increasing female access to capital and markets; and reforming laws and practices that prevent women's full and free participation in the global economy. What key economic challenges do Malawian women and girls face? Drawing on examples from your past service, how would you seek to work with Malawians to promote women's economic empowerment?

Answer. Women and girls in Malawi face economic challenges, societal discrimination, and limited access to capital, education, and professional opportunities. Insufficient child and health care mean many women and girls carry disproportionate familial duties. As I have done in other assignments in Zambia, Nigeria, and South Africa, if confirmed I will work to use U.S. Mission resources through USAID and through Public Affairs Section training programs to empower women, expand skills training, create mentorship networks, and provide small grants to start-up businesses run by women. If confirmed, I will also work with development partners to expand programs that support female students, entrepreneurs, activists, and civil society leaders.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. People in southern Madagascar are experiencing famine-like conditions. What is your assessment of how effective the Malagasy Government has been at organizing a response? Are there actions the U.S. Mission could take to help improve the response? What are the potential second-order impacts of famine on the country as a whole, and what steps would you take, if confirmed, to mitigate them?

Answer. This is not only a difficult challenge, but an existential one as well. The Malagasy Government has limited capacity to address the drought-induced food insecurity facing southern Madagascar. In addition to providing significant financial support, the U.S. Mission has encouraged other donor countries to support this humanitarian crisis and continues to work closely with NGOs and U.N. agencies such as the World Food Program to address the immediate need and develop plans to assist the population adapt to drought conditions. The most significant impact is internal migration, which threatens unique ecosystems.

I would work with the U.N., NGOs, other donor countries, and U.S. agencies like USAID to determine what more we can and should be doing. I would also work with the Malagasy Government to assess their efforts on assisting displaced persons and concurrently protecting endangered environmental resources.

Question. Madagascar was slow to join the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access initiative, (COVAX), and President Andry Rajoelina spent the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic touting an herbal remedy for the disease. He also criticized vaccines. If confirmed, what steps will you take to encourage the Government to take a science based approach to containing and mitigating the COVID-19 pan-

demic, and take steps to plan for the effective procurement and distribution of vaccines once they are available?

Answer. The situation has improved recently. Madagascar received a U.S. Government donation of 302,400 doses of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine in late July and there has been strong public acceptance of it. I will proactively seek opportunities to encourage the government of Madagascar to promote vaccines and utilize the mission's excellent connections within the health community and our public diplomacy tools to support this message. I will commit Mission resources to help the government of Madagascar address the challenge of an underdeveloped health system and poor transportation infrastructure, which inhibit large-scale, rapid distribution of vaccines, particularly to rural areas far from the capital Antananarivo.

Question. Competition between political elites in Madagascar has had violent and destabilizing consequences in the last twelve years, including a coup in 2009. This year, President Rajoelina claimed that security forces foiled a coup plot against him. What is your assessment of the level of political stability in Madagascar—is another coup likely? If confirmed, what steps will you take to reduce tensions between political elites?

Answer. Although the Government of Madagascar claimed there was a coup attempt this summer, the Rajoelina administration appears relatively stable and we assess that a successful coup is not likely in the near term. I commit to building relationships with all political parties in Madagascar and engaging with the diplomatic community to facilitate discussion among the political elites.

Question. Presently, the United States has limited diplomatic engagement with Comoros, and provides little in the way of foreign assistance. Would an expansion of ties be in the interest of the United States? What are potential areas of cooperation? If confirmed, would you increase engagement with the Comorian Government?

Answer. There are excellent opportunities to expand our diplomatic engagement with Comoros to the benefit of U.S. interest, particularly in the arena of maritime security due to its location on the Mozambique Channel, which is a major trafficking artery. Assistance in expanding capacity in maritime security, establishing transparent and accountable institutions, and in basic health and education would be immediate priorities in expanding our bilateral relationship.

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

Answer. Early in my career I served in Haiti in the post-“Baby Doc” era where we worked to support its fledgling democracy. Later in my career, in both Vietnam and Indonesia, the issues of democracy and human rights were at the top of our agenda. Whether advocating for human rights for our local staff or for the population at large, this is something I take very seriously and has been a priority in every post that I have served. I realize these issues are front and center in Madagascar and Comoros, so my team and I would have a lot to work to do, if I were confirmed. I commit to prioritizing these issues in both countries.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Madagascar and Comoros? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. As Senator Cardin has noted, corruption is a significant issue in Madagascar and Comoros. Both countries also face challenges in the electoral process, with disinformation from malign actors in Madagascar, and opposition party boycotts in Comoros. If confirmed, I will use upcoming elections in Madagascar in 2023 and in Comoros in 2024 to support both countries in strengthening their democratic institutions to ensure the elections ultimately reflect the will of their citizens.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Madagascar and Comoros? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. My first step would be to assess the current challenges to democracy in Madagascar and Comoros and develop an action plan to address these challenges. I expect that action plan would include outreach to opposition parties and civil society as well as programs to encourage greater transparency in government.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. I would review the current allocation of government assistance, gather input from my team and civil society partners, and assess how to prioritize these limited resources. I would look to find a balance between humanitarian assistance on one hand and programs to build the Government of Madagascar's capacity and establish good governance practices on the other.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Madagascar and Comoros? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes, I would make it a priority to meet with civil society members in Madagascar and Comoros to understand their challenges and to most effectively utilize USG programs that support their work. I will staunchly defend the rights of civil society and take appropriate actions to ensure their ability to operate freely in Madagascar and Comoros.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties in both countries. With elections coming up in 2023 and 2024, I would work with my team to create a plan to establish relationships with opposition parties, including diaspora groups. I also commit to advocate for diverse participation in the political process.

Question. Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with Madagascar and Comoros on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. Yes, I commit to actively engage with the media and staunchly defend freedom of the press. I also commit to regularly meeting with the independent, local press in both Madagascar and Comoros.

Question. Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes, I commit to engage with a variety of government and non-government counterparts to counter disinformation, whether disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors.

Question. Will you and your Embassy teams actively engage with Madagascar and Comoros on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes, I commit to actively engage with the governments of Madagascar and Comoros to support the rights of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Madagascar and Comoros, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. Yes, I commit to use my position to defend the human rights of all Malagasy and Comorian people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Question. What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. In Madagascar, no law prohibits same-sex sexual conduct for those aged 21 and older. . Nonetheless, members of the LGBTQI community report they face social stigma and discrimination, particularly within their own families. In Comoros, same-sex sexual activity is illegal, although authorities do not actively enforce the law. Due to societal pressure, LGBTQI persons generally do not reveal their sexual orientation.

Question. What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. I commit to regularly meeting with LGBTQI organizations and advocating for their rights in Madagascar and Comoros.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. Yes, I would welcome the opportunity to fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time I am in Washington for consultations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. Given the administration's redefined Prosper Africa policy, how will you prioritize U.S. investment into Madagascar, and ensure there is a level playing field given the pervasive levels of corruption that exist in Madagascar's institutions and its judiciary? Further, will you focus on the settling of the standing investment disputes with US companies, including Symbion Power?

Answer. Corruption in Madagascar is a significant obstacle for U.S. business, and I recognize that accountable institutions, sustained by a commitment to the rule of law and transparency, are essential to creating a business climate conducive to foreign investment. I commit to working with the government of Madagascar to reinforce the need for accountable institutions and provide U.S. expertise in developing transparent government. I also commit to support U.S. companies to settle investment disputes.

Question. Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power? If confirmed, how would you respond to Madagascar or Comoros doing something like this?

Answer. Constitutional changes should be made through a consultative process that includes civil society, opposition parties and all other stakeholders. Constitutional changes designed to favor incumbents or extend terms against the will of the people erode democratic principles and undermine stability. If confirmed, I will advocate for regular, democratic transitions of power, which yield more accountability, stronger institutions, and less corruption.

Question. In November 2020, I published Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Madagascar and Comoros, and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The United States should partner with likeminded countries to counter negative actions and influence of the PRC. We need to call out and confront non-democratic behavior and insist that all economic actors on the continent adhere to the highest standards of transparency, anti-corruption, debt sustainability, environmental protection, and respect for human rights, including labor rights.

Question. Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions? Would you support such a mission for Madagascar's next national election?

Answer. Promoting democracy and human rights has long been a core task of American foreign policy. Election observation can promote public participation, encourage transparency and public confidence in the electoral process, and mitigate the potential for electoral violence. Both U.S. Mission observers and independent observation missions help deter fraud at polling stations and facilitate the collection of critical information about the conduct of the elections. To ensure real democratic gains, it is important that our elections work not focus solely on Election Day, but also address problems in the lead up to elections that inhibit the ability of all parties to compete on an equal basis.

Question. Many U.S. Missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Madagascar?

Answer. I am impressed with the resiliency of the team in Madagascar in general but in particular during the difficult last 18 months under COVID-19. Morale remains good at post thanks to the efforts of the former Ambassador and the current Deputy Chief of Mission.

Question. How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Madagascar?

Answer. At every one of my posts, taking care of our teams has been my top priority. First, I would assess where things stand today with both the American and local staff in both Madagascar and Comoros through direct communication and interaction. And then together, we would see what changes, if any, were necessary. The bottom line is always communication and interaction. Even at the height of terrorism in Indonesia and direct attacks in my consular district when I was principal officer in Surabaya, my team and I were united and mutually supportive. That is always my number one goal.

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

Answer. I successfully faced this challenge in my last three overseas leadership positions in large and complex, multi-post missions—Indonesia, Vietnam and Nigeria. Creating a true “One Team, One Mission” approach takes a unified strategic approach, time, effort and honesty. The results are always worth the work. I would aim to do the same at Mission Madagascar.

Question. Management is a key responsibility for Chiefs of Mission. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. Whether I was supervising a section of 10 or a Mission of 900, my approach has always been to be as communicative and transparent as possible and to welcome and incorporate the great contributions of my team. I solicit input first and then carefully listen to my staff before making decisions. However, ultimately, I must take responsibility for our decisions and back up my team. I am also fully aware of when I must make the difficult decisions.

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

Answer. No. Any action that does not convey respect or professionalism is not only unacceptable, it is simply counterproductive. This goes not only for supervisors but also for other staff, including our local staff.

Question. How do you envision your relationship with Deputy Chief of Mission?

Answer. The COM-DCM relationship is extremely important because it sets the tone for the Mission. If confirmed, I would create a close partnership with the incumbent, relying on him for both policy and personnel guidance and the critical “truth-to-power” reality checks. The DCM is the eyes and ears of the Mission and I intend listen.

Question. If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Chief of Mission?

Answer. As a former DCM and two-time principal officer, I know what a critical role the DCM should play in both bilateral policy issues and internal Mission management. The DCM should not be chained to their desk but should be representing the Mission outwardly as well. Just as the DCM should lead and mentor our mid-level and more junior staff, they must have the opportunity to lead at the Mission level to prepare themselves for more senior positions.

Question. In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking. Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. This is a topic dear to my heart. As Director of the Office of Performance Evaluation in the then-Bureau of Human Resources, I led the team responsible for major reform of the EER, promotion and awards. I personally introduced the changes with outreach to more than 10,000 foreign service employees over two years. Those reforms were just a first step to creating a more responsive system such as the new Meritorious Service Increase award process and I am happy to say that these efforts are ongoing. Key to all these efforts is the push for supervisors

to be honest, fair, and responsive in their evaluations. The Department continues to prioritize this effort, as do I personally.

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

Answer. Yes, I believe that is very important. I have not only supported such efforts but have championed them and tried to educate my colleagues on this issue. It is critical not only to the assessment of the rated employee but to the development of supervisors and future Department leaders.

Question. It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and local citizens. In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our Embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

Answer. If you ask my team my overriding motto, they would tell you in unison "If you are sitting behind your desk, you are not doing your job." At every post that I have worked in or led, this has been true. Our best work is done when we are engaged with our host country and its nationals. That is often a challenge, especially in large Missions, where we must respond to the demands of Washington and the interagency 24/7. I believe that the Chief of Mission must set the expectation, provide the resources, and if need be, pick up the slack in order for our staff to get out of the office, interact with the people and support U.S. interests.

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

Answer. In most cases, it is simply a matter of time and resources. If confirmed, I, along with my DCM, will make sure our team have enough of both.

Question. Do you think the Department should require Chiefs of Mission have experience in the region to which they are nominated?

Answer. In my experience, the overriding qualification for any COM must be proven leadership and management experience. That is not something that can be learned on the job. Secondly, experience in strategic policy making that can be applied to any post or situation should be considered. If one can combine those two skills with regional experience, that would be ideal. However regional experience on its own should not be considered sufficient, in my opinion.

Question. With little experience in the sub-Saharan Africa, how are you approaching this assignment?

Answer. I have served across four continents and led Missions in three postings. That includes senior leadership in arguably our most important partner in Africa, Nigeria, where I run a multi-agency post of 400 American and local staff plus 200 security contractors. Lagos is larger than 80 percent of our sub-Saharan Africa posts, including Madagascar, and is important to our overall Africa policy. If confirmed, I will bring my years of experience in Africa and elsewhere to this challenging assignment.

Question. Do you consider your lack of experience in the region a handicap in starting your position as COM?

Answer. I bring extensive strategic leadership and more specifically, experience in the complex, sometimes dangerous, and always challenging Nigerian environment to the table. In Vietnam, I led a team of more than 900 staff in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, both as Deputy Chief of Mission and as Chargé d'Affaires for more than one year. In Surabaya, I led a team of 120 in two posts (including Bali) through terrorist attacks, pandemics, and natural disasters.

Question. If confirmed, would you consider your lack of experience in identifying a Deputy Chief of Mission?

Answer. Yes, that would be one of many factors I would consider. I have extensive experience in recruiting, hiring, mentoring and supporting my senior staff. Many of my former staff and mentees are now in leadership positions of their own including multiple Deputy Chiefs of Mission and Deputy Assistant Secretaries. I also have an extensive network and knowledge of our next level of leaders through my time in the Human Resources Bureau and as assistant professor and Acting Deputy Commandant at the National War College.

Question. Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Madagascar? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

Answer. Mission Madagascar's public diplomacy program is small but robust. As in many countries, there is always more demand for engagement, training, and exchange programs but the Mission is actively engaged. If confirmed, I will move back to more in-person programs, but virtual programs will continue to be an important tool. Challenges are more physical than philosophical at this point, with poor infrastructure, transportation challenges and distances posing some obstacles to travel and programming.

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

Answer. Post has latitude to tailor public messaging to local issues and concerns. If confirmed, I will ensure that our public diplomacy posture continues to play a key role in promoting our many shared values and America's generous financial assistance and support across the range of issues.

Question. As Ambassador, what would be your approach to dividing your time and attention between Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make this one of my first on-the ground assessments. COVID-19 restrictions hampered the Mission's outreach to Comoros, but two teams have travelled since May, and the current Chargé d'Affaires will be visiting the first week of October. I look forward to her and the DCM's thoughts on the best way forward.

Question. How frequently would you plan to travel to Comoros to meet in-person with partners?

Answer. It would be my goal to visit as often as is feasible. Just as important is making sure that our team at all levels travel regularly, not just the Chief of Mission.

Question. In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Madagascar remained on Tier 2 due to lack of accountability of complicit government officials, as well as failure to end facilitating child sex trafficking, among several other key areas of potential improvement. How will you work with the government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. I commit to work with the government of Madagascar to make improvements in preventing trafficking in persons. I would continue to support our efforts to increase transparency of government institutions and to alleviate poverty, which together address the roots of this issue.

Question. In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Madagascar was identified as having religious freedom issues within civil society. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor the religious freedom situation in Madagascar. I commit to working with civil society and the Malagasy government to ensure all citizens enjoy freedom of religious thought and expression as provided in the country's constitution. My understanding is that there are several, discrete challenges for specific religious groups in Madagascar and that the country overall is accepting of religious diversity. If confirmed, I will work with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious tolerance and to address religious freedom concerns in Madagascar.

Question. In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Madagascar was identified as having a litany of human rights abuses, including impunity for security forces and within government ranks. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. If confirmed, I will assess the situation and develop an action plan to reduce the instances of extrajudicial killings, which would likely include improving training for Malagasy security forces.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to meet with civil society members in Madagascar and Comoros to understand their challenges and to most effectively utilize USG programs that support their work. I will staunchly defend the rights of civil society and take appropriate actions to ensure their ability to operate freely in Madagascar and Comoros.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. Madagascar is one of the most interesting places in the world, with unique flora and fauna and a very distinct culture and population, but it also remains a very poor country. Trade—and the jobs that it sustains—are key to self-sustaining development. Good jobs solve so many social challenges. In what manner and in what sectors might you seek to increase U.S. trade with and investment in Madagascar? What role do you see for potentially greater trade and investment engagement in Madagascar via U.S. programs like Prosper Africa and Power Africa?

Answer. Commercial engagement is one of the top Mission goals and as an economic officer, I have always put that at the forefront of my professional efforts. I was pleased to learn that the Mission team has put a strong focus on increasing its outreach, including to U.S. businesses. If confirmed, I would work hard to ensure fair treatment by local officials and others to counter weak rule of law and corruption. Sustainable development would be our goal. In Nigeria, my team and I have worked with Prosper Africa and Power Africa programs and I would welcome seeing how we can bring that expertise and opportunity to Madagascar.

Question. The Comoros Islands sit in a strategic location in the Indian Ocean, particularly with respect to combatting piracy and the threat it poses to international sea commerce. What are your views on the programmatic focus and impact of America's International Military Educational Training (IMET) program in Comoros, especially on military professionalization and counter-piracy initiatives in the Indian Ocean?

Answer. The objective of the U.S. IMET training program is to professionalize the Comorian military, especially its maritime forces. This is particularly important due to the country's strategic location in the Mozambique channel, a major piracy artery. The Mission's Department of Defense staff are working hard within the constraints of their finite resources to build cooperative security partnerships with Comoros and with like-minded allies in the region. Our current bilateral partnership with Comoros on maritime security issues is strong, and developing their capacity is a long-term project. If confirmed, I would welcome working with our Department of Defense colleagues on the ground, as I have done in Indonesia, Vietnam, and Nigeria.
