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**NOMINATIONS OF ANDREW SCHAPIRO
AND NINA HACHIGIAN**

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2014

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

Andrew H. Schapiro, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Czech Republic
Nina Hachigian, of California, to be Representative to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:36 p.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher Murphy presiding.

Present: Senators Murphy and Johnson.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER MURPHY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT**

Senator MURPHY. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will now come to order. We will be joined shortly I believe by Ranking Member Senator Johnson. Thank you very much for your patience. As you know, we just finished a long series of votes, which happens to be the final series of votes for the week. So that may explain what could be a smaller turnout for this hearing. We appreciate your patience, figured that you guys have waited for months for this hearing to take place, so an extension of a few hours might not necessarily be so disastrous.

I am pleased to welcome both of our nominees and also your friends and family who have come here today to support you. The committee will consider today the nominations of Andrew Schapiro to be our Ambassador to the Czech Republic and Nina Hachigian to be our Ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Just to outline the process, I will give some opening remarks. If Senator Johnson arrives, he will give his as well. Then we will proceed to introductions of our nominees, at which time you will be invited to give your opening statements and then answer questions from the panel. It would be great if you could keep your opening statements to around 5 minutes or less.

To begin, I would like to address the United States relationship with the Czech Republic and the challenges and opportunities that

await our next Ambassador. The United States-Czech relationship is a special one. Our democratic histories have served as an inspiration to each other. Former Czech President, poet, and playwright Vaclav Havel and the revolutionary manifesto Charter 77 are icons of freedom and democracy to millions here in the United States. Correspondingly, America of course was a refuge for thousands of Czechs fleeing both Nazi occupation and Soviet control.

In addition to our shared values, we also have strong security and economic ties. The Czech Republic is a key NATO ally and serves as the protecting power for U.S. interests in Syria after we evacuated our Embassy in Damascus. Since 2002 they have been one of our staunchest and strongest partners in Afghanistan, sending 700 soldiers, including special forces, who operate in some of the most challenging areas of Afghanistan.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Czech Republic plays a leading role promoting democratic values around the world, helping countries make that difficult transition from authoritarian regimes to representative democracy. It was under the Czech Presidency of the European Union that the Eastern Partnership Initiative was launched.

Still, there are challenges in the Czech Republic that no doubt will be met by our next Ambassador. The surprisingly successful entrance of the ANO Party on the Czech political scene was largely driven by voters fed up with bribery and corruption. According to a Gallop Poll, the percentage of Czechs who perceive corruption as widespread in the government increased by 15 percentage points between 2007 and 2013, reaching 94 percent last October. The recent scandal that forced the Prime Minister's resignation and triggered new elections may have been the most notable of these problems, but hopefully it will also lead to real reform.

Another area that will be both a challenge but also an opportunity is the field of energy security, which has increasingly become a central issue of our discussions around Ukraine and the European response to Russia's belligerent actions in the region. The Czech Republic, like many nations in Central and Eastern Europe, is highly dependent on Russian energy. They need a regional strategy to diversify their sources and to modernize their energy infrastructure.

Now let me say a few words about ASEAN. The United States has deep interests in Southeast Asia, including maritime security, the promotion of democracy and human rights, the encouragement of liberal trade and investment regimes, counterterrorism, the combating of illegal trafficking of narcotics and human trafficking, and many other issues.

As a Pacific nation and a global power, it is imperative that the United States continue to deepen our engagement in the region and with ASEAN, its most important multilateral institution. In terms of our economic partnership, the trading and investment figures with the region speak for themselves. U.S. goods trade with ASEAN is nearly \$200 billion. Services trade is approximately \$30 billion, and U.S. foreign direct investment in those markets is around \$160 billion. Conversely, the 10 countries have a market of approximately 600 million consumers and economic growth there has been faster than the world average for the past decade.

In terms of political and security interests, I would note that the United States has an abiding interest in maintaining peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region, and this includes ensuring open sea-lanes in the South China Sea and the East China Sea, where so much of the world's commerce flows. So it is of paramount importance that any disagreements and territorial disputes in Asia be resolved peacefully, through international law, through arbitration and through codes of conduct, not through aggressive actions and confrontation.

The tension between Vietnam and China—I am sure we will talk about that today—that we have seen in recent days underscores they need for peaceful mechanisms to resolve territorial disputes. We hope that the Association will continue to play an important role in facilitating these discussions.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on those subjects and many others. In the absence of Senator Johnson's opening remarks, let me proceed to introducing our witnesses and then you can proceed with your statements. I am pleased to introduce Andrew Schapiro, who is the nominee for Ambassador to the Czech Republic, who has come before this committee after a career in both the public and private sector.

Andrew is a Czech American who has deep family ties to the country to which he has been nominated to serve. I would encourage all of my colleagues to read the incredible moving story of his family's experience during the time of Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia as documented in "Letters From Prague."

Mr. Schapiro attended Yale University, graduating magna cum laude with a degree in history. He was awarded the Marshall Scholarship to do postgraduate work at Oxford, earning a degree in philosophy, politics, and economics, and then he returned to the United States to attend Harvard, the law school there, where he also graduated magna cum laude.

Again, his legal career as a clerk to two distinguished Federal judges, both Richard Posner and Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun. He then entered public service, spending 5 years as a Federal public defender in Manhattan. He went on to become a partner at two leading international law firms, achieving newsworthy victories in the areas of intellectual property, white collar criminal defense, and commercial litigation. He was selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers of America* and has been described as one of the brightest legal minds of his generation.

In addition, Mr. Schapiro is involved in a number of civic and charitable organizations, serving on the Criminal Justice Act Advisory Board for the U.S. Court of Appeals in the Second Circuit and the Board of Directors for the Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund, as well as the Board of Directors for the Jewish Council of Urban Affairs.

I am also pleased to introduce Nina Hachigian as the nominee for the Ambassador to be the Representative of the United States to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with the rank and the status of Ambassador. She is currently a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, based in Los Angeles. She focuses on great power relationships, the United States-China relationship, international institutions, and United States foreign policy.

She is the coauthor of the book "The Next American Century: How the U.S. Can Thrive as Other Powers Rise." She was previously a senior political scientist at RAND Corporation and served as the director of the RAND Center for Asia Pacific Policy for 4 years. Before that she was with the Council on Foreign Relations and also on the staff of the National Security Council in the White House.

She has published numerous reports, book chapters, and journal articles. She is on the board of the Institute for International Affairs of Stanford University and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Pacific Council on International Policy.

She received her bachelor of sciences from Yale University and then, like Mr. Schapiro, for inexplicable reasons left Connecticut to pursue her J.D. from Stanford Law School.

We will now move to opening statements. We will start with you, Mr. Schapiro, and then Ms. Hachigian.

**STATEMENT OF ANDREW H. SCHAPIRO, OF ILLINOIS,
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

Mr. SCHAPIRO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks in advance to Ranking Member Johnson and all members of the committee. It is an honor to come before you as the President's nominee to be our next Ambassador to the Czech Republic.

Seventy-five years ago my late mother, then a small girl, watched from the window of her family's apartment in Prague as German soldiers marched in to occupy her city. Czechoslovakia, as it was then known, had been a flourishing outpost of Western democracy and culture prior to those tragic events. Our family, like all the Czech people, learned the hard way that you cannot take liberty and security for granted.

We ultimately learned something else—that the United States of America, the Nation that gave my mother and her parents refuge when they fled the Nazis, literally saving their lives, is a force for good in the world like no other.

I want to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the trust that they have shown in me with this nomination, and I am so pleased that if I am confirmed my wife and children will be joining me to represent America in the Czech Republic. They mean everything to me and they are here with us today: my wife Tamar, our 13-year-old daughter, Gallia, and our 10-year-old son, Alexander. Mr. Chairman, they will be force multipliers in Prague if I am confirmed for this position.

I would also like to acknowledge my sister, also named Tamar, who has come in from California to be here today. Sadly, my parents are no longer with us, but their wisdom and their examples are always present.

The Czech Republic is a staunch, important ally in the heart of Europe. We have deep relationships in three key areas: our shared security, our shared prosperity, and our shared values. Let me address each in turn.

Our defense and security relationship has flourished since the end of the cold war. As an active member of NATO, the EU, and the OSCE, the Czech Republic plays a role in global affairs that is disproportionate to its relatively small size. As you mentioned, Mr.

Chairman, Czech military forces serve side by side with U.S. forces in Afghanistan. The Czechs have helped to promote peace and stability in the Balkans, in Mali, and the Sinai, and the Czechs have courageously served as our protecting power in Syria since we closed our Embassy there in 2012.

If confirmed, I will work to fortify our bilateral and multilateral cooperation in building security around the world.

Of course, Russia's actions in Ukraine now remind us and our allies of the role that NATO was originally created to perform, the defense of transatlantic security. Here again, the Czechs are making important contributions. They have offered fighter jets to reinforce Baltic air space and troops to support the NATO Response Force. They have also provided monitors for OSCE missions. In fact, a Czech was among the OSCE monitors recently taken captive and then released in Eastern Ukraine.

The Czech Republic has quickly and faithfully implemented the targeted sanctions and asset freezes that have been imposed on Russia, and if confirmed I will make sure that we continue to coordinate closely with our Czech allies as we jointly address the situation in Ukraine. I will also take every opportunity to reaffirm our ironclad commitment to mutual self-defense under NATO's Article 5.

Today the Czech defense budget totals just over 1 percent of GDP, falling well short of NATO targets and placing the Czechs in the middle of the pack among our European allies in terms of defense spending. If confirmed, I will urge the Czech Government to boost the share of resources that it dedicates to defense.

Recent events also starkly demonstrate the need for greater attention to European energy security. The Czech Republic, which gets about 75 percent of its oil and gas from Russia, understands that predictable and uninterrupted access to energy is fundamental to both national security and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will work with the Czech Republic to help increase its energy security through diversification of energy sources and routes.

Next, I want to build on our two nations' growing economic and commercial ties. Over the last 4 years bilateral trade between the United States and the Czech Republic has doubled to nearly \$6 billion. The Czech Republic has become one of the United States fastest-growing export markets in Europe, and if confirmed I will be a strong advocate for U.S. business interests to support job creation back home and I will make expanding our trade ties and ensuring that our firms can compete on the ground a top priority.

Completing an ambitious Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TTIP, is a key strategic goal for both the United States and the European Union and its member states, including the Czech Republic. I promise that, along with our excellent inter-agency team in Prague, I will work to maintain the support of the Czech Government for TTIP and help to promote awareness that a mutually beneficial agreement will ensure continued growth and prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic.

Finally, on our shared values, if confirmed I will advocate for transparency and rule of law in the business sector and encourage the Czech Government to continue its anticorruption efforts to help improve the overall business climate. I will also work with the

Czech Government and civil society organizations to help foster a more inclusive society so that all Czechs, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation, benefit from equal opportunity and full protection of the law.

In all of these efforts I will draw upon my experience as an advocate, as a public speaker, as a student of economics and politics, and as a manager of large and diverse teams to advance the goals of our Nation and the Embassy.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I noted at the outset that in the late 1930s my mother and grandparents watched Nazi troops enter their city from their apartment window in Prague. That apartment building still stands and it is within walking distance of the U.S. Ambassador's residence where, if confirmed, I will soon be living with my own family. It is not a long walk, but it is quite a journey that has taken us from that apartment to that residence. I am deeply honored to have been asked to represent the United States in Prague. I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and I welcome any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schapiro follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANDREW H. SCHAPIRO

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the committee. It is an honor to come before you as the President's nominee to be our next Ambassador to the Czech Republic.

Seventy-five years ago, my late mother—then a small girl—watched from the window of her family's apartment in Prague as German soldiers marched in to occupy her city. Czechoslovakia, as it was then known, had been a flourishing outpost of Western democracy and culture prior to those tragic events. Our family—like all the Czech people—learned the hard way that you cannot take liberty and security for granted. And we ultimately learned something else: that the United States of America—the nation that gave my mother and her parents refuge when they fled the Nazis, literally saving their lives—is a force for good in the world like no other.

I want to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the trust in me that they have shown with this nomination. And I am very pleased that, if I am confirmed, my wife and children will join me in representing America in the Czech Republic. They mean everything to me, and they are here with us today. My wife, Tamar; our 13-year-old daughter, Galia; and our ten-year-old son, Alexander. They will be "force multipliers" in Prague if I am confirmed for this position. I would also like to acknowledge my sister—also named Tamar—who has come in from California to be here today. Sadly my parents are no longer with us—but their wisdom and their examples are ever-present.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, at this critical time, the Czech Republic is a staunch, important ally in the heart of Europe. We have a deep relationship in three key areas: our shared security; our shared prosperity; and our shared values. Let me address each in turn.

First, our defense and security relationship has flourished in the decades since the end of the cold war. As an active member of NATO, the EU, and the OSCE, the Czech Republic plays a role in global affairs that is disproportionate to its relatively small size. Czech military forces serve side by side with U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan; they are currently in charge of base protection at Bagram Air Force base and contribute helicopter training units and special forces troops. The Czechs have promised that they will draw down only in consultation with allies, and have pledged to be "in together, out together" with us in Afghanistan.

The Czechs have also made important contributions to peace and stability in the Balkans, providing units for both NATO's force in Kosovo and the EU's mission in Bosnia. Today Czech soldiers are deployed with the EU Training Mission in Mali, and with the Multinational Force Observers mission in the Sinai. Additionally, the Czechs have courageously served as our protecting power in Syria since the closure of our Embassy there in 2012. If confirmed, I will work to fortify our bilateral and multilateral cooperation in promoting democracy and building security around the world.

And while Czech forces have proven their mettle in expeditionary missions, Russia's actions in Ukraine now remind us and our allies of the role that NATO was originally created to perform, the defense of transatlantic security. Here again the Czechs are making important contributions. They have offered fighter jets to reinforce Baltic airspace and troops to support the NATO Response Force. They have also provided monitors for OSCE missions; indeed a Czech was among the OSCE monitors recently taken captive and then released in Eastern Ukraine.

The Czech Republic has quickly and faithfully implemented the targeted sanctions and asset freezes that have been imposed on Russia. If confirmed, I will make sure that we continue to coordinate closely with our Czech allies as we jointly address the situation in Ukraine. I will also take every opportunity to reaffirm our ironclad commitment to mutual self-defense under NATO's Article 5.

Today the Czech defense budget totals just over 1 percent of GDP, falling well short of NATO targets and placing the Czechs in the middle of the pack among our European allies in terms of defense spending. If confirmed, I will urge the Czech Government to boost the share of resources that it dedicates to defense. I know that Defense Secretary Hagel and Czech Defense Minister Stropnický discussed Czech modernization efforts and the need to maintain readiness and capabilities to support NATO when they met here in Washington last month. If confirmed, I will continue to engage on this high priority topic.

The events in Ukraine also starkly demonstrate the need for greater attention to European energy security. The Czech Republic—which gets about 75 percent of its oil and gas from Russia—understands that predictable and uninterrupted access to energy is fundamental to both national security and economic prosperity. With the cancellation of the Temelin nuclear power plant tender, the Czech Government is reexamining its energy security strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the Czech Republic to help increase its energy security through diversification of energy sources and routes.

Next—I want to build on our two nations' growing economic and commercial ties. Over the last 4 years, bilateral trade between the U.S. and the Czech Republic has doubled—to nearly \$6 billion. With a prosperous, industrialized economy, the Czech Republic provides substantial export opportunities for the U.S. in high-tech, manufacturing, and other sectors. Last year, with the support of the U.S. Commercial Service, we exported almost \$2 billion of goods to the Czech Republic—more than at any other time in our history. In fact, the Czech Republic has become one of the United States' fastest growing export markets in Europe. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for U.S. business interests to support job creation back home, and will make expanding our trade ties and ensuring that U.S. firms can compete on the ground a top priority.

Completing an ambitious Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TTIP, is a key strategic goal for both the United States and the European Union and its member states, including the Czech Republic. The Czechs will benefit from the expansion of trade and reduction in the cost of doing business through lowering tariffs and removing "behind the border" barriers. U.S. companies will benefit from the opening of opportunities—especially for small and medium-sized businesses—to trade with and invest in the Czech Republic. I promise that—along with our excellent interagency team at our Embassy in Prague—I will work to maintain the support of the Czech Government for TTIP and help to promote awareness that a mutually beneficial agreement will ensure continued growth and prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic.

Finally, on our shared values, if confirmed, I will advocate for transparency and rule of law in the business sector and encourage the Czech Government to continue its anticorruption efforts to help improve the overall business climate. Last year, several prominent Czech NGOs came together to speak with one voice on anticorruption issues. Their efforts led to creation of several distinct pieces of anticorruption legislation which a majority of parliamentarians have publicly supported. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Czech civil society organizations to support and amplify their efforts.

Confronting all forms of racism and intolerance reinforces the values and security of both the United States and the Czech Republic. I will work with the Czech Government and civil society organizations on building a more inclusive society to ensure that all Czechs, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation benefit from equal opportunity and the full protection of the law.

In all of these efforts, I will draw upon my experience as an advocate, a public speaker, a student of economics and politics, and a manager of large and diverse teams to advance the goals of our Nation.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I noted at the outset that in 1939 my mother and grandparents watched Nazi troops enter their city from their apart-

ment window in Prague. That building still stands, and it is within walking distance of the U.S. Ambassador's residence where—if confirmed—I will soon be living with my own family. It is not a long walk, but it is quite a journey that has taken us from the apartment to the Residence. I am deeply honored to have been asked to represent the United States in Prague. I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I welcome any questions you may have.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Schapiro.

Ms. Hachigian, I hope that I came somewhat close to pronouncing your name correctly. You are welcome to give your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF NINA HACHIGIAN, OF CALIFORNIA, NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR

Ms. HACHIGIAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am deeply honored to appear before you today and humbled by the confidence that President Obama has shown in me with this nomination. My Armenian grandmother, whose locket I am wearing, only had a grade school education. When she came to this country fleeing persecution and poverty in her homeland, I do not think she could have imagined the path that would bring me here.

Her younger son served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean war. He earned a Ph.D. in math. He married another professor from Germany and they had a daughter, who ended up at this table. I am my grandmother's American dream. My parents would also have been very proud of this nomination.

I would like to introduce my husband. My family is more important to me than anything and I would not be here if Joe and my two children were not willing to embark on a genuine adventure. I also want to thank my friends and colleagues who are here with us today.

I have been working on U.S. Asia policy for some 15 years now since I left the staff of the National Security Council, first as the Director of the Center for Asia Pacific Policy at the RAND Corporation and now as a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. In those jobs, I traveled to the region frequently, had the opportunity to meet with Asian leaders and work closely with my Asian counterparts.

I am thrilled by the prospect of entering government again and serving my country if I am confirmed as the next Ambassador to ASEAN. I want to acknowledge the key role the Senate has played in recognizing the growing importance of ASEAN, including by creating this position in 2006.

Just as the Rebalance to Asia is an important part of the administration's foreign policy, engagement with ASEAN plays a central role in the rebalance. Increasingly, the most challenging issues in Asia—energy security, territorial disputes, climate, human trafficking—can only be solved by nations working in concert. ASEAN is at the heart of Asia's institutions, providing the architecture to work through these issues, and that is why Secretary Kerry said last year "The partnership that we share with ASEAN remains a top priority for the Obama administration."

What binds the 10 countries of ASEAN together is their commitment to nonviolence and the rule of law. We share those values. We share ASEAN's vision of a peaceful, prosperous, rules-based order in the Asia-Pacific. If confirmed and with your help, I will work with ASEAN to further our common values, including human rights for the people of Southeast Asia.

The United States has other important interests in the region, including economic opportunity. Southeast Asia's over 600 million people are already America's fourth-largest export market, supporting over half a million U.S. jobs. ASEAN is pursuing an integrated economic community and the United States is supporting that effort. America is the largest foreign investor in Southeast Asia. If confirmed and with your help, I will continue to work to expand U.S. business's access to the growing ASEAN market.

Energy, environment, and climate are also critical issues in Southeast Asia. As a Californian, I especially welcome the chance to engage with the region on how to protect oceans and rivers, these critical natural resources that provide food security and economic livelihoods for so many.

Our engagement with ASEAN is also about its people, many of whom are our relatives. Over 6 million Americans identify with an ASEAN ethnicity. The region is young—65 percent of ASEAN's people are under the age of 35. With the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative that President Obama launched in April, we are looking to build ties with the leaders of tomorrow, giving them a platform to work with each other across ASEAN borders.

All of our interests in Southeast Asia ultimately rest on the peace and stability made possible by our enduring security presence in the Asia-Pacific. Two treaty allies, the Philippines and Thailand, are members of ASEAN. The United States response after Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines shows the unique capabilities that our military and civilian agencies bring to bear and demonstrates our deep and abiding commitment to addressing both traditional and nontraditional security challenges in the region.

Half of the tonnage of the world's ship-based cargo passes through the South China Sea. The United States has a national interest in the unfettered flow of this commerce and in freedom of navigation and overflight in these waters. We have a deep stake in ensuring that the territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea are solved peacefully, without coercion, force, or intimidation, and in accordance with international law.

Unfortunately, we have seen lately what appears to be a pattern of unilateral actions by China to advance its territorial and maritime claims, the latest of which is China's introduction of an oil rig into the disputed waters near the Paracel Islands. This is provocative and raises tensions and it highlights the need for claimants to clarify their claims in accordance with international law. America supports ASEAN's strong and unified voice on these disputes and its efforts to manage them in a manner that is consistent with a rules-based regional order and international law. We encourage ASEAN and China's efforts to conclude a meaningful code of conduct. A peaceful rules-based process will benefit all the claimants, big and small, and help preserve regional peace and stability.

An effective ASEAN will have lasting benefits for the region and for our shared future. If confirmed and with your help, I will commit myself to deepening our ties with this important organization. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I am happy to answer your questions now or at any time in the future.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hachigian follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NINA HACHIGIAN

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today, and humbled by the confidence that President Obama has shown in me with this nomination.

My Armenian grandmother, whose locket I am wearing, had only a grade school education. When she came to this country, fleeing persecution and poverty in her homeland, I don't think she could have imagined the path that would bring me here.

Her younger son served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean war. He earned a Ph.D. in math, married another professor from Germany (my mother, who later became a small businessowner), and they had a daughter who ended up at this table.

I am my grandmother's American dream.

My parents would also have been very proud of this nomination.

I would like to introduce my husband. My family is more important to me than anything, and I wouldn't be here if he and our two children were not willing to embark on a genuine adventure.

I've been working on U.S. Asia policy for some 15 years now, since I left the staff of the National Security Council—first as the director of the Center for Asia Pacific Policy at the RAND Corporation, and now as a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress. In those jobs, I traveled to the region frequently and had the opportunity to meet with Asian leaders and work closely with my Asian counterparts.

I am thrilled by the prospect of entering government again, and serving my country, if confirmed as the next Ambassador to ASEAN.

I want to acknowledge the key role that members of the Senate and of the House have played in recognizing the growing importance of ASEAN, including creating this position in 2006. I will count on your continued engagement if confirmed.

Just as the Rebalance to Asia is an important part of the administration's foreign policy, engagement with ASEAN plays a central role in the rebalance.

Increasingly, the most challenging issues in Asia—energy security, territorial disputes, climate, human trafficking—can only be solved multilaterally. ASEAN is at the heart of Asia's institutions, providing the architecture to work through these issues, and that is why as Secretary Kerry said last year: "The partnership that we share with ASEAN remains a top priority for the Obama administration."

What binds the 100 countries in ASEAN together is their commitment to non-violence and the rule of law. We share those values, and we share ASEAN's vision of a peaceful, prosperous rules-based order in the Asia-Pacific.

If confirmed, and with your help, I will work with ASEAN to further our common values, including human rights for the people of Southeast Asia.

The United States has other important interests in the region including economic opportunity. Southeast Asia's over 600 million people already are America's fourth-largest export market, supporting over half a million U.S. jobs.

ASEAN is pursuing an integrated ASEAN Economic Community, and the United States is supporting that effort. In 2012, President Obama established the U.S.-ASEAN Expanded Economic Engagement initiative to promote increased U.S. trade with and investment in the region, and to encourage ASEAN countries to join high-standard trade agreements. If confirmed, and with your help, I will continue this work to expand U.S. businesses' access to the growing ASEAN market, creating more jobs for Americans and realizing ASEAN's own goals.

Energy, environment, and climate are critical issues in Southeast Asia. As a Californian, I especially welcome the chance to engage with the region on how to protect oceans and rivers—these critical natural resources that provide food security and economic livelihoods for so many.

Our engagement with ASEAN is also about its people, many of whom are our relatives. Over 6 million Americans identify with an ASEAN ethnicity.

The region is young. Sixty-five percent of ASEAN's people are under the age of 35. With the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative that President Obama launched in April, we are looking to build ties with the leaders of tomorrow, giving

them a platform to work across ASEAN borders to solve social and economic challenges.

All of our interests in Southeast Asia ultimately rest on the peace and stability made possible by our enduring security presence in the Asia-Pacific. Two treaty allies, the Philippines and Thailand, are members of ASEAN, and all five Pacific allies are members of the East Asia Summit. The U.S. response after Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines shows the unique capabilities our military and civilian agencies bring to bear and demonstrates our deep and abiding commitment to addressing both traditional and nontraditional security challenges in the region.

Half of the tonnage of the world's ship-based cargo passes through the South China Sea. The United States has a national interest in the unfettered flow of this commerce and in freedom of navigation and overflight in these waters.

We have a deep stake in ensuring that the territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea are solved peacefully, without coercion, force, or intimidation and in accordance with international law.

Unfortunately, we have seen lately what appears to be a pattern of unilateral actions by China to advance its territorial and maritime claims, the latest of which is China's introduction of an oil rig into disputed waters near the Paracel Islands. This is provocative and raises tensions, and it highlights the need for claimants to clarify their claims in accordance with international law.

America supports ASEAN's strong and unified voice on these disputes and its efforts to manage them in a manner that is consistent with a rules-based regional order and international law. We encourage ASEAN and China's efforts to conclude a meaningful Code of Conduct. A peaceful, rules-based process will benefit all the claimants, big and small and help preserve regional peace and stability.

An effective ASEAN will have lasting benefits for the region and for our shared future. If confirmed, and with your help, I will commit myself to deepening our ties with this important organization.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I am happy to answer your questions, now or at any time in the future.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you to both of our nominees. Welcome to your families as well.

We will now start an opening round of questions. Mr. Schapiro, let me start with you to talk a little bit about the subject of my first, and I think only, visit to the Czech Republic, which was some years ago in the middle of the tender for the nuclear contract, which has now been shelved, in part likely because of energy price dynamics in the Czech Republic and the region. But of course, this was always about the Czech Republic's efforts to make themselves energy independent, and maybe the price sensitivities of the market today do not allow for the tender to go forward. But hopefully we will have an ambassador there who will try to impress upon the Czechs the need to reopen this bidding process. We clearly have an American company that we hope gets fair consideration, but it is hard to figure out in the short term and the medium term how the Czech Republic really moves in a substantial manner to independence with respect to energy from Russia without that nuclear project getting under way.

What is your understanding as you have learned about this country, about the prospects of that deal being put back together, and what is the role of our next Ambassador in trying to make that happen?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You raise a very important issue, the issue of energy independence, which has both an economic and a security aspect to it, as we have learned in recent events. As you note, the Czech Republic does rely on nuclear power for some of its electricity generation, and we were of course disappointed that the Temelin tender, the tender for the Temelin nuclear power plant, has been called off.

I can say that our Embassy team in the Czech Republic did wonderful work in advocating for Westinghouse in that regard. But, as you noted, it was essentially an economic decision by the Czech Government. The Czech energy company, CEZ, had asked for price guarantees, but, given the economic realities, the government was not able to make those price guarantees.

If I am confirmed, I will make sure to advocate for and support an open and transparent tender process. There is word that the tender is not necessarily permanently taken off the shelf.

Senator MURPHY. If you could talk a little bit about the orientation of the Czech Republic to Europe. Their former President Vaclav Klaus was famously Euroskeptic in his views. You have now got the ANO Party. The leader of that party is not supportive of joining the euro zone, although he is, frankly, not rabidly committed to staying out of European Union affairs.

A lot of talk within the region about this next round of European Parliament elections perhaps resulting in more Euroskeptic Parliament members going to Brussels. What do you see? What do you understand to be the view and the trend line over the next 5 years of attitudes toward Europe and the EU within the Czech Republic?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. Thank you, Senator. What I can say about that is that the current government is generally regarded as somewhat more EU-centric than the government that it replaced. But as you correctly point out, one of the larger parties within the coalition, ANO, is sometimes seen as not so tilted toward Europe. So I think what we can draw from that is that it is very hard to predict. It is a relatively new government. But certainly we have seen nothing that causes any alarm or concern. There are strains of Euroskepticism in Czech politics, as in most countries in the EU.

I would not hazard to predict how the European parliamentary elections, which I think are a week from today, will turn out. I think we will have to wait and see. But everything I have heard suggests that we have no cause for any alarm.

Senator MURPHY. Ms. Hachigian, I am not sure whose phrase this was, but one of your focuses is on great power relationships and clearly that would seem to describe the relationship between the United States and China. But part of being a great power is submitting yourself to internationally acceptable ways of resolving disputes. One of the troubling trend lines in the part of the world that our subcommittee looks at over the past several months has been one great power, Russia's, enthusiasm, frankly, for walking away from those traditional ways of dealing with disputes and disagreements.

As you look at this pattern of aggressive activity on the open seas by the Chinese, do you think this is a government that is moving toward attempting to settle disputes outside of those acceptable norms, or do you think this is just a sort of series of provocations designed to lay claims so that they can settle disputes in an acceptable form?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. Thank you for that question, Senator. It is a difficult question because I do not think we really know yet. What we are seeing is the pattern, and it is China's acting unilaterally to change the status quo and not resorting to diplomacy, which is

what the United States would want to see, that these disputes are resolved peacefully and in accordance with international law.

That said, the ASEAN and China are engaged in negotiations over a code of conduct, and the United States would very much like to see that be a meaningful code that is concluded swiftly, because there is obviously a need for more guidelines so that there is not further violence in the region.

Senator MURPHY. One of the criticisms of ASEAN is that it is a talk shop, that it is a forum for a lot of discussion, but not as much action. So take the dispute over the Paracel Islands. What is the role for ASEAN to play in a bilateral dispute like this and what is the potential for ASEAN to shed that image and deliver a little bit more action and a little bit less discussion?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. Thank you for that question. ASEAN has a central role in these disputes. It negotiated a declaration of conduct with China back in 2002, which is a document that asks for all the claimants to act peacefully and to not act in an escalatory manner. Now, as I said, it is in negotiations with China over a declaration of conduct.

Over this last weekend ASEAN had its summit, and in three separate documents it talked about its serious concerns over these incidents in the South China Sea. That is significant. It shows a level of concern on the part of ASEAN that we have not seen before. The Indonesian foreign minister made some surprisingly strong statements. Of course, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister did as well.

I think that, would we like to see even stronger statement? We would and if confirmed as Ambassador that is something that I will certainly be working on.

The other thing I should note is that talking is actually very important in this region that does not have a history of a security architecture. So ASEAN's forums, where the entire region can get together, China and us and many others, to talk about these issues, is actually playing a meaningful role. They also generate a number of confidence-building exercises, including those related to humanitarian response and disaster assistance. So you have all the 10 ASEANs plus China and Japan and us and Australia and others working together to facilitate the future cooperation.

Senator MURPHY. One last question and then I will turn it over to Senator Johnson. Has the announced pivot to Asia, whether or not you agree with the realization of that policy, had an effect on the influence of the United States representative to ASEAN, or are those nations waiting to see what the actual policies are that come after that announcement in policy shift? What has this announced pivot to Asia meant for the influence specifically within the association of the U.S. representative?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. I would say that having a Permanent U.S. Representative is part of the Rebalance to Asia. If confirmed, I would only be the second one, so we have only had one since 2010. We were the first non-ASEAN country to have a Permanent Representative in Jakarta at the Secretariat and that meant a lot and means a lot to the ASEANs.

I think as I look at it from the outside, there is a lot going on in Asia, that we have a tremendous number of different kinds of programs across the board in economics, in security, and in democ-

racy and human rights. It has been a very active policy. I think that an ambassador to ASEAN is able to point to all those things to show that we are there to stay, that we have been a Pacific power and we will continue to be one in the future.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms.—how do you pronounce your name?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. "Hah-CHEE-gee-an."

Senator JOHNSON. "Hah-CHEE-gee-an," OK.

Ms. HACHIGIAN. You were very close.

Senator JOHNSON. Do you draw any parallels in terms of what is happening in Eastern Europe, what the U.S. response has been to Vladimir Putin's aggressive expansion, our reaction to it, and what China is doing in terms of, in your words, acting unilaterally? Do you draw a parallel there?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. I see the parallel that you are drawing. But we have very strong interests in Asia that the rebalance is all about, and I do not think anyone should doubt our resolve to realize those interests and those of our allies in the region.

Senator JOHNSON. You are saying nobody should, but are people doubting our resolve? Have you spoken to some of the ASEAN countries and are they starting to question Americans' resolve? And is that a concern to you, and how are you going to address it?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. I see your point. I think that we are doing so much in Asia that I do not think that they are doubting our resolve. I see the analogy that you are drawing, but these unilateral actions that China has been taking, they precede the annexation of the Ukraine and they continue to exist. I do not think that there has been a direct effect that I can see, although I do not know for certain.

What I can say is that Putin's annexation of the Crimea has perhaps put more pressure on China in the region to show that it actually means to resolve these disputes peacefully, as is its stated policy.

Senator JOHNSON. That would be a hopeful outcome. Let us hope that is exactly what China is thinking. I think they are probably thinking something else. I think they are thinking this is probably a pretty good time to act, and that is a concern.

Talk to me about the economic opportunities we have in East Asia? What are our greatest opportunities?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. I think we have a terrific opportunity to increase exports. It is already the fourth-largest market and it is growing rapidly. ASEAN has plans to form an integrated economic community, which over time will mean more harmonization of standards and regulations across the 10 countries, and I think that will make it a lot easier for our exporters.

So I would say that that is a central and important opportunity for us, and if confirmed I will be speaking with U.S. businesses about how we can realize that.

Senator JOHNSON. There has been an awful lot of talk here in Congress and in Washington about potential Chinese currency manipulation. I kind of happen to think that the United States is calling the—the pot calling the kettle black here. And there has been

an awful lot of reports that it is very difficult to say exactly where the Chinese currency value would actually fall if it were in a true free market.

Do you have any thoughts on that?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. China is a major economic player in the region, no question. They have strong trading relationships with ASEAN. But we have strong trading relations with ASEAN as well and we are the largest foreign investor by far.

In terms of China's currency, I am certainly no expert and should probably take that question back.

Senator JOHNSON. That is a pretty large driver, though, of economic activity between the countries, correct, currency valuations?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. It certainly is bilaterally between us and China, and I assume is as well within the region. But in terms of the detailed economic analysis of that, I do not think I can get it to you just now.

[The written response to Senator Johnson's question to Nina Hachigian follows:]

It is imperative that we get our relationship with China right, given the effect its economic policies have on the United States, including the Rebalance to Asia, and on the world economy. We have an interest in developing a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive relationship with China that delivers benefits to both our countries and to the broader international community. As a part of developing this relationship, we must find ways to address the array of issues born of our substantial and complex bilateral economic engagement.

The policy of the administration is to use all the tools at U.S. disposal to direct China toward full compliance with its international trade and commercial obligations, including its commitment to enhance exchange rate flexibility. The management of our economic relationship cuts across a range of U.S. agencies, including USTR and the Departments of Treasury, Commerce, Energy, and Agriculture, in addition to State. I agree with the objective of leveling the playing field in China for U.S. businesses and workers; however, I defer specific questions about currency to the Treasury Department.

More broadly, we must remind China how both our countries benefit from China's increased integration into the rules-based international economic system—and of the level playing field this system requires.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Schapiro, why do you not speak a little bit in terms of what are our greatest opportunities economically with the Czech Republic?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. Thank you, Senator. I am very excited to build on the great work that our team on the ground in the Czech Republic has been doing over the last 4 years under Ambassador Eisen. They have doubled trade between our countries, so that now the Czech Republic is one of our fastest growing, I think it is either the second- or third-fastest growing export market in Europe.

So I want to support and encourage that type of trade. I think there are four things I can do in that regard. First, I think the Ambassador's job is to be, and his team is to be, alert to opportunities and make sure that that gets communicated back home to companies, to businesses, to this committee.

At the same time, we have to be advocates, and that is something that I have spent my career doing, so to be out advocating for U.S. companies on the ground.

Next, I think we really need to work to build an environment in which free trade allows both our country and the Czech Republic to really reap the benefits of economic growth. For that reason, pressing and encouraging the Czechs, who are already essentially

on board with the TTIP treaty—there are still discussions going on, but they have been supporters. Working to make sure they help the European Union get that across the finish line with us would be the third thing I would want to do.

Then fourth, as Senator Murphy said, I think before you were coming in, is to do all I can to level the playing field by pressing for rule of law and advancing the anticorruption efforts that we already have under way, especially in procurement. If you are a U.S. company coming in, you need to know that the rules are going to apply by one yardstick to everyone.

Senator JOHNSON. So specifically in what product areas or service areas have exports grown, and are those the same areas that there is renewed or increased opportunity in the future, or are there some other areas as well? Specifically with the product or service areas?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. The U.S. exporting to the Czech Republic, I know that we have increased exports in high tech and that we also have large resource and development capabilities that some American companies have placed in the Czech Republic. In turn, the Czechs mainly export manufactured goods to the United States.

I think there is a great deal of opportunity, but I probably will need to be on the ground and surveying the landscape before I can opine as to whether one sector or another is best for us. We had hoped that the area of nuclear energy would be one and, as we discussed earlier, there still may be some hope to revise that effort. That is certainly something that creates a tremendous amount of jobs back here in the United States.

Senator JOHNSON. Both Senator Murphy and I have been involved in meetings with European partners and there is always a great deal of vocal support for TTIP in general, but then it kind of gets down to the specific issues. Are you aware of any specific trouble spots in terms of negotiating TTIP that will come out of the Czech Republic?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. Nothing unique to the Czech Republic, other than there are some concerns about farmers markets and whether farmers markets and agriculture will be affected in a way that hurts Czech farmers. I think that is not the case, and so one of my jobs—and I know our team is already doing this—will be to make sure that the story gets out about how a mutually beneficial treaty between the United States and the European Union can benefit everyone.

But the short answer to your question is there are no large concerns on the horizon that we have heard, nothing different from what we are seeing in many of the European countries.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Senator Johnson.

One of the things that both of us have observed as we have watched the crisis in the Ukraine and on Russia's borders play out is that, as we are increasingly concerned about security interests, we tend to spend a little bit less time focusing on some of the human rights issues and problems inside places like Russia. It is a convenient distraction from some of the very serious issues regarding the freedom of civil society.

I think the same thing plays out in Southeast Asia as well. As we are focused on these almost daily security concerns, we maybe lose sight of some of our interests in promoting human rights.

That is an opening to ask a broad question to you, Ms. Hachigian, over this question of what ASEAN's role is in promoting human rights in the region. I just noted the recent decision of Brunei to institute fairly strict sharia law, including floggings for abortions and adultery. What is the role that we play within ASEAN on the issue of human rights and how aggressive will ASEAN itself be in trying to work on those issues?

Ms. HACHIGIAN. The issue of human rights is very important to me. When I was in college I spent some time at an antiapartheid organization in South Africa. I went to Afghanistan to do some research on the placement of land mines in civilian areas. In my first trip to Southeast Asia I was part of a Navy program to train Cambodian military officers in human rights and the rule of law. So these are personal—this is a personal interest to me.

I think if you look at the region overall the human rights situation has gotten quite a bit better over the last 20, 30 years. But there are still pockets of real need for improvement, including the Rohingya in Burma and freedom of expression in Vietnam and then, as you say, sharia law in Brunei.

ASEAN has a few years ago established a human rights commission, and the United States has been working with that commission from the beginning. If confirmed I will continue to work to try to make that a more effective body than it currently is.

When it comes to sharia law in Brunei, I know that our bilateral embassy is engaged on this issue. I think it comes down to it being important that a nation's laws conform with its international obligations on human rights. Some of the physical corporal punishment associated with that law, if implemented, as you point out, would be inconsistent with international obligations.

Senator MURPHY. One additional question for you, Mr. Schapiro. We have danced a little bit around Ukraine here today. The Czechs have been very strong, frankly, in their at least language and rhetoric that they have used surrounding the provocations of Russia in Eastern Ukraine and the invasion and annexation of Crimea. What is the disposition as you understand it of the Czech Republic with respect to the next level sanctions, possible sectoral industry-wide sanctions, that will have an economic effect on major Russian trading partners like the Czech Republic? We have heard a lot of strong talk from some of our European partners, but not necessarily corresponding action.

I am one, and I think others on the committee join me, in believing that it is probably about time for the United States to move out on our own with respect to stronger sanctions.

What do you understand to be the disposition of the Czech Republic?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. I think I would describe the disposition as cautious, Senator. As you note, the Czechs have thus far stood side by side with us. There is no daylight between our positions. They have implemented the sanctions that are in place thus far and they have most recently condemned the May 10 referenda in Eastern

Ukraine. No major media outlets in the Czech Republic are tilting pro-Russian in any way.

That being said, Russia is a significant trading partner of the Czech Republic. They get 70 to 80 percent of their gas and oil from the Russians. So they face competing concerns. I think my job as Ambassador, if confirmed, will be to continue to try and, through public engagement and through private meetings with the government, do all I can to support those who will stand with us, because the Czechs do recognize—and this is one of the sources of the strong support that you describe—they understand that you cannot be asleep at the wheel when there is a dangerous power not too far away. They had the experience of the late 1930s, they had the experience of 1968. So I think they get it.

All that being said, it is true there would be some significant economic pain if we go to sectoral sanctions.

Ms. HACHIGIAN. I would just ask you in your capacity as our next Ambassador to convey a very strong message that this assumption of security based on NATO membership comes with limitations. One limitation is that the United States cannot continue to provide 70 percent of the funding. We cannot allow for countries like the Czech Republic to come in with only 1 percent of their GDP. I was glad that your opening remarks talked about your intention to press that point.

But secondarily, what Putin is perfecting is an ability to rattle nations and gain control of portions of their society and public affairs without a transparent invasion through military force. That should worry every single NATO member because we have an Article 5 obligation to protect NATO members, but the question is if the kind of tactics that Putin is using in places like Eastern Ukraine start to be used in a NATO country, a Czech Republic or a Hungary or a Baltic State, there is a legitimate question as to what our Article 5 responsibility is.

That is why, even with the pain that may come with engaging in tougher sanctions, our European allies especially on the eastern edge of the continent I would hope should be willing to deal with some of that temporary economic pain to make sure that those kind of tactics are not visited upon their country, posing a pretty significant and troublesome question about what NATO's response will be.

Mr. SCHAPIRO. I could not agree with you more.

Senator MURPHY. Senator Johnson.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think Putin is perfecting that technique because he is not paying a price. Mr. Schapiro, you talked about the Czech Republic's dependence on Russian oil. As Ambassador, would you advocate for opening up those oil markets so we can end Vladimir Putin's basic monopoly on oil and gas supply to not only the Czech Republic, but the Ukraine and other parts of Europe?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. Well, I am pleased to say that the Czechs have increased storage capacity and made investments in reversible pipeline technology. We support that. I will encourage Czech efforts to diversify their energy sources, to liberalize EU energy markets, to increase interconnectivity of European energy supply works.

I was pleased to read that I think just yesterday, I believe it was the V-4—Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic—announced their intention to come up with a plan to deal with any potential shutoff of Russian gas and oil, because I think this has to be a wakeup call for them, and that is a message I intend to bring.

Senator JOHNSON. But just storing Russian oil is not the answer. They actually have to get supplied from other places. Certainly I think the United States has the capability of doing it, and I think it would be helpful if people on the ground there could advocate back to the administration. It would be very helpful to start, for example, to allow those LNG permit applications to proceed forward. Just that announcement I think would be helpful.

Earlier today I read a report that the Czech Defense Minister said that he sees no NATO troops stationed on Czech soil. Do you have any further information on that? Have you heard about that, and what that posture is?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. I do, Your Honor—

Senator JOHNSON. Close enough.

Mr. SCHAPIRO. It is my former job as a lawyer. [Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON, yes. The Czech Defense Minister's comment—I think it was to a Reuters reporter—about seeing no need for NATO troops to be stationed on Czech soil caused a bit of an uproar over the last 2 days in the Czech Republic. He was roundly criticized by all of the parties in the government, including the Prime Minister. He has essentially walked that back, said that his comments were taken out of context by Reuters, he was talking about permanent stationing of troops.

In response to this, the lower house of the Czech legislature just—it was either yesterday or today; I am not sure about how the time difference plays into this—passed a new resolution stating that they will comply with all NATO obligations. So I was pleased to see that it created and expression of support for NATO.

Senator JOHNSON. So you would anticipate, then, that the Czech Republic—and you would potentially help advocate for this—could potentially host training exercises as somewhat a show of strength and resolve against Vladimir Putin's actions?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. I think—I could be wrong about this, but I think the Czech Republic has already stated that it would be open to hosting training exercises. I know that the Defense Minister was here in April and met with Secretary Hagel and National Security Adviser Rice. It is possible that I am mistaken about that with regard to exercises, but I believe that is accurate.

Look. Anything that we ask the Czechs to do as a part of NATO or that NATO wants to do that involves the Czech Republic is something that is going to need to be worked out through a dialogue with our Czech partners, and my job will be to facilitate that dialogue and advance our interests.

Senator JOHNSON. I would like to ask both the nominees—and we will start with Mr. Schapiro. When we were over in the Ukraine, I think, one of the most important messages we heard is that the propaganda coming out of Vladimir Putin and Russia is incredibly effective. I think we see it in Venezuela. We have these very dictatorial regimes in total control of the media.

My concern, across the board, is that America has pretty well withdrawn from providing the truth and providing information. My final question to both of you is your assessment of that and what do you think we can do in the countries that you are going to be representing the United States in, to hopefully increase our efforts?

Mr. SCHAPIRO. It is a real issue, Senator. A few weeks ago I turned on my television in a hotel room and I was watching what I thought was an ordinary news program. This was here in Washington. And after about 4 minutes I realized, something just seems off about this. Then I realized I was watching RT, the Russian faux cable news channel. I can see how, to those who do not view it necessarily with a critical eye, it is fairly sophisticated. That is a real issue.

The Czechs have a good history of partnering with us to counter Russian disinformation. Back after the fall of the Iron Curtain, Vaclav Havel, who was then the President of the Czech Republic, invited Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty to move from Germany to Prague. So RFE and Radio Liberty are now located in the Czech Republic. Of course a lot of what they do is beamed toward other areas of the world, but some of it is Russian language.

I think, in light of what has happened, no one should be blind to the danger that that type of propaganda poses, and as Ambassador, if confirmed, I will encourage and support all of our efforts to push back.

I will say, though, I think one of our great strengths is that those who pay attention understand that when they look at our country and the diversity of voices and CNN and Fox and MSN and NBC, I think people can tell the difference. I would not want to fall into any ham-handed propaganda, but I do not think that is what you are suggesting.

Senator JOHNSON. No. The problem is so many people just live their lives and they are not paying attention, not closely. So when they are inundated with propaganda from Vladimir Putin's Russia or from the dictators now in Venezuela or other places, there is just no pushback.

I think one of the problems we have, whether we are talking about the human rights abuses within Muslim countries, requires a real concerted effort to provide real information.

So I just throw that question to you as well.

Ms. HACHIGIAN. Thank you, Senator. I think this is why our continued advocacy for freedom of the media in all these countries is really important. I do think, though, that actions speak louder than words, and even in a country where media is controlled, as in Vietnam, the message of China's recent actions has really come through. As you know, there have been protests across the country.

I think, similarly, our actions and what we did in Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, that is real. That is showing a real commitment, and that is better than any propaganda. We just have to make sure we can get the message out about what we are actually doing. I think that is the challenge. That is what public diplomacy is all about and what, if confirmed, I will help to try to do.

Senator JOHNSON. I agree, actions speak far louder than words, and that is a lesson we can learn in other areas as well.

Thank you.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Senator Johnson.

Thank you both for your testimony today. I think you have acquitted yourselves very well. We are going to keep the record open for a short period of time. We are going to keep it open just until tomorrow at 5 o'clock. So if we do get any questions in, we hope that you can turn them around very, very quickly, in part because we are going to try to move your nominations through the committee very, very quickly. So the record will be open until Friday at 5. You will try to turn any questions around as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your participation today, and with that this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]