



S. HRG. 113-319

NOMINATIONS OF THE 113TH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—
MAY 7 THROUGH DECEMBER 17, 2013
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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**NOMINATIONS OF STEVE LINICK, MATTHEW
BARZUN, LILIANA AYALDE, DAVID HALE,
EVAN RYAN, KIRK WAGAR, DANIEL SEPUL-
VEDA, TERENCE McCULLEY, JAMES SWAN,
JOHN PHILLIPS, KENNETH HACKETT, AND
ALEXA WESNER**

TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2013

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

- Hon. Steve A. Linick, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of State
- Hon. Matthew Winthrop Barzun, of Kentucky, to be Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Hon. David Hale, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Lebanon
- Hon. Liliana Ayalde, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil
- Evan Ryan, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs
- Kirk W.B. Wagar, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore
- Daniel A. Sepulveda, of Florida, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of Service as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Communications and Information Policy in the Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs and U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy
- Hon. Terence Patrick McCulley, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
- James C. Swan, of California, to be Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- John R. Phillips, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Italian Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Republic of San Marino
- Hon. Kenneth Francis Hackett, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Holy See
- Alexa Lange Wesner, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez, Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Corker, Risch, and Flake.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Moving to the nomination hearing, thank you all for joining us on the business meeting today.

Today, as we approach the August recess, we have a plethora of well-qualified nominees for the committee's consideration before us. We welcome them to the Senate, as well as their family members who are joining us today to offer their support. We recognize that an obligation that is taken on by one of our ambassadors, really is an obligation by family, and we understand the sacrifices involved and we appreciate and applaud all of our nominees and their families who are willing to serve their country.

Before we begin, let me say I hope we can expedite the process which too often can be long and fraught with delay, as you well know. I would urge my colleagues on the committee to submit any additional questions for our nominees to the committee by this evening, and I urge our nominees to return their answers in writing as quickly as possible.

I want to thank Senators Kaine and Markey who will be taking the gavel for panels 3 and 4, and I want to thank Senator Corker again and his staff for working on this process so diligently with me, including reviewing files, meeting with nominees, and making the time to hold this hearing during a very busy week. But I believe our efforts are crucial to filling critical posts in a timely manner.

Before I introduce the first of two panels, let me turn to Senator Corker for his comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator CORKER. I look forward to this process continuing today. Again, I know much of the paperwork has just come in recently, and I know in this particular case, it has been 2,022 days since we have had an inspector general nomination. So I am glad that you are here. I look forward to your testimony and I want to thank all the members of this committee for participating in this especially today so we can hopefully move many of these out by week's end, if there are no objections.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Corker.

We will start with our first panel. I and others have been deeply concerned that the Department of State has been operating without a permanent inspector general since 2008. Inspectors general plays a crucial role in identifying ineffective programs, process weaknesses, wasteful spending that undermine public confidence in Government. A permanent State IG is essential for the proper functioning of the Department.

I am, therefore, pleased that the administration has nominated Steven Linick as the inspector general for the Department of State.

He is a highly qualified nominee who can function independently and objectively. He is currently the IG for the Federal Housing Finance Agency. He has previously served as an Assistant United States Attorney and as the Deputy Chief of the Fraud Section of the Department of Justice's Criminal Division. In other words, just the sort of qualifications that one wants from the State Department inspector general.

With that, Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Yes. This is a critically important post, something that both of us have been pushing for, and I am glad the State Department finally has made this nomination.

Obviously, the safety of our Foreign Service officers is something that has become of even greater focus to all of us with recent events, and I know that one of the roles that you all have is to ensure that there is integrity in what we are doing in that regard.

So I thank you for being here. I think it is incredibly important, with all the moving parts that we have at the State Department, to have a functioning and strong inspector general, and I look forward to your testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

With that, Mr. Linick, we will ask you to make your statement. We would ask you to synthesize your statement in about 5 minutes or so. Your full statement will be entered into the record, without objection. And the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF HON. STEVE A. LINICK, OF VIRGINIA,
TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. LINICK. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Corker, and members of this committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored to be President Obama's nominee for Inspector General of the U.S. Department of State. This is the second time President Obama has nominated me to serve the Nation, as I was confirmed by the Senate in late 2010 to serve as the first inspector general of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, FHFA, the agency responsible for overseeing Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Home Loan Banks.

Before I begin my official testimony, I would like to introduce my wife, Mary; my son, Zackary; my daughter, Sarah; my mother, Madeleine; and family friend, Robert King, who are here supporting me today.

By way of background, most of my professional life has been devoted to public service. Shortly after graduating from the Georgetown University Law Center, I joined the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office as an assistant district attorney. In 1994, I became a Federal prosecutor and, over the next 16 years, worked with various components of the U.S. Department of Justice, including two U.S. attorney's offices. Since October of 2010, I have served as the inspector general of FHFA.

I believe my professional experiences make me well suited to serve as the Inspector General of Department of State. As a former Federal prosecutor, I have a strong and successful background in combating fraud, waste, and abuse in Government programs at home and abroad. Notably, while at the Department of Justice, I

served for 4 years as the Executive Director of the National Procurement Fraud Task Force. During that time, I supervised the investigation and prosecution of individuals and companies for contract fraud and corruption related to the wars and reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. I worked closely with officials from the Special Inspectors General for Iraq and Afghanistan Reconstruction, plus the offices of the inspectors general from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

In addition, my service as the FHFA inspector general demonstrates that I have the skill, judgment, and experience necessary to manage a large Office of Inspector General, an independently overseen agency with significant program responsibilities and financial resources. In this role, I have gained a deep appreciation for the critical mission of inspectors general within Federal Government agencies, as well as the importance of conducting vigorous, independent, objective oversight.

As FHFA's first inspector general, I was responsible for building an organization from the ground up, including hiring approximately 140 professionals. My Office's oversight responsibilities for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which have received approximately \$187 billion to keep them solvent—this is taxpayer money. From the outset of the Office's formation, I employed innovative strategies to maximize results, including collaborating with inspectors general to leverage resources and benefit from best practices.

To date, my team has published approximately 50 reports and numerous management alerts on critical topics affecting the U.S. housing crisis. We have made recommendations that are expected to produce at least \$2 billion in added recoveries. Additionally, we have initiated or participated in many criminal and civil investigations relating to mortgage fraud that have resulted in significant indictments and convictions.

It has been an honor to serve as the inspector general of FHFA, and I am very proud of my Office's accomplishments.

If confirmed, I commit to bring the same leadership, energy, vision, and independence to the Office of Inspector General for the State Department. From a strategic and leadership perspective, I understand that the responsibilities of the position to which I have been confirmed are great. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of State Office of Inspector General is an independent, objective organization that provides robust oversight, transparency, and accountability to the programs and operations of the Department of State.

I will maintain close relationships with Congress, including this committee and other committees of jurisdiction.

I will develop effective working relationships with State Department management.

I am honored to be considered for this important position, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Linick follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. STEVE A. LINICK

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Corker, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be President Obama's nominee for Inspector General of the U.S. Department of State. This is the second time President Obama has nominated me to serve the Nation, as I was confirmed by the Senate in late 2010 to serve as the first Inspector General of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, the agency responsible for overseeing Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Home Loan Banks.

Before I begin my official testimony, I would like to introduce my wife, Mary, my son, Zackary, and my daughter, Sarah, who are here with me today.

Most of my professional life has been devoted to public service. Soon after graduating from Georgetown University, I spent about 8 months in Burkina Faso working on international development issues for Africare, a nongovernmental organization. Shortly after graduating from Georgetown University Law Center, I worked in the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. I then became a federal prosecutor and, for the next 16 years, worked within various components of the Department of Justice, including two United States Attorney's Offices (in Los Angeles, CA, and in Alexandria, VA) and here in Washington (in the Criminal Division, Fraud Section).

I believe my professional experiences make me well suited to serve as Inspector General of the Department of State. As a former federal prosecutor, I have a strong and successful background in combating fraud, waste, and abuse in both U.S. domestic and overseas programs. Furthermore, I have the skill, judgment, and experience necessary to manage a large office of inspector general and independently oversee an agency with significant program responsibilities and financial resources.

Having served as the FHFA Inspector General for more than 2½ years, I gained a deep appreciation for the critical role played by inspectors general within federal government agencies. It has also highlighted for me the importance of conducting vigorous, independent, and objective oversight.

As FHFA's first Inspector General, I was responsible for designing and building an organization from the ground up. I recruited and hired seasoned professionals with backgrounds in housing, finance, investigations, and auditing to staff critical operational offices, including an Office of Administration, Office of Audits, Office of Investigations, Office of Evaluations, and an Office of General Counsel.

From the outset of the Office's formation, I employed innovative strategies to maximize results, including collaborating with inspectors general and law enforcement agencies that have shared interests and goals to leverage resources and benefit from best practices. For example, I staffed the Office of Investigations with highly experienced former prosecutors to investigate and prosecute FHFA-OIG cases in U.S. Attorney's Offices across the Nation. I also spearheaded an initiative among the federal inspectors general with oversight of housing programs to address collaboratively housing crisis issues.

To date, my Office has published approximately 50 reports and numerous management alerts on critical topics affecting many aspects of the U.S. housing crisis. We have made recommendations that are expected to produce at least \$2 billion in added recoveries, and potentially more. Additionally, we initiated or participated in multiple criminal and civil investigations relating to mortgage fraud that have resulted in many indictments and convictions.

If confirmed as Inspector General of the Department of State, I commit to bringing the same energy, vision, innovation, independence and leadership to that Office.

Additionally, as a former federal prosecutor with substantial white-collar and government fraud experience, I managed and coordinated complex grand jury investigations and prosecutions involving a variety of criminal cases, including procurement fraud and public corruption in Iraq and Afghanistan. I also participated as an instructor in overseas programs sponsored by the Department of Justice and other agencies in Uganda, Mozambique, United Arab Emirates, and Mali, where I taught topics such as money laundering, public corruption, contract fraud, and financial crimes.

Notably, I served for four years as the Executive Director of the National Procurement Fraud Task Force. That group was led by the Department of Justice and included inspectors general from numerous federal agencies. Under my watch, the Task Force investigated and prosecuted individuals and companies for corruption and fraud related to contracts and grants, with a special emphasis on overseas programs focused on the conflicts and reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. In that regard, I worked very closely with officials from the Special Inspectors General for Iraq (SIGIR) and Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), plus the Offices of Inspectors General from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

From a strategic and leadership perspective, I understand that the responsibilities of the position to which I have been nominated are great. Based on the significant issues facing the Department of State, it is clear to me that assuming the leadership role of Inspector General will be challenging and rewarding. I look forward to this task, if confirmed.

If confirmed, I pledge to:

- Ensure that the Department of State Office of Inspector General (OIG) is an independent and objective organization that provides timely, robust, fact-based oversight, transparency, and accountability to the programs and operations of the Department of State;
- Consult stakeholders regularly (including the Government Accountability Office and affected communities);
- Efficiently and effectively deploy OIG resources to those areas that present the highest risk to the Department of State;
- Collaborate with other inspectors general who have potentially overlapping interests, jurisdiction, and programs;
- Ensure whistleblowers have a safe forum to voice grievances and are protected from retaliation; and
- Aggressively protect taxpayer funds against fraud, waste, and abuse.

I am honored to be considered for this important position and look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much for your testimony.

Let me start off with this position has been vacant since January 2008, the longest unfilled position among the inspectors general across the Federal Departments. Based on your experience as a confirmed inspector general in your present position, what effect do you think that a vacancy of that length may have created at the Department of State?

And I heard your commitment to independence. How will you assure the independence of State OIG; if confirmed, upon assuming the position?

Mr. LINICK. Senator, thank you for that question.

I recognize there has been a longstanding vacancy. Clearly, it is one of the challenges that I face at the State Department. I do not know what impact that has had on the OIG, and one of my first goals would be to roll up my sleeves, go into the office, if confirmed, and find out where there are gaps in oversight or problems in the Office and look for solutions.

In terms of independence, I have been very independent at the FHFA OIG, and I would certainly employ the same strategy at the Department of State Office of Inspector General. For me, this means telling the truth, even if it is unpleasant; promoting transparency; resisting any interference; pursuing investigations wherever the facts may lead; protecting whistleblowers to make sure they have a safe forum for expressing grievances; and ensuring there are high standards for audits, investigations, and inspections.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me ask you, if you are confirmed, what is your thinking on how you will work—inevitably your audits will produce some understanding, some recommendations, some legitimate concerns about the operations of the Department within the context of your purview of your work. How will you work with the Secretary of State and other senior Department officials to ensure that recommendations made by you are implemented?

Mr. LINICK. There is a process that I employ at FHFA OIG. It is a process that all inspectors general employ, starting with making the recommendations; informing Congress about those recommendations; following up on those recommendations; doing addi-

tional reports to ensure compliance with those recommendations. If I had a problem with implementation of recommendations, I would certainly not hesitate to take it up with the Secretary and also discuss it with Congress.

The CHAIRMAN. Can we get your commitment to that as part of that process, since this is the committee of oversight and jurisdiction, that you will bring to our attention those issues that you are having a problem getting implemented?

Mr. LINICK. You have my commitment. I am very close with the Senate Banking Committee and other committees of jurisdiction at FHFA OIG and routinely debrief both Senate and House bipartisan on events and activities at the OIG and at the agency.

The CHAIRMAN. And then finally, under the Foreign Affairs Act of 1980, each State Department post or mission is supposed to be inspected by the OIG at least once every 5 years. There are about 85 posts and bureaus that have not been inspected in the past 5 years, and Congress has had to grant the Department a waiver to this requirement. What do you believe, upon your confirmation, can be done to remedy the situation?

Mr. LINICK. I am aware of the statutory requirement for inspections. One of my first tasks will be to look at the resources allocated to inspections, audits, investigations and determine where OIG priorities are. I am very interested in working with this committee, if confirmed, to understand the committee's perspectives on the need for inspections of various embassies.

The CHAIRMAN. I am going to turn to Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know you are aware of the challenges that GAO has laid out regarding the lack of using appropriate accounting standards, if you will, at the State Department. And I guess you understand that there may be some personnel changes or other kind of practices that need to be changed. I do not know anything specifically in that regard, but are you willing to do whatever is necessary to bring the State Department into using appropriate accounting standards there as they are dealing with these issues?

Mr. LINICK. I absolutely am. I believe that those standards are important for the integrity of the Office of Inspector General for its credibility, and one of my first tasks, if confirmed, is to take a look at the GAO issues, the independence issues. It is concerning to me. I have not formed a conclusion yet. It is something I would certainly want to understand better, consult with staff, and view the terrain.

Senator CORKER. One of the other issues that has occurred within the Office of Inspector General is there has been a tremendous amount of turnover. So there is a lack of what you might call institutional knowledge and the ability to really have the background to delve into issues in an appropriate way. I assume that you would address that issue also if confirmed.

Mr. LINICK. Yes. That is something else I would address.

Senator CORKER. And I guess there is an opportunity to make better use of contracting within the State Department. That has been definitely pointed out. Obviously, that will be a major responsibility of yours, and I assume, if confirmed, you will do everything you can to demonstrate to the State Department better ways of

contracting and getting value for taxpayers and what they are doing.

Mr. LINICK. I certainly will, Senator.

Senator CORKER. And I assume the same thing relating to—I guess you have a background that I guess equips you to help with all acquisition activities there, and I assume that you will use that background that you talked about earlier to help the State Department in all of its acquisition activities.

Mr. LINICK. Yes. My background has prepared me for that.

Senator CORKER. I appreciate the in-depth meeting you had with our staff. I appreciate your willingness to serve in this way, and I look forward to your confirmation.

Mr. LINICK. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Corker. I very much appreciate both of your attention to getting the appointment of an inspector general for the Department of State. As you both pointed out, it has been a very long time, and so we are very pleased, Mr. Linick, that you have been willing to take on this task. Obviously, the challenge is tremendous. And I think as the American taxpayers' eyes and ears inside Federal agencies, that inspectors general provide really important oversight that is of benefit not only to Congress and the administration but also to the agencies themselves. So thank you for your willingness to serve.

As you know, one of the challenges that all of Government is facing right now at the Federal level are the impacts from sequestration, those automatic cuts that have gone into effect. I wonder if you can talk about how this factors into the job, if you are confirmed, and how it will affect your priorities as you go into State.

Mr. LINICK. Certainly sequestration will impact the role of the OIG. I am not there yet so I do not know exactly what the resources look like, but if confirmed, that would be my first task is to explore the various management challenges and how resources are allocated to those management challenges.

At the end of the day, it is all about prioritization, as you said, and it is about strategic planning and planning audits and evaluations in a way which targets the highest risk areas. And that is what I do at FHFA OIG. We have a very rigorous strategic planning process, and we try to do our best to maximize, to leverage our resources without expending too much money.

Senator SHAHEEN. And can you talk about who is involved in that planning process? So as you think about putting together that kind of plan at State, who should be involved in those discussions?

Mr. LINICK. At OIG at the State Department, if confirmed, I would talk with all stakeholders, the State Department itself. Hopefully this committee would be willing to talk as well and to provide perspectives. GAO and other stakeholders and, of course, consulting with OIG staff about this.

At the OIG at FHFA, we have a working group that is comprised of various division representatives from audits and evaluations and other offices, and we get together and take all the information that we have culled from the various stakeholders and inventory everything. And then what we do is we categorize them into buckets

based on their risk factor, and then we come down with a list of, you know, "must to-do's." And that is how we do it, and I would employ the same approach at the State Department OIG if confirmed.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. And I hope you will commit to continuing to work with this committee as you are going through that process and reporting to us so that we will have some sense of what you are doing as well.

Mr. LINICK. I would look forward to that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

The Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction reported on July 26 that the State Department has provided inadequate oversight of a \$50 million rule-of-law training contract being implemented in Afghanistan by an Italian NGO.

I wonder, as Senator Corker raised, contract management and oversight continues to be an issue, not just within State but throughout the Federal Government. If confirmed, what more can you do to ensure that contracts are prepared with effective oversight requirements and conditions that ensure they are more successful as they are being implemented and more cost effective?

Mr. LINICK. This is clearly an area that has been identified as a management challenge. The State Department, from what I can tell, is spending a lot of money on contracting. This is an area with which I am familiar having worked as the director of the National Procurement Fraud Task Force. Contingency contracting especially is very risky. In my experience, oversight is an afterthought because everybody wants to get the money out the door, and we all know that—and the story that we have heard from the SIGAR is an old story, unfortunately, as far back as I can remember. I have heard similar stories with lack of oversight.

If confirmed, I would certainly bring my experience to bear and look very closely at the controls that the State Department has to oversee these contracts.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

One of the other issues that has been in the news recently is an IG audit report that the Bureau of International Information Programs has spent about \$630,000 on two campaigns to raise the number of fans that it has on its Facebook page. And the critics have suggested that this is not a good use of funds, and while I understand that the IIP has since agreed with some of the State IG recommendations—can you talk about how your role as IG, if you are confirmed, could be employed in helping agencies not to get into this kind of situation where money is being spent on issues that are not necessarily the direct mission for those agencies and where they should be focusing funds?

Mr. LINICK. That is a fundamental role for an inspector general to protect taxpayers against fraud, waste, and abuse, and that is something that we do at FHFA OIG through trying to employ cost savings, provide recommendations to the agency, to suggest ways to minimize costs.

I am familiar with this particular incident. I understand public diplomacy is one of the management challenges identified by the inspector general, and this is something that I would focus on if confirmed as well.

Senator SHAHEEN. I guess I am asking a little bit different question and that is how do you look at the mission of an agency within the Department and determine—or do you see that as being part of your role as you are looking how money is spent?

Mr. LINICK. I do. If there are articulated standards or articulated policies that consist of the mission and those policies are not being met, it is within the IG's mandate to review how the implementation of that mission, whether or not the end result complies with that mission. So that would be part of the OIG role.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murphy.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Linick, thank you very much for your willingness to serve in this position and coming before the committee today.

With the expected closure of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, your office is going to now have new responsibilities. You are obviously going to continue to do oversight on State Department operations there, but you are also going to be taking over oversight for our civilian assistance programs. And I understand the budget calls for some additional new positions to cover that responsibility, I think about five people.

But can you talk a little bit about how you are going to split your time and your Office's time between overseeing what is still an enormous State Department presence there, along with the civilian assistance programming that was previously overseen by SIGIR?

Mr. LINICK. That is something that I would explore once I am there, if I am confirmed. I am not able to tell you what the allocation would be from this vantage point because I am outside of it. So prioritization and making sure resources are allocated would be first priority.

But I think the issue of Iraq and the transition coming in Afghanistan are obviously going to put enormous responsibilities on the State Department in Iraq that it already has in supporting the civilian presence. There is more spending on housing and medical and all these other things that are attendant to supporting the civilian presence. It has been identified as a management challenge, at least the transition in Afghanistan, and this is something that I would take a close look at and work closely with the SIGAR and the SIGIR as they both sunset. I know that the SIGIR is about to sunset and the SIGAR will at some point in the future. But I would commit to working closely with both of them.

Senator MURPHY. Well, and I hope you will also commit to coming back to us to tell us whether five people is enough to cover what is an enormous new responsibility there.

One other related question. Maybe, again, you have not had the opportunity to really think about this or take a look at it. But during my one trip to Iraq, we were there for the specific purpose to oversee some of the contracting programs, and even with, at the time, tens of thousands of American troops there, we could not get anywhere. We were not allowed to essentially go and see 80 percent of the contracting programs because they were not in areas that were safe for us to travel. And this will be a problem not only in Iraq with your new responsibilities, but in Afghanistan as we

draw down our military presence and certainly, as it is today, in Pakistan.

So to the extent that you have thought about this, one of the challenges that are presented to you in terms of mobility—you are going to need to go and see things in these countries, and yet today in Iraq, and within a year or so in Afghanistan, there just is not going to be the military presence to give your operations cover. This could be problematic if there is not proper security to allow you to go and do the job where you want to do it.

Mr. LINICK. Based on my experience, I know that this is a very difficult issue for oversight because if you cannot do site visits and you cannot get out, if you do not have protection if you are an auditor, for example, you cannot do your job. This is something that I would have to look at. I am not in a position to tell you right now how to solve that problem, but I am aware of the problem. And it costs money, obviously, to protect folks to go out and do oversight of projects and so forth.

Senator MURPHY. Well, you are asking for protection from the very group that you are auditing. Sometimes it obviously presents an obvious conflict, again as you experience perhaps those inherent tensions in asking for major security resources from an organization that you might be in the end critiquing. I hope that you would report back to us as well on those challenges.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Linick, thank you for your service and congratulations on your nomination.

Just a couple of items. You might have talked a bit about this but I wanted to delve into a bit more. In your work on the National Procurement Fraud Task Force, to what extent did that involve international procurement issues?

Mr. LINICK. A significant amount of international procurement issues were involved. Part of my job was to coordinate all the war zone prosecutions for the Department of Justice, and I worked very closely with the ICCTF, which is the International Contract Corruption Task Force. It included the State Department IG, the Department of Defense, SIGIR, SIGAR, and I was integrally involved in—

Senator Kaine. USAID?

Mr. LINICK. USAID as well. Sorry for that. USAID as well, FBI. I was very involved in working those cases. I was also the deputy chief of the Fraud Section at that time, and many of those cases were provided to folks in my section. So I supervised a lot of the prosecutions involved in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they involved corruption, bribery, all sorts of contract fraud. So I am very familiar with that.

Senator Kaine. Good.

Mr. LINICK. And I have been to Kabul and Bagram.

Senator Kaine. In that work.

Mr. LINICK. Yes.

Senator Kaine. In late March, the State Department's OIG notified the Department that it was going to start a special review of the accountability review board process in order to determine, I

think, the effectiveness of the whole ARB process, but it also specifically mentioned recommendations regarding the ARB convened in the aftermath of Benghazi. I would love to hear you talk about either how that work is progressing or—you are not there yet—what would be your hope in terms of continuing that work and looking at the accountability review boards and how they can be made most helpful to the Department, also to Congress and the public.

Mr. LINICK. I really have no knowledge of that review. I have not been involved in it. I have not studied the underlying facts. I plan, if confirmed, on taking a hard look at all pending matters. Of course, that is one of the pending matters. I have formed no conclusions or judgment yet. Obviously, once I am able to look at facts and review documents, then I will be in a better position to make an independent determination as to next steps.

Senator KAINE. I have no further questions, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you all. Seeing no other members of the committee—again, I remind members that we will have questions open until the close of business today. And if you do get any questions, I would urge you to answer them expeditiously. It would be the chair's desire, working with the ranking member, to have your name up for a business meeting vote on Thursday, but that will depend upon making sure we have answers to any questions that are posed.

With that and with the thanks of the committee, you are excused.

Mr. LINICK. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me call up our next panel. And as we have them come forward, I am going to introduce them in the interest of time here.

I am pleased to welcome Matthew Barzun as we consider his nomination to be our next Ambassador to the Court of St. James or, if you prefer, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom is one of our closest allies, and the job of representing the United States in London was first held by John Adams and a succession of remarkable Americans. Matthew Barzun is no stranger to the world of diplomacy, having served successfully as our Ambassador to Sweden in 2009 and 2011, and I am sure that he will represent us well. We welcome you to the committee.

You can all come up.

Mr. David Hale. I welcome David to the committee. He is from the great State of New Jersey. So that gets you past first base here as we consider his nomination to be our next Ambassador to the Republic of Lebanon. While many countries in the Middle East have experienced significant difficulties from Syria's civil war, Lebanon has certainly taken the brunt of the fallout. Currently there are over 600,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the number is expected to surpass 1 million by the end of the year. Mr. Hale is no stranger to Lebanon, having served there twice before, most recently from 1998 to 2001 as the Deputy Chief of Mission and having also served as our Ambassador to Jordan from 2005 to 2008. The chair is confident he is up to the challenge.

Let me welcome Evan Ryan to the committee today who has been nominated to serve as the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. This is a Bureau that plays an essential role in U.S. public diplomacy by promoting better understanding between the United States and other countries through a variety of partnerships and professional exchanges. Ms. Ryan is qualified for this particular role and has the experience to prove it. She previously served as Assistant to the Vice President, Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement, and prior to that, she worked as a consultant for the Educational Partnership for Children of Conflict and served as the Deputy Chair for Governance for the Clinton Global Initiative. So we believe that she will make an excellent Assistant Secretary of State in this regard, and I look forward to working with her in the coming years.

And I understand that Ms. Ayalde is stuck in security. So we will hopefully liberate her so that she can be at the hearing here shortly.

With that in the order in which I introduced you, Ambassador Barzun, we will start with you. If you would synthesize your statement in about 5 minutes for each of you, your full statements will all be included in the record, without objection. And we will start with you, Ambassador Barzun.

I see you have been liberated from security. Let me welcome as well Liliانا Ayalde, who has been nominated to be our next Ambassador to Brazil. This is an incredibly important bilateral relationship, as well as the role that Brazil increasingly plays in a regional as well as an international context, so much so that President Obama will host President Rousseff for an official visit this coming October. Ms. Ayalde has strong experience in the hemisphere as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere, as well as having served in an ambassadorial post in that regard. So we welcome you as well.

Ambassador Barzun, you can start off.

STATEMENT OF HON. MATTHEW WINTHROP BARZUN, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Ambassador BARZUN. Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of this committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for placing their confidence in me with this nomination, and I thank you for considering it. If confirmed, I will work every day to nurture and deepen this special relationship.

It is a relationship that has been meaningful to me for as long as I can remember and comes from my own family's connection to England. My 10 times great grandfather was John Winthrop, a Founding Governor of my home State of Massachusetts. His statue is right over there in Statuary Hall.

Back in 1630, John Winthrop left his comfortable life in Suffolk to lead a group of 700 across the Atlantic to New England to build a new life in a place he named Boston. In the middle of that jour-

ney, he gave a sermon. Echoing the Sermon on the Mount, he said, "We must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." Those words quoted by Presidents Kennedy and Reagan and so many others have become part of the American DNA.

But it is also fitting that the sermon was delivered between England and America because those words also described the hopes and the expectations shared by so many around the globe for the United States-United Kingdom relationship. As the President and Prime Minister Cameron have said, the United States and the United Kingdom count on each other, and the world counts on our alliance.

That is why we stand with our U.K. ally to advance our common agenda: ensuring our security, delivering economic growth, and safeguarding our shared values. That is the work our two governments are engaged on right now on all topics at all levels. I know there are far too many to list now with my allotted time, but I would like to highlight just three.

First, our work together in Afghanistan where, after us, the United Kingdom is the largest troop contributor to the NATO mission.

Second, our work together on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, which the United Kingdom strongly supports.

And third, our work together on every security challenge of our times, whether it is securing a lasting peace in the Middle East, providing humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees, or calling for Iranian compliance with nonproliferation standards. Progress in these areas and others is only possible if we continue our long history of cooperation.

As we saw in the Boston Marathon and the solidarity shown with Boston at the start of the London Marathon just a week later, it is the nature of our friendship that we always keep moving forward together.

Mr. Chairman, 4 years ago, this committee gave me the opportunity and the honor of serving my country as U.S. Ambassador to Sweden. My wife, Brooke, who is my partner in diplomacy and life, and our three wonderful children are ready, if I am confirmed, to serve again.

Mr. Chairman, members of this distinguished committee, if confirmed, I will serve with deference to this body, to your colleagues in Congress, and to the administration that has nominated me. I will serve with the utmost respect for the time-tested bonds shared by our great nations. I will serve with purpose and with optimism, knowing that the eyes of all people are indeed upon us.

I thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Barzun follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MATTHEW WINTHROP BARZUN

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for placing their confidence in me with this nomination, and I thank you for considering it. If confirmed, I will work every day to nurture and deepen this special relation-

ship and important NATO ally. As the President and Prime Minister Cameron have said, the United States and United Kingdom count on each other, and the world counts on our alliance.

It is an intimate connection as we saw last week when so many Americans shared Britain's excitement about the new prince. And it's a relationship that has been meaningful to me for as long as I can remember.

Part of that meaning stems from my own family's connection to England. My ten-times Great Grandfather was John Winthrop, the first Governor of my home State of Massachusetts (his statue is right over there in Statuary Hall). In 1630, John Winthrop left behind his life in Suffolk county, England, to lead 700 men and women across the Atlantic to New England so they could build a new life in a city he named Boston.

In the midst of that journey he delivered a sermon whose words have inspired Americans ever since. Echoing the Sermon on the Mount, he said, "We must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." Quoted by Presidents Kennedy, Reagan, and countless others, these words express an ideal that has become part of America's DNA. But it is fitting that the sermon was delivered while traveling between England and America, because these words also describe the hopes and expectations held by so many around the world for the United States-United Kingdom relationship: "The eyes of all people are upon us."

With this in mind, I come before you today with a tremendous sense of purpose and optimism. This optimism is not based on nostalgia, but on a history of continuing our common purpose, adapted for the times in which we live. I am confident that, working together, our two countries will not only preserve this critical relationship, but will continue to adapt it to a quickly changing world.

I began my professional life in 1993 when I left Boston to join a four-person Internet startup in San Francisco called CNET. The company grew quickly, our success a result of realizing early that the web was different. What didn't work was trying to just "build an audience" the way publishers and producers did. What did work was directly engaging with our users—to build a community.

I met my amazing wife, Brooke, in California. She has since become my partner in diplomacy and in life and we now have three wonderful children. At the height of the Internet boom, we decided to move to her hometown of Louisville, KY, where the daily practice of building a community is as old as the frontier generations. I embraced the city and it embraced me. Even when I am not there, I always try to channel Louisville's spirit of generosity, hospitality, and warmth.

I brought this spirit to Sweden when I served as the U.S. Ambassador there at an important time. During my years there, Sweden held the presidency of the EU, and Wikileaks posed unforeseen challenges to the diplomatic community. Together with our Swedish counterparts, our embassy team built stronger relations on behalf of trade, security and human rights, earning a medal for exemplary diplomatic service in the process.

I look forward to building on this diplomatic success if confirmed as Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

We live in a complex world, and the challenges we face today not only demand strategies that can evolve with the speed of change, but also wisdom and perspective. Standing with our U.K. ally, we must continue to advance our common agenda of ensuring our security, delivering economic growth, and safeguarding our shared values.

That's the work our two governments are engaged on right now—on all topics and at all levels. To list them all would fill my allotted time, but you know them well: (i) our work together in Afghanistan where, after us, the U.K. is the largest troop contributor to the NATO mission; (ii) our work together on the transatlantic trade and investment partnership, which the U.K. strongly supports, (iii) our work together to on every security challenge of our times—whether it is securing a lasting peace in the Middle East, providing humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees, or calling for Iranian compliance with nonproliferation standards. Together, the United States and the United Kingdom support democracy and freedom across the globe.

Progress in these areas and others is only possible if we continue our long history of cooperation. As we saw in the Boston marathon and the solidarity shown with Boston at the start of the London marathon a week later, it is the nature of our friendship that we always keep moving forward. Together.

What Britain means to us can be summed up in so many ways, but here's one I like that came up in a conversation with our youngest son. When talking about the possibility of moving to London, I mentioned the fabled "special relationship." He asked me what that meant. My first attempts were long and failed. Words like "allies" didn't work. "Historic bilateral bonds" was met with a blank stare. I thought for a while and then said, "We're best friends." That worked.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, if confirmed, I will serve with deference to this body, to your colleagues in Congress, and to the administration that has nominated me to be the next steward of this key post. I will serve with the utmost respect for the time-tested bonds shared by our great nations. I will serve with purpose and optimism, knowing that the eyes of all people are upon us.

I thank you for your time and look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.
Secretary Ayalde.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LILIANA AYALDE, OF MARYLAND, TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL**

Ambassador AYALDE. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you.

I am extremely honored to be here today as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil. Please allow me to express my deep gratitude to the President and the Secretary of State for the trust and confidence in me as shown through this nomination. Also, please allow me to express my sincere appreciation to the committee as it undertakes its vitally important constitutional role of advice and consent.

With the chairman's permission, I wish to recognize my family and friends and colleagues who have supported me over the years—many of whom are here today. I especially would like to acknowledge my parents, Jaime and Mercedes; my nieces, Bianca, Karina, and Alexa; and my lovely daughters, Stefanie and Natalia. Each knows the joys and sacrifices of public life, and I am grateful for their love and their steady support.

I come before you today as a career member of the United States Foreign Service. I have served my country for 30 years in diplomacy and development, mostly in the Western Hemisphere. As a preteen, I had the privilege of spending 3 years of my life living and learning in Brazil. The impact this vibrant and ambitious country had on me has never really faded. I was impressed by the openness and the spirit of the people and the deep pride Brazilians have in their national heritage.

If confirmed, I would give the highest priority to ensuring the well-being and safety of our mission and that of the American citizens who live and travel in Brazil. In 2012 alone, Brazil received nearly 600,000 tourists from the United States. As the host to the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics, Brazil will receive even more visitors and attention in the coming years, providing the opportunity to showcase to the world its dynamism and its diversity.

The relationship between the United States and Brazil is strong. We share important values, including a commitment to democracy, the rule of law, human rights, environmental protection, and multilateralism. In recent years, we have made great progress in expanding this relationship, not just on the political and economic levels, but also in the people-to-people exchanges aimed at expanding learning opportunities and promoting innovation.

If confirmed, I will work to consolidate these important gains and allow our relationship to grow by promoting the following three themes.

One, the shared leadership to address global challenges. It is in our interest to work with Brazil to address common challenges such as food security, environmental stewardship, nonproliferation, public health, and the collective defense of democracy and human rights, and the trafficking of drugs, weapons and people. We welcome Brazil's commitment to be a full partner in tackling this global agenda.

Second, partnering to realize our trade and investment potential. Boosting and sustaining economic growth is a key priority for the United States and Brazil. Strengthening the middle classes and expanding interest in a diversified cross-border trade and investment are important shared priorities. If confirmed, I would work to promote mutually beneficial investments between our private sectors to spur innovation, support growth, and create jobs in both of our countries.

And third, building our people-to-people capacity. Our public diplomacy efforts are of vital importance. If confirmed, I would focus on education, tourism, and English language training to increase the Brazilians' exposure to the United States and understanding of United States policies and goals in the region. Brazil's Scientific Mobility program—a fully funded initiative that will send 101,000 Brazilian students to study science—will connect us with Brazil's next generation of entrepreneurial leaders and complements President Obama's 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative.

Brazil's history has shown that it is not necessary to choose between democracy and economic development. A commitment to democratic institutions and free markets can allow a country to peacefully transform itself into a middle-class society and a global leader. In the process, Brazil has created the opportunity for us to re-imagine our relationship and open the possibility for both countries to construct a new kind of strategic partnership.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with the distinguished members of the committee, Congress, and your staff, to achieve the goals of United States policy and foster a relationship with Brazil that is worthy of both our great nations.

Let me once again thank you for inviting me to testify today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Ayalde follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LILIANA AYALDE

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, thank you very much for this opportunity to appear before you.

I am extremely honored to be here today, as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil. Please allow me to express my deep gratitude to the President and the Secretary of State for the trust and confidence in me as shown through this nomination. Also, please allow me to express my gratitude to the committee as it undertakes its vitally important constitutional role of advice and consent.

With the chairman's permission, I wish to recognize my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues who have supported me over the years—many of whom are here today. I especially would like to acknowledge my parents and my daughters. Each knows the joys and sacrifices of public life, and I am grateful for their love and steady support.

I come before you today as a career member of the United States Foreign Service. I have served my country for 30 years in diplomacy and development, mostly in the Western Hemisphere. As a teenager, I had the privilege of spending 3 years of my life living and learning in Brazil. The impact this vibrant and ambitious country had on me has never faded. I was impressed by the openness and spirit of the peo-

ple, and the deep pride Brazilians have in their national heritage. I recognized in Brazil's racially and ethnically diverse society strong similarities with the United States.

If confirmed, I would give the highest priority to ensuring the well-being and safety of our mission and that of American citizens who live and travel in Brazil. In 2012 alone, Brazil received nearly 600,000 tourists from the United States. As host to the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics, Brazil will receive even more visitors and attention in the coming years, providing the opportunity to showcase to the world its dynamism and diversity. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Brazilian Government to support its efforts to ensure safe and successful major events.

The relationship between the United States and Brazil is strong. We share important values, including a commitment to democracy, rule of law, human rights, environmental protection, and sustainable development; the desire to see peaceful resolution of disputes between nations; and a commitment to multilateralism. In recent years, we have made great progress in expanding the relationship, not just on the political, economic, energy, and defense levels, but also in people-to-people exchanges aimed at expanding learning opportunities and promoting innovation. Dozens of bilateral dialogues, memoranda of understanding, agreements, working groups, and people-to-people exchanges underpin our broad-based relationship.

If confirmed, I will work to consolidate these important gains and allow our relationship to grow by promoting the following themes:

Shared leadership to address global challenges. Brazil has committed itself to global leadership. The May 2013 selection of Brazilian Ambassador Roberto Azevedo as the World Trade Organization's next director general and Paulo Vannuchi to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights further illustrates Brazil's growing influence. It is in our interest to work with Brazil to address common challenges, such as food security, environmental stewardship, arable land and fresh water management, nonproliferation, advancement of women and girls, public health, the collective defense of democracy and human rights, and the trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people. Our engagement includes a growing number of innovative trilateral initiatives, and we welcome Brazil's commitment to be full partners in tackling this global agenda. A perfect example of our increased cooperation is the upcoming Global Partnership Dialogue, led by the Secretary of State and his Brazilian counterpart, which deepens our interactions with Brazil on priority strategic challenges.

Partnering to realize our trade and investment potential. Boosting and sustaining economic growth is a key priority for the United States and Brazil. Both of our societies look to their policymakers to advance policies that lead to greater prosperity, equity, and opportunity. Strengthening our middle classes and expanding diversified cross-border trade and investment are important shared priorities. If confirmed, I would work to promote mutually beneficial investment between our private sectors to spur innovation, support growth, and create jobs in both of our countries.

Building our people-to-people capacity. Our public diplomacy efforts are of vital importance. If confirmed, I would focus on education, tourism, and English language training to increase Brazilians' exposure to the United States and understanding of U.S. policies and goals in the region. Brazil's Scientific Mobility program—a fully funded initiative that will send 101,000 Brazilian students to study science, technology, engineering, and math at foreign universities—will connect us with Brazil's next generation of science, technology, and entrepreneurial leaders, provide a huge boost to U.S. colleges and universities, and complements President Obama's 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative.

If confirmed, I would encourage outreach to Brazil's vibrant community by engaging civil society and strengthening outreach to youth and future leaders in universities, political parties, and business. I will strive to expand our relationship by reaching out to people and regions across Brazil we might not have reached in the past and acquaint Brazilians from all backgrounds with the United States.

Brazil's history has shown that it is not necessary to choose between democracy and economic development. A commitment to democratic institutions and free markets can allow a country to peacefully transform itself into a middle class society and global leader. In the process, Brazil has created the opportunity for us to reimagine our relationship and opened the possibility for both countries to construct a new kind of strategic partnership. This is not to say that Brazil does not have challenges, or that we do not have differences. But we have the mechanisms in place to address these issues constructively, and the points of converging interests far outweigh our differences. The potential for the relationship between Brazil and the United States is as great as our willingness to embrace the opportunities before us, and our goal is to show that we can best achieve our mutual interests through collaboration and cooperation.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with the distinguished members of this committee, Congress, and your staffs to achieve the goals of U.S. policy and foster a relationship with Brazil that is worthy of both our great nations. Let me once again thank you for inviting me to testify today and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Ambassador Hale.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID HALE, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF LEBANON**

Ambassador HALE. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored and humbled by the privilege to appear before you today, and by the trust that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have bestowed upon me. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with the Senate on how best to advance United States interests in Lebanon.

I have had the honor and privilege of serving my country in the Foreign Service since 1984. I have devoted my career to advancing U.S. interests in the Middle East. Lebanon and its people have been a part of my life for decades. I was first assigned to Beirut just after the civil war ended and Lebanon lay in ruins. Years later, I returned as the Deputy Chief of Mission in a brighter time as the country rebuilt.

I learned a lot from the Lebanese people, particularly from their unflagging aspirations and endurance. I was proud to help build partnerships between America and Lebanon as we supported Lebanese efforts to regain true independence, sovereignty, and unity, to restore stability and security throughout the country, to revitalize their economy, and to build strong state institutions accountable to all Lebanese citizens.

This work is incomplete, but furthering that partnership remains a priority for the Obama administration because it is in the U.S. national interest. If confirmed, I will devote myself to working with the Lebanese to advance these common goals.

If confirmed, I will have no higher priority than the safety and security of American personnel, information, and facilities in Lebanon, as well as that of all American citizens there. My overseas career since 1990, including as Ambassador to Jordan, has been at high-threat posts in the Middle East. That experience has taught me to guard against complacency, to minimize risk, and to ensure that we have the resources and practices we need to advance America's business as safely and securely as possible.

The Syria crisis is having a profound effect on Lebanon. The spillover threatens to disrupt Lebanon's progress toward democracy, independence, and prosperity. There are those who would drag Lebanon into the Syrian conflict. Hezbollah is putting its own interests and those of its foreign backers above those of the Lebanese people. Hezbollah's active military support for the Syrian regime contradicts the Baabda Declaration, violates Lebanon's disassociation policy, and risks Lebanon's stability. My mission, if confirmed, will be to do everything possible to support the Lebanese in their policy of disassociation from the Syrian conflict, help them maintain their sovereignty, and ensure that America is helping to meet the humanitarian challenge posed by refugee flows into Lebanon.

Violence is already spilling over. The work of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces to protect Lebanon from these consequences reminds us that U.S. security assistance is a pillar of our bilateral relations and clearly in the U.S. national interest. We have worked with these two institutions to fight common terrorist threats. We have a strong commitment to support the Lebanese as they build up these institutions so they can project state authority to all corners of Lebanon. Only with such institutions can Lebanon ever attain stability, sovereignty, and security.

There are over 700,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict in Lebanon, a nation of only 4 million. The strain is great. Our humanitarian aid helps the refugee population, as well as Lebanese host communities, many disadvantaged themselves, with food, shelter, health care, and schooling. If confirmed, I will seek new ways to support Lebanese protection and assistance for those fleeing the terrible violence next door.

Lebanon's banking sector is the backbone of its economy. For the financial sector to continue to attract capital, it must meet international standards on countering money laundering and terrorist financing. If confirmed, I will work with the Lebanese banking community to ensure that it remains a stabilizing force for the economy.

It is now more important than ever to promote Lebanon's democratic traditions. The decision to forgo elections and to extend the current Parliament for nearly 2 years undermines Lebanon's democratic practices. We recognize this is a Lebanese process, but Lebanese political leaders should respect the electoral process and the constitution, crucial bulwarks for Lebanon's democracy.

Finally, Lebanese-American relations are more than a bilateral tie between governments. There is a strong, proud, energetic community of Lebanese Americans who have contributed much to our country. Many of these Americans are committed to the development of their land of origin as well. And I am proud of my ties to a community that has done so much for the United States and for Lebanon.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I thank you again for the opportunity to be here. If I am confirmed, I hope to see you and your staffs soon in Beirut, and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Hale follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID HALE

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored and humbled by the privilege to appear before you today and by the trust that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have bestowed upon me. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with the Senate on how best to advance U.S. interests in Lebanon.

I have had the honor and privilege of serving my country in the Foreign Service since 1984. I have devoted my career to advancing U.S. interests in the Middle East. Lebanon and its people have been a part of my life for decades. I was first assigned to Beirut just after the civil war ended and Lebanon lay in ruins. Years later, I returned as the Deputy Chief of Mission in a brighter time, as the country rebuilt. I learned a lot from the Lebanese people, particularly from their unflagging endurance and aspirations. I was proud to help build partnerships between America and Lebanon, as we supported Lebanese efforts to regain true independence, sovereignty, and unity, to restore stability and security throughout the country, to revitalize their economy, and to build strong state institutions accountable to all Lebanese citizens. This work is ongoing, and furthering that partnership remains a

priority for the Obama administration, because it is in the U.S. national interest. If confirmed, I will devote myself to working with the Lebanese to advance these common goals.

If confirmed, I will have no higher priority than the safety and security of American personnel, information, and facilities in Lebanon, as well as that of all Americans there. My overseas career since 1990, including as Ambassador to Jordan, has been at high-threat posts in the Middle East. That experience has taught me to guard against complacency, to minimize risk, and to ensure that we have the resources and practices needed to conduct America's business as safely and securely as possible.

The Syria crisis is having a profound effect on Lebanon. The spillover threatens to disrupt Lebanon's progress toward democracy, independence, and prosperity. There are those who would drag Lebanon into the Syrian conflict. Hezbollah is putting its own interests and those of its foreign backers above those of the Lebanese people. Hezbollah's active military support for the Syrian regime contradicts the Baabda Declaration, violates Lebanon's disassociation policy, and risk Lebanon's stability. My mission, if confirmed, will be to do everything possible to support the Lebanese in their policy of disassociation from the Syrian conflict, help them maintain their sovereignty, and ensure that America is helping to meet the humanitarian and economic challenge posed by refugee flows into Lebanon.

Violence is already spilling over. The work of the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces to protect Lebanon from these consequences reminds us that U.S. security assistance is a pillar of our bilateral relations and serves U.S. interests. We work with these two institutions to fight common terrorist threats. We have a strong commitment to support the Lebanese as they build up these institutions so they can project state authority to all corners of Lebanon. Only with such institutions can Lebanon ever attain stability, sovereignty, and security.

There are over 700,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict in Lebanon, a nation of 4 million. The strain is great. Our humanitarian aid helps the refugee population as well as Lebanese host communities, many disadvantaged themselves, with food, shelter, health care, and schooling. If confirmed, I will seek new ways to support Lebanese protection and assistance for those fleeing the terrible violence next door.

Lebanon's banking sector is the backbone of its economy. For the financial sector to continue to attract capital, it must meet international standards on countering money laundering and terror financing. If confirmed, I will work with the Lebanese banking community to ensure that it remains a stabilizing force for the economy.

It is now more important than ever to promote Lebanon's democratic traditions. The decision to forgo elections and extend the current Parliament for nearly 2 years undermines Lebanon's democratic practices and stability. We recognize that this is a Lebanese process. But, Lebanese political leaders should respect the electoral process and the constitution, crucial bulwarks for Lebanon's democracy. These institutions are cherished by the Lebanese people.

Lebanese-American relations are more than a bilateral tie between governments. There is a strong, proud, energetic community of Lebanese-Americans who have contributed much to our country. Many of these Americans are committed to the development of their land of origin as well. I am proud of my ties to a community that has done so much for both the United States and Lebanon.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to be here. If I am confirmed, I hope to see you and your staff soon in Beirut. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.
Ms. Ryan.

STATEMENT OF EVAN RYAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Ms. RYAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I will like to thank my parents, Donna and Tony Ryan; my husband, Tony Blinken, for joining me here. I am deeply grateful for their support.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me interrupt you for a moment. We want to welcome Mr. Blinken back to the committee, who was the staff director in the committee at one time and is the Deputy National Se-

curity Advisor. So we are thrilled to see that the world could wait a moment for you to be here with your wife.

Ms. RYAN, I am honored to be considered by the Senate for this important position, and I am grateful for the trust and confidence that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me with this nomination to be Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. If confirmed, I look forward to joining the administration's foreign policy team and advancing our country's public diplomacy goals.

The mission of ECA is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of countries around the world through educational and cultural exchanges. International exchanges enjoy broad bipartisan support in Congress. ECA's wide range of programs and initiatives continue to capitalize on American strengths and ideals—the near universal appeal of our education system, our culture and our values, our entrepreneurs and our innovators, our scientists, athletes, and thinkers. ECA is the lifeblood of public diplomacy, establishing the personal relationships that become the foundations of international partnerships.

My background draws me to the position of the Bureau and has prepared me for the considerable responsibilities of Assistant Secretary. For the past 4 years, as the Assistant to Vice President Biden for Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs, my work focused on bringing people together from across America on a broad range of issues. I built and strengthened constituencies and saw the power of shared ideas. If confirmed, I will see that the American people remain at the heart of ECA exchanges.

I have also seen the power of people-to-people exchanges through serving on the board of directors of PeacePlayers International and working with the Education Partnership for Children of Conflict. When you bring people together through areas of mutual interest, you open lines of communication and build trust that is essential for solving long-term challenges. Thanks to the opening made through this sports exchange, children learn that what they have in common far outweighs the differences that divide their communities.

These experiences instilled in me a conviction that through education, culture, and sports, the United States can help defuse conflict, bring people together, and build partnerships to face global challenges.

With citizens increasingly able to shape local and even global events, ECA's mission is more vital now than ever. Annually ECA engages 350,000 exchange participants and is connected with more than 1 million ECA alumni, including 365 who became leaders of their countries, 54 who won Nobel Prizes, and many more who returned to become leaders in their chosen fields. This is the legacy of flagship programs like Fulbright and International Visitor Leadership Program, which was started by Nelson Rockefeller who invited Latin American journalists who came to the United States to learn about freedom of speech and democratic values.

ECA's international program participants get to see America firsthand. ECA is connecting with new audiences from every part

of society and empowering youth, women, minorities, and underserved communities, the world's future problem-solvers.

Equally important is the impact of ECA exchange programs on the United States. When ECA sends Americans abroad, they become ambassadors for our Nation. Through ECA programs, Americans learn about other cultures and gain skills needed to succeed in the global marketplace.

And every day in every State, your constituents demonstrate American values to exchange participants through their hospitality. They open their classrooms, their workplaces, homes, and hearts to people from nearly 190 countries.

By linking Americans together with people from around the world, we can develop lasting relationships and partnerships that overcome political and cultural differences. And there is a tangible benefit too. Last year, international students contributed nearly \$23 billion to the U.S. economy.

If I am confirmed, I will sustain and build on the Bureau's extraordinary record of connecting with youth, women, emerging leaders, and the underserved to address the challenges of today and invest in the future of America's global relationships.

For example, I am committed to engaging youth from every region and background because 65 percent of the world's population is under the age of 30. If confirmed, I am excited to expand ECA programs like the Youth Ambassadors which started in Latin America and promotes mutual understanding and increases leadership skills.

ECA programs are also a bridge to opportunities and alternative narratives for the next generation.

If confirmed, I believe the following are also essential strategic directions for ECA.

No. 1, ensuring ECA programs are aligned with foreign policy priorities.

Two, leveraging technology and new media to connect more people with America such as virtual exchange programs.

Three, investing in long-term relationships with exchange alumni to increase the overall impact of ECA's programs.

And last, increasing opportunities for Americans.

Public diplomacy relies on our country's greatest asset, the American people. When you meet Americans, you meet American values. If confirmed, my focus will be on creating lasting people-to-people relationships that are the foundation of U.S. global engagement.

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

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ryan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EVAN RYAN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ranking Member Corker, for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored to be considered by the Senate for this important position—and I am grateful for the trust and confidence that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me with this nomination to be Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. If confirmed, I look forward to joining the administration's foreign policy team. It would be a privilege to advance our country's public diplomacy goals under the leadership of Secretary Kerry, whose commitment to solving global challenges by bringing people together has been unwavering throughout his career.

The mission of ECA is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of countries around the world through educational and cultural exchanges. International exchanges enjoy broad bipartisan support in Congress. ECA's wide range of programs and initiatives continue to capitalize on American strengths and ideals—the near universal appeal of our education system, our culture and values, our entrepreneurs and innovators, our scientists, athletes, and thinkers. Through these programs, the State Department is building ties to emerging leaders around the world. ECA is the lifeblood of public diplomacy—establishing the personal relationships that become the foundation of international partnerships.

My background draws me to the mission of the Bureau and has prepared me for the considerable responsibilities of Assistant Secretary. For the past 4 years, as the Assistant to Vice President Biden for Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs, my work focused on bringing people together from across America—including law enforcement and labor, state and local elected officials, business and religious leaders, educators and community activists—on a broad range of issues. I built and strengthened constituencies and saw the power of shared ideas in advancing the administration's goals. These constituencies remain deeply engaged with foreign exchange participants, share invaluable expertise, and host them in our communities. If confirmed, I will see that the American people remain at the heart of ECA exchanges.

I have also seen the power of people-to-people exchanges overseas through serving on the Board of Directors of Peace Players and working with the Education Partnership for Children of Conflict. When you bring people together through areas of mutual interest, you open lines of communication and build trust that is essential for solving long-term challenges. In Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Israel, Peace Players uses sports to bring together children of different races, religions, and ethnicities. Thanks to the opening made through this sports exchange, children learn that what they have in common far outweighs the differences that divide their communities.

The Education Partnership for Children of Conflict helps make sure that children whose lives are disrupted by war still have access to schools, books, and teachers. War can produce a lost generation; the Partnership promotes education and offers opportunities to overcome divisions that lead to conflict in the first place.

These experiences instilled in me a conviction that, through education, culture, and sports, the United States can help defuse conflict, bring people together and build partnerships to face global challenges. We must continue to find creative ways to connect with people around the world. Exchange programs open doors.

With citizens increasingly able to shape local and even global events, ECA's mission is more vital now than ever. Annually, ECA engages 350,000 exchange participants and is connected with more than 1 million ECA alumni—including 365 who became leaders of their countries, 54 who won Nobel Prizes and many more who returned to become leaders in their chosen fields. This is the legacy of flagship programs like Fulbright, founded in 1946, and the International Visitor Leadership Program, which was started by Nelson Rockefeller who invited Latin American journalists who came to the United States to learn about freedom of speech and democratic values.

ECA's international program participants get to see America first-hand. They live and work here and return to their own countries and share their new skills and understanding. The impact is global. Participants are from every part of society. They are high school and university students, emerging leaders, entrepreneurs, journalists, activists, government officials, religious leaders, and academics from every class and background. ECA is connecting with new audiences and empowering youth, women, minorities, and underserved communities—the world's future problem-solvers.

Equally important is the impact of ECA exchange programs on the United States. We live in a globalized world, and providing Americans international experiences makes our country stronger—better able to understand, cooperate, and compete. When ECA sends Americans abroad they become ambassadors for our Nation. They often study, work, and live with people who have never met an American. Through ECA programs, Americans learn about other cultures and gain skills needed to succeed in a global marketplace.

And, every day, in every state, your constituents demonstrate American values to exchange participants through their hospitality. They open their classrooms, workplaces, homes, and hearts to people from nearly 190 countries. From their hometowns, they are sharing the best of America with the world.

By linking Americans together with people from around the world, we can develop lasting relationships and partnerships that overcome political and cultural dif-

ferences. And there is a tangible benefit, too: last year, international students contributed \$23 billion to the U.S. economy.

If I am confirmed, I will sustain and build on the Bureau's extraordinary record of connecting with youth, women, emerging leaders, and the underserved to address the challenges of today and invest in the future of America's global relationships.

For example, I am committed to engaging youth from every region and background because 65 percent of the world's population is under 30. I know the transformative impact new ideas and experiences have on a young person. We have to be in the business of talent scouting around the world, finding emerging leaders, empowering them to fulfill their dreams, and building a long-term relationship with the people of the United States. If confirmed, I am excited to bolster and expand ECA programs like the Youth Ambassadors, which started in Latin America and has brought young people throughout the hemisphere together to promote mutual understanding, increase leadership skills, and prepare youth to make a difference in their communities. And to support the President's Young African Leaders Initiative, by bringing young Africans to the United States for summer leadership institutes at U.S. colleges and universities, and providing opportunities for them to network and contribute to their country's future when they return home.

It is also essential that ECA connect with young people in vulnerable communities. ECA programs are a bridge to opportunities, alternative narratives, and a marketplace of ideas for the next generation. These relationships are an investment in our shared futures.

If confirmed, I would look to continue expanding the reach of the Bureau's English language programs to build on the strong global demand for English language proficiency. English language skills connect young people to America, open doors, develop communities, and allow people to enter the global economy. This is a priority for the President and will have an impact far into the future. To cite just one example, already ECA's English Access Microscholarship program reaches tens of thousands of students each year in underserved communities in more than 85 countries worldwide. They are building strong bridges between countries, communities, and cultures while strengthening America's popularity and appeal.

I also believe the following are essential strategic directions for ECA:

1. Ensuring ECA programs are aligned with foreign policy and are mutually reinforcing;
2. Leveraging technology and new media to connect more people with America, such as virtual exchange opportunities;
3. Investing in long-term relationships with exchange alumni to increase the overall impact of ECA's programs; and
4. Increasing opportunities for Americans and impact on domestic communities.

Public diplomacy relies on our country's greatest asset, the American people. When you meet Americans, you meet American values. If confirmed, my focus will be on creating lasting people-to-people relationships that are the foundation of U.S. global engagement. I would be honored to lead this important effort for our country.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all for your testimony and to your family members for being here.

Let me start off with an answer I want from each of you and it is a simple yes or no. If you are confirmed, will you be responsive to requests from this committee and responsive to sharing insights in your respective posts with this committee by both the chair and members of the committee?

Ambassador BARZUN. May I start?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Ambassador BARZUN. Senator, thank you for that question. In the spirit of brevity, yes, absolutely.

Ambassador AYALDE. Mr. Chairman, I would welcome those insights.

Ambassador HALE. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. RYAN. Mr. Chairman, yes, absolutely. I look forward to working with the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you.

Now, let me start off with you, Ambassador Barzun. As former Prime Minister Thatcher would say, the Anglo-American relationship has done more for the defense and future of freedom than any other alliance in the world. That is very true. You embodied it in your opening statement.

In that context, there are still challenges before us, challenges on terrorism, challenges in North Africa, challenges as we still seek to deter Iran's march toward nuclear weapons, for which the United Kingdom has been a tremendous ally in this regard and forward thinking within Europe. How do you envision working to strengthen our mutual interests, but of course U.S. policy in this regard, to get our British allies to continue not only on the path they have been on but to intensify it in these areas with us?

Ambassador BARZUN. Thank you, Senator, for that question and raising that important topic—or topics, I should say.

As you pointed out, the defense and security cooperation between our two countries is unrivaled, and precisely because the cooperation has been going on for so long and it is so strong, I will certainly make sure to never be complacent. That takes a lot of work from an incredibly talented country team over there at post. And if confirmed, I will engage with the talented country team to engage on political, economic, defense, and security, on all those issues because those all come to play, as we seek to make the world a more peaceful, prosperous, and just place and of course, if confirmed, would welcome the opportunity to work closely with you, your staff, and this committee to make sure that that remains just as strong as it is today.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate that. I am particularly concerned about Iran. This committee has acted a series of times, in concert with the Congress, in a way in which it is rare today to have one unified voice of 100-to-0 votes about our concern about Iran's march toward nuclear weapons. And Great Britain has been a tremendous ally in this regard, and we need their continued leadership as we get into a phase of, I think, increasing challenge. So I commend that to your attention in your portfolio as you go there.

And something that is on a personal note but I think also important to our country, but on a personal note, I have for some time been involved in questions of Northern Ireland from my days in the House as a member of the Ad Hoc Irish Caucus from convincing President Clinton's national security advisor to give Gerry Adams his first visa to the United States, from helping seven boys called the Ballymurphy 7 to be liberated from a system of which they had 98 percent conviction rates just simply because they were Irish Catholics.

And while we have come a long way, a recent set of circumstances in Northern Ireland with protests exacerbated by the parades that take place annually and the riots that have ensued thereon has had a process by which Richard Haas, a former U.S. special envoy to Northern Ireland, is going to chair an effort. I hope that you will work with him and play a role in this regard. I think we have invested too much not to see the path to peace continue. It has been a cold peace but, nonetheless, to continue on a march toward greater integration. So I hope that you will consider that as part of your portfolio.

Ms. Ayalde, you and I had a conversation about Brazil. I think it is an incredibly important regional partner. I think it is incredibly important in its continuing aspirations in the world. I think the Brazilians have so much potential.

I, however, get concerned when I see, when they have opportunities, where they are headed sometimes. I get concerned in their position as the revolving chair of the Security Council where they seek further engagement with Iran, on Libya, in Syria in a way in which clearly diverts from my mind from where our views are. And to the extent that they want to be a new permanent member of the Security Council, it would make me real concerned about their aspirations in that regard.

And regionally I hear about their desire to be the regional leader, but I see them do very little outside of the country on democracy and human rights.

So while there is a lot that we are in common cause with the Brazilians, I hope that you are going to pursue, upon confirmation, a broadening of what I hope their vision is and their participation is in the days ahead.

Ambassador AYALDE. Senator, I appreciate your comments and certainly this is going to be a priority for me, if confirmed. My understanding is that the intensity of this dialogue over the last 2 years has improved. As Brazil becomes a much more active global player, the space in which we can dialogue and influence on these very important issues has increased. And so, if confirmed, I would want to pursue these very high priority foreign policy objectives so that we could have a much more fruitful and constructive way forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador Hale, you have one of the most challenging posts here, and in that respect, I wonder what your perspective is on a continuing political and military stalemate in Syria in terms of affecting Lebanon. What would be the ramifications in Lebanon for either a rebel victory or a regime victory in Syria?

Ambassador HALE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Of course, the situation we are facing today is an impasse in Syria and the consequences that flow into Lebanon. It is going to be very challenging in a post-conflict environment, frankly, to even predict what Syria itself will look like, much less what Lebanon is going to look like.

But one thing I think is very important to bear in mind is that Lebanese society is interwoven very deeply into Syrian society. The connections between these two countries run very, very deep. All you have to do is look at a map and see why that is the case.

Our hope is that Lebanon will stay out of this conflict, that Hezbollah's role in trying to drag Lebanon into this conflict will be showcased and rejected by other elements of the population, and that as the situation in Syria stabilizes, Lebanon itself can go back to a stable environment as well, that the refugees will be able to go back into Syria. Ultimately, that will require a political solution there, that the violence slipping over the border will cease, and the Lebanese will be able to take back the command of their own agenda, which is to rebuild their country from years of civil conflict.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally and before I turn to Senator Corker, because time has run and I want to make sure everybody gets an

opportunity here, what do you think is the view—what is the degree of your view in terms of having the Lebanese leadership not allow the country to backslide into their past in terms of the type of conflict that we have seen in Lebanon before? What is your barometer reading on it?

Ambassador HALE. I think that the President of the Republic, President Suleiman, is showing remarkable leadership in preventing that from occurring. He has spoken out forcefully about that. He has defended the disassociation policy and he has condemned those, such as Hezbollah, who are violating it. That is also true of the commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces, who has also made similarly courageous statements. I believe that the vast majority of Lebanese political and factional leaders and religious leaders, as well as the vast majority of the population of that country, has a very strong aversion to returning to conflict. The evidence of what happened to that country is all around them. All you have to do is drive the streets of Beirut or in the countryside. Everyone knows the costs and the consequences of it. But it is very important that the tension that is rising from the conflict in Syria and Hezbollah's involvement in it be dealt with directly and that the political process, which is currently paralyzed, return to function well so that all elements of that society feel that they are participating in the decisions being made for the security and future of the country.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Ryan, I will get to you in my second round. Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank each of you for your public service and continued public service, hopefully, after this weekend.

Ms. Ryan, I had to step out for a moment with something on the floor and you may have spoken to this in your opening comments. But I would love to hear how your positions in the private sector and the public sector have prepared you for this role in cultural affairs that hopefully you will take.

Ms. RYAN. Thank you so much, Ranking Member Corker, and thank you again for letting me be here today.

I actually was an exchange student in college, and so I have that firsthand experience.

But shortly after college, I worked for First Lady Hillary Clinton, and in that job, I was able to travel to 22 countries around the world and see the different cultures and different societies and how different cultures and societies can offer us insights and we can learn from them and vice versa.

I then worked with a nonprofit called PeacePlayers International, and PeacePlayers International works with children of different races, religions, and ethnicities, and brings them together with sports. They play together, learn that they have more in common with each other than they do have differences. They currently operate in Northern Ireland, in South Africa, and Israel and the West Bank. And what was fascinating to learn working with PeacePlayers is when you work with young people who have not yet formed hard opinions about people who differ from them, you can show them that there is much more in common that they have with one another than differences.

I also worked with the Education Partnership for Children of Conflict, and what we found is one of the first things to go by the wayside in an area of conflict is a school, a child's ability to learn. And that can stunt that country's growth, that country's path in the future if you are not educating its young people.

So through all of these, as well as through my most recent work with Vice President Biden when I worked with constituencies all around the country and saw that when you bring people together and open a dialogue, there is more that we can accomplish together than apart.

I think the power of ECA is that you do open doors to people around the world. There are currently 350,000 participants in exchange programs through ECA, and we bring them here to this country. They see American ideas, American values. They are exposed to American democracy. They then go home to their country. They share their experience of America. And that benefits us in the long term. I think Senator Lindsey Graham called ECA's exchange programs "national security insurance" because if you send people back to their home after they have been here, seen what America is really about, perhaps something that they had not been exposed to in their own media, and given them a chance to see how much broader their horizons can be, that impacts us in the long term in terms of our diplomacy and in terms of how this country deals with leaders who have been exposed and been through our exchange programs.

So I think it is a very powerful place to be in terms of our public diplomacy, and I feel that my background is uniquely suited to accomplish a lot in this role. And I really appreciate your question.

Senator CORKER. Well, thank you.

We have had some difficulties over the last couple years where certain efforts have taken place to clamp down on these programs where we have had people coming here to the United States and really learning a great deal about entrepreneurship and for enterprise and all those things that have helped make this country great. And I do hope, if confirmed, that you will work with us to ensure that these programs are not clamped down upon but actually, you know, within the resources available, expanded because I agree. I think it is a tremendous opportunity for us to share values with people in other countries, for them to take those back to their home. But, again, there have been some efforts, I think you may be aware, to curtail these activities, and I hope you will help us ensure that that does not happen.

Thank you again for being here.

Ambassador HALE, I know that Senator Menendez asked you a couple questions about Lebanon, and I think you talked a little bit about post. But right now as things sit, what is it that you think we could be doing to help stabilize Lebanon with the conflict that is occurring in Syria?

Ambassador HALE. Thank you, Mr. Ranking Member.

There are a number of things that we are doing now and that I will continue to do in order to help stabilize the situation in Lebanon.

One of my first priorities is going to be to make sure that Washington has a clear picture of the impact of developments in Syria

on the ground in Lebanon politically, economically, security, and the humanitarian situation.

Second, we have to stay focused on that humanitarian issue. The United States has contributed \$160 million out of our total budget for the Syrian refugee crisis to our partners in Lebanon to help work with the refugee issues there.

I think we also want to make sure that the Lebanese leadership is thinking ahead about contingencies related to the refugees so that they are prepared and the international community as a partner for them is also prepared and ready with planning.

And then we need to continue to help with this disassociation policy rhetorically and behind the scenes politically to make sure that those who support disassociation have our support.

One of the most important and tangible ways that we can stabilize Lebanon is to continue our very concrete support for the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces. We are contributing resources to them so that they can train and equip to deal with the security challenges inside the country, including countering the terrorist threats, controlling the border, including the Syrian border, making sure that Hezbollah can no longer claim that there is a vacuum in the state, but there is a strong state institution capable of carrying forth the security of that country.

Senator CORKER. Ms. Ayalde, Ambassador, I thank you for being here and thank you for your willingness to serve in another country.

I see I am out of order here. I apologize.

There is a lot of economic and development changes taking place in Brazil right now. What do you think we can do? I mean, there is tremendous turmoil. There was growth for a period of time, obviously much dissension within the country right now about direction. What do you think we as a country can do to help move Brazil along in a productive way?

Ambassador AYALDE. Thank you, Mr. Ranking Member, and thank you for the question.

Brazil has tremendous potential on all fronts, and we are best situated to take advantage of that. We have various dialogues going on that try to hone in on some of the barriers to trade, we are already very well poised to address these issues. It is a very dynamic process.

We have CEO's working on this. We have a very active CEO forum with 12 CEOs from Brazil and 12 CEOs from the United States working together trying to identify what those potential barriers may be and how we can help address them jointly.

There are opportunities in the energy sector that we are looking at very eagerly. Bids are due to be announced for oil and gas exploration, and we are looking forward to the opportunity this can offer U.S. business.

We have a number of areas that we are going to continue to work with the Brazilians to try to take advantage of opportunities. But we are already doing a lot. Tourism, for instance, has just grown exponentially from the United States to Brazil and from Brazil to the United States. And as a result, we accommodated our consulates. We had to address the streamlining. We have one of the

highest visa issuance in the world, and we have a number of Brazilians coming to the United States and buying. That means jobs.

You mentioned the recent turmoil or protests that have gotten a lot of public attention. We believe this is a sign of the resilience of the Brazilian democracy and the voices came out and protested, and the President responded immediately in a peaceful way. And those concerns are being taken seriously and the government is looking at ways of trying to address the call for improved health services, improved education, and better transportation.

And then again, there are also opportunities for our engagement on the infrastructure. There are new airports and ports projects, and we are looking forward to seeing more U.S. business engagement. And if confirmed, I would certainly work with our private sector and the Brazilian government to try to make sure that there are fair rules of the game for that economic engagement.

Senator CORKER. Thank you.

And, Ambassador, I will probably get to you in a second round, but I thank you for your willingness to go from Sweden to where you are going. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murphy.

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

Thank you to all of our witnesses for your willingness to serve.

Ambassador Barzun, I appreciate your mention of TTIP in your list of the top three issues that will confront you in your new post. I, in my service in the House, was not a 100-percent supporter of trade agreements that came before the Congress, but I am a big supporter of this one because I think it has not only enormous economic potential but has large geopolitical consequences if we get it right.

That being said, it will be a lot easier to enforce and maintain a TTIP that we hopefully eventually sign if England is still part of Europe. And you are going to be there during a really consequential time for the identity of that nation. In particular, in 2015, we expect there will be a conversation and perhaps a referendum, according to Cameron if he wins reelection, on the U.K.'s continued participation in the EU.

Talk to us just a little bit about our disposition and your future disposition as Ambassador as England and the United Kingdom goes through what could be a pretty tumultuous debate about their future role in the European Union and what the consequences perhaps are to the United States if their decision to perhaps withdraw or either further limit their participation.

Ambassador BARZUN. Thank you, Senator, for raising very important topics and topics I do plan to deeply engage on, if confirmed.

I think the President said it quite well when Prime Minister Cameron came to visit earlier this spring, and I will echo those words in answer to your question. And it is important to say right up front that the U.K.'s decision for how it works with and within Europe is a decision and internal matter for the United Kingdom.

That said, the United States interests—our interest is, as the President said, for a strong U.K. voice in a strong European Union for the reasons you touched on, Senator. A strong U.K. voice—we share a commitment to free and fair trade. We get a strong, bit TTIP deal done with the European Union. That is not only good for

the European Union and the United States, which is a third of global trade. It also sets great, high standards for the rest of the world.

So that is how I plan to handle it, if confirmed, and as that evolves, I, of course, look forward to working with you, your staff, and this committee to monitor progress. Thank you.

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

Ambassador Hale, in our conversation before today's hearing, you were referencing comments regarding the Syrian refugee inflow to Lebanon as creating an existential crisis in Lebanon. And sort of thinking about that afterward, it sort of strikes me as maybe one existential crisis layered on top of another existential crisis, perhaps layered on top of another. This is about as confusing a country for identity politics purposes as you get, and it plays out in the LAF. It is playing out right now as the general of the LAF and the ISF are both seeing their terms expire and you have got infighting amidst the political groups trying to figure out who comes next.

And it often causes consternation here in Congress because we, for instance, look at the sometimes watered-down willingness of the Lebanese Security Forces to take on Hezbollah, for instance, and we wonder why we are continuing to fund them if they are not taking the kind of rigorous posture that we would like them to. I think we sometimes have that consternation because we misunderstand the complicated nature of identity politics and political coalition building today, and we also probably misunderstand the importance of the LAF and a nonsectarian armed forces in trying to be one of the few legitimate brokers of peace and political stability.

So we talked a little bit about this privately but talk to us just a little bit about the role you can play to help us make the case to appropriators here that we should continue military funding for Lebanon, certainly with an understanding that there is a line that they can cross that would cause us to change our disposition. But how can you help us make the case that this is an incredibly important funding stream for the Lebanese people and for our regional security interests?

Ambassador HALE. Senator, that is an absolutely essential issue that you have raised, and I think you have captured very well the nature of the challenge that we are facing on this.

I would cast things in the following way. This has got to be a long-term effort. You know, I saw the Lebanese Armed Forces at the end of the civil war personally as a diplomat. It was a broken vessel. The war broke it. We have been helping them build up literally from the boots up since this period.

And one of the reasons that Hezbollah was able to become what it is today is that it thrived in the vacuum that was left by this absent state security authority. So if we have the long-term ambition, as we do, of making sure that Hezbollah is no longer the militia and terrorist threat that it is today, then we have got to have in place state institutions that can carry on the security challenges that are present in Lebanon and around the region. So that is the long-term goal that we have here.

We, obviously, would anticipate that there is not going to be a military solution to Hezbollah. We saw that in 2006. There has to be a much more complex approach to it. There has to be a political

strategy by Lebanese to reach a consensus that Hezbollah can no longer be the one militia that is still around and still armed and still controlling spots of Lebanese territory that is still making decisions that affect the life and prosperity of every Lebanese citizen without any accountability at all. But we will never get there if we do not have these institutions in place.

And think of the alternative. If we were not engaging and bolstering the Lebanese Armed Forces, then you would have not only Hezbollah but a whole host of terrorist groups seeking haven in Lebanon, finding their own sanctuaries, developing their own means, fighting amongst themselves, and then spilling all that over into Israel and other countries. We have seen that movie, and it is the last thing we want to see again happen in Lebanon or anywhere else in the world.

So I believe that this is the right investment to be making.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you. Mr. Ambassador, I just want to also thank you for your comments about the strong Lebanese American population and your willingness to draw upon them to try to make some of these cases I think ultimately to make your job and our job easier.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And to the witnesses, congratulations. Thank you for your service.

Mr. Barzun, your inspiring story about John Winthrop makes me want to offer a sentimental piece of advice to you to exemplify the same point, the great connection between our countries. There is a tiny Anglican church a few blocks from the Thames in the little community of Gravesend, which is at the mouth of the Thames where it flows into the sea. And in that parish, there is a very well-tended grave and it is the grave of the archetypal Virginian Pocahontas. The English settlers who came to Jamestown—frankly, they did not know how to survive Virginia weather, and if it had not been for John Smith, they all would have died. Pocahontas stayed her father's hand as they were about to kill John Smith and that really began the peaceful relations between Virginians, Native Americans, and the English, that first example of English settlement on this continent.

Pocahontas married another Virginian, John Rolfe, and traveled back to England, and when she had been there for a while, they gave her the Christian name Rebecca. She was coming home and fell ill on the journey down from London and was taken ashore in Gravesend and died.

The English have taken care of her grave there since the early 1600s, and in the church, there are two stained glass windows over the altar. One is Rebecca, her Christian name. When I went in and looked at it, the other one was Ruth. And I could not figure out why Ruth was in a stained glass window. But as you well know from the King James Bible that John Winthrop probably preached from, Ruth is the subject of the wonderful Old Testament story of Ruth and Naomi, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, who were of different nations. And when Naomi told Ruth to go back home

after her husband died, Ruth famously said, "Wither thou goest, I shall go. Thy people shall be my people. Thy God shall be my God."

It is a wonderful tribute to the relationship and that tie between Virginian Indians and the English but also between the United States and England. And that is why the stained glass windows are there and that is why the grave has been so carefully maintained for so many years. It will inspire you in your role. I doubt you need inspiration, but it will inspire you to see it. It is evidence of your proposition.

The CHAIRMAN. That is just an example of the tip of the depth of knowledge that exists on this committee. [Laughter.]

And I thank the Senator for exhibiting it.

Senator KAINE. So now on to the more mundane. I am really interested in this Scotland referendum, the devolution referendum. And I do not know if you have any thought about that or what the conventional wisdom of that is. My understanding is the Prime Minister offered to Scottish people the ability to have a referendum about their future, including potential independence. And I think it might even be right about the same time as you would be having the discussion about the European Union.

Do you have any sense about how that is perceived right now and how it would likely go? I know the United States would have no position on it, but I am just curious.

Ambassador BARZUN. Thank you, Senator.

You are right. The Scottish referendum will be at the end of 2014, and you are also right that, of course, it is an internal matter for the United Kingdom. So it would not be appropriate for me to speculate about future outcomes.

I would, however, like to ask your permission to use that story about Pocahontas early and often, if confirmed. That is fantastic.

Senator KAINE. It is not trademarked, as far as I know.

Ambassador BARZUN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

Ambassador Ayalde, if I could. Just one little thing that interests me. I could ask you a lot. But the chairman talked about his concerns about Iran in speaking to you that Brazil, you know, I think often showing an independence that a great nation and a great economy would have, does things in the foreign relations field that make us antsy and ought to make us antsy.

But one thing about the relationship with Iran I think is this. Brazil is one of the few nations in the world that gave up a nuclear weapons program. They were developing nuclear weapons when they had a military government in the 1970s and 1980s largely because of their concerns about their neighbor Argentina. And about 5 years after the military government fell in 1990, they voluntarily abandoned their nuclear weapons program. They are one of the few examples. I think South Africa and Libya might be the other two, each for their own reasons, of nations that were well on their way to developing nuclear weapons and then decided not to.

It is my hope—the chairman is working on this. We need to do things with respect to Iran, military options, strong diplomacy, strong sanctions. And yet, at the same time, there ought to be some positive examples out there of why nations have decided that it is

in their own long-term interest to abandon nuclear weapons programs.

And I hope that that story of Brazil as an example of a nation that abandoned a nuclear weapons program might be something that you and your colleagues in the Brazilian Government, should you serve in that capacity, could tell because I think it would offer some lessons to Iran and possibly to North Korea or other nations that are deciding to pursue a nuclear path. You do not need to pursue a nuclear path to be a strong economy and be a global power. I think that is a lesson from Brazil, and I just wondered if you might want to say anything about that.

Ambassador AYALDE. Thank you, Senator. Yes, very much so. That is the kind of positive moves that we are trying to encourage. The global partnership dialogue includes some of these global issues, including the relationship with Iran, and we hope to be able to move in positive directions through forceful diplomatic dialogue. And the experience that you have highlighted certainly points to ways in which this can happen, but we want to see that more frequently and obviously much more robustly.

Senator KAINÉ. And I know, as the chairman knows, one of the things that is most troubling about Iran is the way they are trying to play all throughout the Americas, the Spanish language TV and radio networks, trying to spread the influence of Iran in Brazil elsewhere. And we need to pay attention to Iran in the southern hemisphere not just in the Middle East. And I look forward to working with you on that.

Ambassador Hale, I recently went with Members of the Senate to the Middle East and Afghanistan and saw in Turkey and Jordan the effects of Syrian refugees. But we did not go to Lebanon and have extensive discussions about the effect of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In Turkey, the refugees tend to be in camps of about 10,000 each, and when a camp is filled, then you build another camp of about 10,000 each. In Jordan, the camps tend to be larger, and because of water shortages in Jordan, they tend to be very challenging for the Jordanian Government.

I would suspect because of the ties between Syria and Lebanon, a lot of the refugees who would come from Syria into Lebanon would sort of maybe not be in camps but blend in more with family or friends or connections in parts of the country. But could you describe the effect of the Syrian refugees currently on Lebanese life?

Ambassador HALE. It is having a huge effect, Senator. And I appreciate your observations on the situation around Syria's borders.

The Lebanese decided not to set up camps. There are pros and cons in all these decisions. There are camps in other countries where the Syrian refugees themselves are extremely unhappy, in fact, have rioted because of the conditions in those camps.

And I think you put your finger exactly on the reason why the Syrian refugees, because of the ties between these countries, are able to integrate a little bit better into the society. If you look at a map of where they are located, they are literally spread all over the country, but not unexpectedly, the majority are in areas near the Damascus highway, in the Bekaa Valley, and the coastal highway that comes down in north Lebanon.

The impact is on almost every aspect of life. These people, some of them, have had resources but their resources are beginning to dry up. They have rented apartments and so forth, but others do not have resources and are living with extended families in overcrowded housing, unable to necessarily meet their basic needs. And that is where our role becomes so important. They are doubling up in schools. The Lebanese have opened up the schools, but the demand is very great.

I saw this in Jordan. By the way, I served there during a large period of the conflict in Iraq. We had a very similar challenge.

So one of the objectives that we have is to make sure that our assistance goes to the community where the refugees are not just to the refugees, because their demands are spilling over into areas that are already disadvantaged.

Like Jordan, the Lebanese have a neuralgia about refugees, and you can understand why, because of the Palestinian refugee population and the distortions that that generated in the society.

So I think everyone, going back to chairman's initial question, is looking to us also to see that there is going to be a solution to this problem. And so that is why, working with the Syrian opposition, ultimately the answer is to find a political solution inside Syria.

Senator Kaine. Thank you.

Ms. Ryan, I will have a question in round two, but back to you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Let me ask you, Ms. Ryan. I agree with everything you said—that is rare around here—with reference to the importance of educational and cultural affairs in the Bureau. There is an effort underway to make significant reductions to the Department's funding to the tune of approximately \$124 million below the State Department's request for fiscal year 2014. I personally will work against that, but I hope it does not get realized.

But inevitably, the challenge is when you are looking at the overall resources for our State Department, our Foreign Service abroad, this is an area that seems to be ripe for those who do not understand—and I agree with Senator Graham that this is probably one of the best placed resources germinating our ideas across the globe on democracy, freedom, and the potential of each individual human being to fulfill their God-given potential. So it has enormous value.

But to the extent that we are restricted with sequester and other challenges looking ahead, if you were to be confirmed, how do you look at how do we prioritize this effort in the world? How do we look at the changing realities in the Middle East and North Africa? How do we tailor our programming or should we tailor our programming as part of an overall mission to fight extremism?

So, you know, in my mind, we would love everybody to come and see and engage and then go back in their own countries and promote these values that they will see for themselves are, in essence, really not just American but universal. But that is not going to happen.

So is there a prioritization that we should be pursuing in this regard, especially in light of the budget challenges that we consistently face?

Ms. Ryan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You make a critical point and that is an excellent question.

I know that ECA works very closely with the regional bureaus of the State Department and with our embassies around the world to ensure that our programs at any given time are in line with our foreign policy priorities. And as you stated, in these budget times, we do have to make sure that the programs that we are developing are the ones that are most helpful to our foreign policy priorities and that they meet the needs of the changing global landscape.

To your point, there is a program that ECA has called Tech Women that started just with women in the Middle East. It has now been expanded to parts of North Africa. And what they do is they bring women from the Middle East who are interested in developing skills in tech. They come here for a mentorship program in Silicon Valley where they are matched with women who teach them tangible skills and technology. They go back to their home countries. They have marketable skills. They know how to start a business. They know how to develop these things. We have now empowered them, taught them these skills. They have benefited completely from the United States.

And what you will find is, especially with women—this is why I think this program is so unique and powerful—women invest in their children and in their children's education and help form the opinions that their children are going to grow up with about the United States. So that is one example of, I think, how ECA has been nimble in making sure that their programs do align with the foreign policy priorities of the administration of this country.

The CHAIRMAN. So if you are confirmed, you will oversee a department that will be nimble enough to respond to the changing challenges we have within the context of your fiscal constraints.

Ms. RYAN. Exactly. And making decisions about which programs we need to prioritize based on what the current needs are for our goals.

The CHAIRMAN. I have one last question and you referenced it in your opening statement, which I was glad to see, and that is using new media platforms as a way of expanding our reach globally within the context of public diplomacy. Can you expound a little bit upon that because I think that especially when we are having budget challenges, this is an opportunity to reach mass audiences in a way that, first of all, is aware in how they seek to communicate and, secondly, gives us the opportunity to expand our reach?

Ms. RYAN. Thank you, sir. That is a very important point.

One of the things that ECA has focused on recently is virtual exchanges where people can learn from us online. We can develop programs where they can sit at their computer in their country and learn virtually with programs here in the United States. So that is something that will be a priority. It is something that, as you can imagine, is at a much lower cost than actually transporting people. So virtual exchanges is something that is on the horizon and that ECA is already working on. And I look forward to, if confirmed, to continuing in that effort.

One other piece of—you know, in terms of what you have raised and how we can accomplish these goals and meeting people's needs through other means. We already have very strong English language programs around the world. What that has accomplished and what I hope it will continue to accomplish at a, hopefully,

lower cost is purely by teaching American English to people around the world, you then enable them to read American media, to read English online in a way they would not have been able to before, be exposed to ideas online purely because there are these English language opportunities that have been a priority for a very long time of ECA and I hope, to your point, do not get cut in any budget cuts because English language teaching is a very subtle diplomatic tool and very powerful way to engage people not only with the United States but with U.S. Web sites, Internet, ideas, and information. And so I am hoping that that English language teaching could remain because I think it is a very subtle and powerful way to teach people about this culture but also open their minds.

The CHAIRMAN. That is great. I hope we are teaching highbrow New Jersey English. [Laughter.]

Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. We could debate that.

I want to thank you all again for your service. I know there are a number of panelists. We have two more coming up, and I will be very brief.

But, Ambassador Barzun, you know, the United Kingdom has been—we have a special relationship with them, as you have mentioned. And if you can remember the Pocahontas story when you get there, you will be one of the most outstanding Ambassadors ever.

But you know, the fact is, at the same time, there are only three NATO countries that are actually living up to their obligations as it relates to funding defense. U.K. is barely doing that right now and it looks like through budgetary cuts could in fact drop down below. I know this is a short and quick answer. But I assume you will be a strong advocate for the United Kingdom in spite of the fact that we have a special relationship with them in maintaining their obligations to NATO in that regard.

Ambassador BARZUN. Absolutely, Senator. Thank you for raising the issue around this important NATO ally.

It is my understanding that Chancellor of the Exchequer Osborne in his most recent budget laid out a defense budget that would remain above the 2 percent. And we all know—both of our countries know—that maintaining a modern deployable force is expensive. And because of our deep cooperation with the U.K., we are committed to working with that strong relationship to make sure that they remain full spectrum capability, that they remain interoperable with us, and also that they finally are able to continue to lead missions on behalf of NATO.

So it is an area of critical concern, one that I will engage on when I get on the ground, and I look forward to working with you, your staff, and this committee, if confirmed.

Thank you.

Senator CORKER. Well, again, I thank all four of you for your willingness to serve our country in this way and for being before us today. And I look forward to a long engagement with each of you. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Ms. Ryan, just briefly. Again, congratulations to you.

One of the programs that your office administers is called the Exchange Visitor Program, and this is already kind of like a constituent question. Virginia has been a great user of this program, and it is to bring international teachers to Virginia who have been very enriching of the student experience in the Virginia public schools.

I just wanted to put on your radar screen for the day that you are doing the job that the traditional time period for these international visits is about 3 years. But the State Department and Virginia have worked very cooperatively for some time in allowing 2-year extensions to ultimately take those periods in Virginia to about 5 years. And I know my superintendent of public instruction, Patricia Wright, will have that letter on your desk as soon as you are there. And I just want to encourage you—I know you know the value of this program and these teachers—how much they enrich students. But just to encourage you in that because in Virginia we have found that to be a really important program that your office operates and we are big fans of it.

Ms. RYAN. Thank you, Senator Kaine. Indeed, I do know that it is a very important program. The teachers who come over here are teaching critical language skills to our students, but they are also exposing our students just by being there to different cultures and that is a very important program. And if confirmed, I look forward to working with you.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you all for your testimony, your willingness to serve.

I remind members that the record for these nominees will stay open until the close of business today for any questions. If you do receive a question, I urge you to answer it expeditiously. It is the intention of the chair, working with the ranking member, to have these nominees before a business committee later this week, but that will depend upon having answers to all questions at that time.

With that and with the thanks of the committee, this panel is excused.

I invite Senator Kaine to take the chair. And I invite our next panel to come forward: Kirk Wagar, Daniel Sepulveda, Terrence Patrick McCulley, and James Swan.

Senator KAINE [presiding]. If I could get members of the panel, please, to come forward, we will begin now panel three. I will do introductions of the four nominees who are before us and then ask Senator Nelson to make some statements. I know he is here to introduce his friend, Kirk Wagar. And after Senator Nelson's comments, we will hear from the four nominees in the order that I introduce them.

First, Kirk Wagar is a friend and has been nominated to serve as Ambassador to Singapore. Mr. Wagar is a Floridian who has had a distinguished and very successful career as an attorney with a deep commitment to public service, including service on the Advisory Board of the Import-Export Bank of the United States. I am pleased to welcome him before the committee to consider his nomination as Ambassador to Singapore.

The position for which he has been nominated is a very important one in the region, both for the issues on the United States-Singapore agenda, such as deepening defense cooperation and the Trans-Pacific Partnership and also because Singapore's role in helping to forge a new and emergent regional architecture for a rules-based Asia-Pacific order. Singapore is also a wonderful innovation capital, and there are great exchanges of information and ideas that can be forged in this role.

The unique role that Mr. Wagar has had as an attorney and his commitment to public service, including the Export-Import Bank, will qualify him in a great position for this Ambassador.

And I will introduce Senator Nelson in a minute who will say more.

Terence McCulley. Ambassador McCulley, welcome. Ambassador Terence McCulley is to be the nominee of the U.S. Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire. As a senior member of the Foreign Service, Ambassador McCulley brings extensive leadership skills, coupled with strong management and interagency experience. His previous service in challenging countries, such as Mali and Nigeria, have instilled necessary insight to serve in a country beginning to find its way after a long and difficult civil war.

Since the crisis following the disputed Presidential elections in 2010, Cote d'Ivoire has been steadily emerging from a difficult era. The current President initiated measures to restore security, address human rights issues, ensure transitional justice, promote political reconciliation, revive the economy, reform security, and rebuild state legitimacy. A sizable agenda.

The United States has been a steadfast partner in these efforts, especially in work on the judiciary and electoral systems. We have also supported efforts to disarm and demobilize former combatants and promote national reconciliation. The immense challenges are not insurmountable. With the wealth of experience and steadfast leadership of Ambassador McCulley, the United States will continue to be a partner of the Ivoirian people, and in a region that has been too long plagued by conflict, a renewed Cote d'Ivoire will be a valuable partner.

Next, Ambassador James Swan. Maybe one of the most challenging countries in Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, is wealthy in natural resources yet remains poor and divided by conflict. Few people know more about these challenges than Ambassador Swan. And I am pleased to welcome him here as we consider his nomination.

Ambassador Swan has the depth and breadth of experience to engage our partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo to move toward realizing its potential and the Congolese people deserve no less than the best the United States can offer.

It is one of the largest countries in Africa, presents great challenges, but there are few people in the service of the United States who understand the challenges and opportunities more than Jim Swan. As a career Foreign Service officer, he has had a long relationship with this country. Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Africa Bureau. He has promoted security reforms and the establishment of broad-based government across the continent, and these happen to be two of our highest priorities in the Congo. Welcome.

Daniel Sepulveda. The Internet and telecommunications are at the heart of the modern international economy and both present huge opportunities and challenges. With many years of experience on just these issues while in Congress and past administrations and in the private sector, Daniel Sepulveda is the perfect candidate to champion the Nation's international information and communication policies and priorities. I am pleased to welcome him as the nominee for Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Communications and information Policy with the rank of Ambassador.

He is well known here in Congress both for his expertise on global telecom and Internet issues, as well as for his extensive experience working for both Senators Cowan and Boxer, as well as for President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry when they were both Senators.

Mr. Sepulveda would assume the head of the State Department's Information Policy Group at a moment when our country is faced with complex international debates over privacy, data flows, Internet governance issues, as well as a time when the administration is pursuing a very significant set of trade and investment agreements that impact directly upon his portfolio.

I want to welcome all of the witnesses before us. Thank you for your public service.

And I am going to begin by asking Senator Bill Nelson of Florida to say a few words of introduction to Kirk Wagar, and then we will have—actually before I do that, I am going to ask my ranking member, with a great hand signal from Senator Nelson about what I was supposed to do next—

[Laughter.]

Senator Kaine [continuing]. That I was able to observe. Before I introduce him, I would like to ask Senator Corker, the ranking member of the committee, to offer some introductory comments.

Senator CORKER. I think you have done an outstanding job of introducing these great candidates and nominees. And I know we have a very distinguished Senator from Florida who is waiting patiently to speak. So I will defer and look forward to your testimony and thank you again for your willingness to serve.

Senator Kaine. Senator Nelson.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA**

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you said, it is my privilege to be back to the committee that I spent many very happy years as a member of this committee and thank you all for your dedicated service doing what has to be done in the confirmation of these nominees. And I am here on behalf of Kirk Wagar.

I have known Kirk for many years. He is from Miami. He is a University of Miami law graduate. He has his own Miami-based law firm. And he has a passion for justice and advocacy. And, of course, someone possessing those characteristics, it is no wonder that the President picked him for a very sensitive diplomatic and political post, and that is Singapore, because Singapore is a major trading partner. It will continue to play a major part in our engagement in efforts, particularly trade efforts, in Asia and our Am-

bassador there oversees the 17th largest trade relationship. It is worth \$50 billion a year.

Singapore, fortunately, has a history of championing trade agreements. And as we get to looking to these Pacific trade agreements, it is going to be all the more important that the Ambassador representing us in Singapore in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations is going to be very crucial.

Now, interestingly, Singapore plays a very strategic military role for us not because they have an army but because we have an agreement with them that the U.S. Navy maintains a logistical command unit in Singapore, and it serves in coordinating warship deployment and logistics. And this is right there at the critical Strait of Malacca, which is the narrow passage from the Pacific to the east, to the Indian Ocean to the west. So our U.S. representative in this tiny, in effect, nation state is critical. Squadrons of U.S. fighter planes are rotated to Singapore, for example, for a month at a time, and the naval vessels make regular port calls. And so the security cooperation with this little country is extremely important to the interests of the United States.

And I want to commend to you for your consideration Kirk Wagar as our Ambassador.

Senator KAINE. Thank you very much, Senator Nelson. We understand that you may have other events to attend to, but we appreciate you being here.

And, Mr. Wagar, why do we not start with you and then we will just move from your side of the table all the way across in the opening comments. And then Senator Corker and I will ask questions, along with any other members who might come.

**STATEMENT OF KIRK W.B. WAGAR, OF FLORIDA,
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

Mr. WAGAR. Thank you, Senator. Mr. Chairman, Senator Corker, it is an honor and a humbling experience to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore.

I am blessed to be a citizen of the greatest Nation on earth. I came here as an 18-year-old student, the first member of my family to attend college, and from that time, this country has provided me with my family, my education, my career, my home, and numerous opportunities to serve in our political process. My story is not possible in any other country in the world.

I would like to first thank President Obama for the faith he has shown in me with this tremendous responsibility and assure this committee that I do not take it lightly.

I also want to thank my dear friend, Senator Nelson, not only for his far too generous words but also his friendship and leadership on behalf of my family and all Florida's families. We could not ask for a more dedicated and gracious champion. His example is one I have followed and I will follow every day.

If the committee will allow, I would like to recognize my family. I was adopted at 4 months old into the most loving of families, and while my parents could not be with us today, I must acknowledge it is because of their guidance and strength that I have achieved anything in my time on this planet.

I would also like to introduce my brilliant and wonderful wife, Crystal Wagar. From her Midwestern roots to her unparalleled work ethic, Crystal serves as a model and inspiration every day, and her willingness to embark on this adventure on behalf of the country we both so dearly love ensures that we will do the best job we can on behalf of the American people.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, it would be an honor to serve my country as the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore.

Singapore is one of our strongest partners in the region, a region that President Obama has made clear is a priority for our future. There are three main pillars to our comprehensive and productive relationship with Singapore.

The historic foundation of the relationship is our dynamic and robust defense cooperation. Few countries surpass Singapore as a partner and a friend to the United States on our defense priorities in the region. Singapore is eager to have interoperable equipment, facilities, and processes that make it easy for us to cooperate with them on broad ranges of activities. We recently forward deployed to Singapore on a rotational basis the first of the U.S. Navy littoral command ships, which serves as an example of the depth of our shared interest in peace and prosperity in the region. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to keep this relationship moving full steam ahead on a positive trajectory.

The second pillar of our relationship is the economic cooperation we have with Singapore bilaterally, regionally, and globally. The U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement was our first free trade agreement in Asia. This bilateral free trade agreement set high standards and broke new ground for future FTAs. Since entering into force in 2004, bilateral trade has flourished, increasing almost 60 percent. U.S. investment in Singapore is twice what we have in China and five times that of what we have in India. By many, many measures, this is America's best performing FTA.

And we are building on that success as we partner with Singapore in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. The TPP will create a 21st century trade and investment agreement among a dozen countries that make up almost 40 percent of the world's GDP. If confirmed, I will work with Singapore to successfully complete the TPP negotiations this year, if possible, and to ensure TPP's full implementation. Singapore has a remarkable open economy with strong protections for intellectual property rights. It is no secret why over 2,000 American companies base their regional headquarters in Singapore. Taking this success and building on it in the region will be an exciting challenge for me.

Our cooperation with Singapore on law enforcement and homeland security issues is the third pillar of our relationship. Our law enforcement cooperation with Singapore over the years has successfully used the available tools and resources, but it is time to update the cooperation to use 21st century tools to combat the 21st century challenges that face us. There is untapped potential in our partnership with Singapore as we confront the global challenges of cyber crime, illicit finance, counterproliferation, and trafficking in persons. I look forward to working with Singapore, if confirmed, on coming up with modern and mutually beneficial solutions to the

problems of the present and of the future. I want to see our non-military security cooperation elevated to the same parity we have on our military and economic cooperation.

Finally, I came to this country because of the values that make America great: freedom, equality, and opportunity. Those values will be intertwined throughout all that I will do, if confirmed. Through our strong people-to-people exchange programs and my own personal public diplomacy efforts, we will continuously represent these values with dignity, sensitivity, and humility. I consider working to increase respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms a key element of the job of an ambassador and pledge to make sure that human rights is squarely on the embassy's agenda, if confirmed. It would be my distinct honor to serve as Ambassador to Singapore on behalf of this great country that has given me everything.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Corker, thank you for inviting me to testify before you today and for giving my nomination your serious consideration. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wagar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KIRK W.B. WAGAR

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Mr. Chairman, Senator Rubio, and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify before you today and for giving my nomination your serious consideration. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator KAINE. Thank you so much, Mr. Wagar.

And just to alert you all, we have just been informed there may be a series of up to seven Senate votes beginning in a very few minutes. But what we are going to try to do is get through opening statements, and if the votes happen, we will just keep you posted as to when we will come back to questions.

Mr. Sepulveda.

STATEMENT OF DANIEL A. SEPULVEDA, OF FLORIDA, FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION POLICY IN THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC, ENERGY, AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND U.S. COORDINATOR FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION POLICY

Mr. SEPULVEDA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Corker.

I am honored to appear before you as the President's nominee for the title of Ambassador while serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy.

I would like to submit my full statement for the record and summarize it for you now.

Senator KAINE. Without objection.

Mr. SEPULVEDA. I want to recognize my wife, Heather Higginbottom, who happens to be the Secretary's counselor as well,

and is here today. And I want to recognize our baby girl, Giselle Fabiana Sepulveda, who is at home.

My parents, Alejandro and Fabiola Sepulveda, are in Florida, but I also want to recognize their support and express my appreciation to them.

Mr. Chairman, I served 12 years in the United States Senate for four Senators, as you mentioned. I managed technology and telecommunications issues, as well as international trade, for all of them. I am well-versed in these issues and passionate about the importance of a thriving, open, and interconnected global communications infrastructure both to our economy and our democracy.

The State Department office I am nominated to lead promotes and preserves global innovation and communications, including international wireless, wired, and satellite communications. The office is also charged with defending and promoting the existing multistakeholder system of Internet governance that has allowed the global information system to revolutionize how we work, educate, and express ourselves. And this mission is more critical now than ever, not just to us but to the billions of people not yet connected to the Internet.

In the coming years, we will face international proposals on Internet issues that will be discussed in multiple fora. You can be confident that the administration's positions on those proposals will continue to reflect the consistent bipartisan approach to Internet governance issues that has prevailed since the Internet's privatization in the 1990s.

If confirmed, I will look to you for guidance and assistance. I take your oversight authority very seriously and I know that jobs, innovation, and discourse of the communications sector has helped enable in your States are critical to the economic and democratic well-being of the country.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity and the honor of appearing before you today, and I look forward to any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sepulveda follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL A. SEPULVEDA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you as the President's nominee for the title of Ambassador while serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs.

I want to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the honor of being nominated for your consideration to serve as a representative of the United States. If confirmed, I will discharge the important responsibilities assigned to the U.S. Coordinator to the best of my ability.

I want to recognize my family here today and those that could not be here as well for all of their support.

Mr. Chairman, I served approximately 12 years in the U.S. Senate, assisting Senator Boxer, then-Senator Obama, then-Senator Kerry, and Senator Cowan. I managed technology and telecommunications issues as well as international trade for all of them. Most recently, I was a senior advisor to Senator Kerry in his capacity as chairman of the Subcommittee on Technology and Telecommunications on the Senate Commerce Committee and worked with his Foreign Relations Committee staff on international issues in the same space. I am well versed in these debates and passionate about the importance of a thriving, open, and interconnected global communications infrastructure to our economy and democracy.

In simple terms, this State Department Office promotes and preserves global innovation in communications. In international wireless communications, this has required the coordination of rules and licenses in wireless operations around the world and the promotion of best practices in policy and law that attract investment in broadband networks.

In addition, we are charged with defending and promoting the existing multi-stakeholder system of Internet governance that has allowed the global information system to revolutionize how we work, educate, and express ourselves. Preserving and enabling the Internet environment for innovation is our mission. And this mission is more critical now than ever, not just to us, but to the billions of people not yet connected to the open Internet.

After last year's sometimes contentious World Conference on International Telecommunications, it seemed that an unbridgeable divide was potentially opening between the developing world and developed economies on how best to address the role of intergovernmental organizations in the management of international Internet-based communications. We are working to close that divide to protect the openness of the Internet and the freedom it grants innovators and citizens alike to create new services that reach the world as well as exercise their rights to speech and assembly.

Toward that end, I have some good news and a lot of hope. Last May, we were able to start changing the tone of the debate. At the International Telecommunication Union's fifth World Telecommunication Policy Forum (WTPF), participants again debated important issues like the adoption of IPv6 (the protocol that provides an identification and location system for computers on networks), promoting Internet Exchange Points, and supporting the multistakeholder model of Internet governance. As the head of the U.S. Delegation in my capacity as a Deputy Assistant Secretary, I was acutely aware of the anxiety leading up to this conference that some governments would push for an outcome pointing toward international regulation of the Internet.

Fortunately, at the event over 900 participants from more than 130 countries came together to adopt six consensus-based opinions on important subjects including the promotion of Internet exchange points and the facilitation of the transition to IPv6. None of the consensus opinions threaten the existing multistakeholder Internet governance system. This outcome validated the multistakeholder preparatory process, which brought together governments, the technical community, civil society, and academia on an equal footing. The U.S. Delegation and key private sector stakeholders were very pleased.

In the coming years, additional international proposals on Internet issues will be discussed in multiple international bodies. Specifically, the United States is preparing for future Internet-related public policy discussions at the Internet Governance Forum in Bali, Indonesia (October 2013), ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee in Argentina (November 2013), the ITU's World Telecommunication Development Conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt (April 2014), and the ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference in Busan, Korea (October–November 2014).

You can be confident that the administration's position on Internet related proposals will continue to reflect the consistent bipartisan approach to Internet governance issues that has prevailed since the Internet's privatization in the 1990s.

Another key communications priority for the Obama administration is the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), which will take place in the last quarter of 2015. At WRC-15, we will address critical spectrum needs such as identifying frequencies to command unmanned aircraft by satellite and new internationally harmonized mobile allocations to progress the administration's broadband agenda. The decisions we will shape at WRC-15 will advance emerging technologies, protect essential government systems, and drive competition in an international regulatory framework hospitable to U.S. industries.

In addition to these international conferences, my office will continue to host a number of bilateral discussions on ICT issues with key engagement countries such as India, Brazil, Mexico, Japan, Korea, and the European Union. Under the stewardship of my predecessor, U.S. Ambassador Philip Verveer, these bilateral relationships have proven critical in helping to ensure strong support and collaboration on a myriad of communications and information technology issues.

As U.S. Coordinator, I will continue to promote the development of the global Internet and work to enhance our relationships and partnership with the developing world in our shared desire to expand Internet broadband access worldwide. If confirmed, I will look to you for guidance and assistance. I take your oversight authority very seriously and I know that the jobs, innovation, and discourse that the communications sector help enable in your states are critical to the economic and democratic well-being of the country.

Thank you for giving me the honor of appearing before you today. I look forward to any questions you may have.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Sepulveda.
Ambassador McCulley.

STATEMENT OF HON. TERENCE PATRICK McCULLEY, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE

Ambassador McCulley. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And with your permission, I would like to recognize three people who are here with us today. First, a great friend and great mentor, retired career Ambassador Johnny Young who served four times as Chief of Mission for our country and I had the honor of serving with him in Togo.

Second, I would like to recognize Christie Arendt, our desk officer for Cote d'Ivoire, who has helped prepare me for this hearing.

And finally, Ambassador Daouda Diabate, the Ivoirian Ambassador to the United States who has joined us today.

Senator Kaine. Welcome, Mr. Ambassador.

Ambassador McCulley. Mr. Chairman, I am going to recognize my wonderful family in the course of my statement, and with your permission, I will continue.

Senator Kaine. Please.

Ambassador McCulley. Mr. Chairman, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, with Members of Congress, and others on our important relationship with Cote d'Ivoire.

I would also like to thank my wife, Renee, and our great sons, Sean and Liam, for their constant support. Renee and Liam are in Washington State at the moment, and I believe they are following this on a webcast. Sean is in Japan. I am quite certain he is sleeping. It is about 5:30 in the morning. But he has promised that he will be watching this on a recording.

Mr. Chairman, with nearly three decades of service in Africa, most recently as the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, I am eager to remain on the continent and, if confirmed, represent the United States in a country that we hope will once again be a political and economic hub in the West African subregion.

Mr. Chairman, I believe strongly that the success of our engagement abroad depends on our people, and I will make it my highest priority to ensure their safety, their well-being, and their security, as well as that of the private American community in Cote d'Ivoire. If confirmed, I look forward to working with interagency partners and our Ivoirian friends to improve an already excellent relationship and to promote the interests of the United States while continuing to press for the peace and prosperity the Ivoirian people deserve.

After more than a decade of instability, Cote d'Ivoire is on a corrective yet challenging path in key areas. The country held free and fair elections in 2010, and the Ivoirian Government has made progress in investigating crimes committed during the preelectoral

crisis. Yet there is much more to be done, and if confirmed, I am resolved to engage with our Ivoirian friends to promote transparency, inclusiveness, equity, and accountability.

Yet justice and reconciliation will not be successful without a credible and transparent legal process nationally and internationally that ensures the investigation of crimes committed by both sides of the conflict and holds those responsible to account, irrespective of political affiliation. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will work with Ivoirian and international partners to press for progress on these critically important issues.

The economy of Cote d'Ivoire is improving, and the United States is engaging with the Ivoirian Government to address corruption and improve the investment climate in order to promote stability and economic growth. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to pursue our economic statecraft agenda supporting and advocating for American businesses that seek opportunities in Cote d'Ivoire.

I am also committed to the collective effort to advance security sector reform, as well as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants in Cote d'Ivoire. The country can, the country must, redouble its efforts in both areas in order to promote stability, protect civilians, and realize Cote d'Ivoire's considerable economic potential.

With President Ouattara's democratic election, the United States lifted restrictions on assistance to Cote d'Ivoire. The bulk of our support now goes toward global health programs focused on prevention, care, and treatment for those living with HIV/AIDS. But we are also providing assistance to support democratic institutions and support capacity building in the security sector, including in respect for human rights and on the role of professional security services in a democracy.

Mr. Chairman, Cote d'Ivoire is a keystone country in a region of growing interest to the United States, and a politically stable and economically vibrant Cote d'Ivoire will promote prosperity in the subregion. Our agenda with Cote d'Ivoire is complex, challenging, and ripe with opportunity and includes support for democracy, good governance and reconciliation, for security sector reform, and for economic recovery. If I am confirmed as United States Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire, I will be a vigorous advocate for America as we advance our relationship with this important west African country.

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

[The prepared statement of Ambassador McCulley follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. TERENCE PATRICK McCULLEY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Corker, and members of the committee, I am honored today to appear before you as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, other Members of Congress, and others on our important relationship with Cote d'Ivoire. I would also like to thank my wife, Renée, and my sons, Sean and Liam, for their constant support. Renée and Liam are on the West Coast at the moment, and Sean is in Japan. They are watching the webcast of this hearing. With nearly three decades of service in Africa, most recently as the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, I am eager to remain on the continent and, if confirmed, represent the United States in a country that we hope will once again be a political and economic hub in the West African subregion.

Mr. Chairman, I believe strongly that the success of our engagement abroad depends on our people, and I will make it my highest priority to ensure their safety, security, and well-being, as well as that of the American community in Cote d'Ivoire. If confirmed, I look forward to working with interagency partners and our Ivoirian friends to improve our already excellent relationship and promote the interests of the United States while continuing to press for the peace and prosperity the Ivoirian people deserve.

After more than a decade of instability, Cote d'Ivoire is on a corrective if challenging path in key areas. The country held free and fair elections in 2010, and the Ivoirian Government has made progress investigating crimes committed during the post-electoral crisis. Yet there is much more to be done, and I am committed to engaging with our Ivoirian friends to promote transparency, inclusiveness, equity, and accountability.

In the current post-crisis climate, where significant rifts remain and with the 2015 Presidential elections on the horizon, serious efforts must be made to advance national healing. Justice and reconciliation will not be successful without a credible, transparent legal process, nationally and internationally, that ensures the investigation of crimes committed by both sides of the conflict and holds those responsible to account, irrespective of their political affiliation. If confirmed, I will work with Ivoirian and international partners to press for progress on these critically important issues.

The economy of Cote d'Ivoire is improving, and the United States is working with the Ivoirian Government to address corruption, and improve the investment climate in order to promote stability and economic growth. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to pursue our economic statecraft agenda, supporting and advocating for American businesses that seek opportunities in Cote d'Ivoire.

I am also committed to the collective effort to support Cote d'Ivoire's security sector reform; as well as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants. The country can—and must—redouble its efforts in both areas in order to promote stability, protect civilians, and realize Cote d'Ivoire's significant economic potential.

With President Ouattara's democratic election, the United States lifted restrictions on our assistance to Cote d'Ivoire. The bulk of our assistance goes toward global health programs focused on prevention, care, and treatment for those living with HIV/AIDS. We also provide assistance to strengthen democratic institutions to build strong systems of governance and rule of law. We advance maritime security in the subregion and we provide training to build the capacity of Cote d'Ivoire's military and police, including in respect for human rights, and on the role of a professional security services in a democracy.

Cote d'Ivoire is a keystone country in a region of growing interest to the United States, and a politically stable and economically vibrant Cote d'Ivoire will promote prosperity in the subregion. Our agenda with Cote d'Ivoire is complex, challenging, and ripe with opportunity, including support for democracy, good governance and reconciliation, for security sector reform, and for economic recovery. If I am confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire, I will be a vigorous advocate for America as we advance our relationship with this important West African nation.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador McCulley.
Ambassador Swan.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES C. SWAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE
CONGO**

Ambassador SWAN. Mr. Chairman, I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I am grateful to the President and the Secretary for the confidence they have placed in me.

I will briefly summarize some longer prepared remarks, if they could be entered into the record.

Senator KAINE. Without objection.

Ambassador SWAN. First, before beginning more formal testimony, I would like to recognize my wife, Daphne Michelle Titus,

and my children, Mitchell and Garner, who regrettably cannot be with us here today, but I am thinking of them.

Mr. Chairman, as you noted in your opening remarks, I have devoted most of my Foreign Service career to Africa and, indeed, much of it to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including service as desk officer in the mid-1990s and then a 6-year period when I was assigned to our Embassy in Kinshasa. And if confirmed, I look forward to drawing on this extensive background to advance our interests in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes.

And indeed, Mr. Chairman, the United States has significant interests in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa and borders on nine other nations. It has an enterprising population of some 70 million people, and it is of global environmental significance because of the Congo Basin rainforest.

A stable, prosperous, and well-governed Congo would advance peace and development throughout central Africa. Yet regrettably, as you noted, Senator, in recent decades the Congo has instead been more notable for recurring cycles of cross-border conflict, internal rebellion, human rights abuses, sexual and gender-based violence, and the like.

I see three sets of issues as of particular importance to advance American interests in the Congo over the next several years.

First, we must intensify efforts to help the Congolese resolve the longstanding conflict in eastern Congo. There are many dimensions to this decade-long human tragedy, including recurrent meddling by the neighbors, proliferation of armed groups, lack of sufficiently capable and professional Congolese security forces, and a culture of impunity for human rights abuses.

This array of challenges may seem daunting, but we are encouraged this year by the opportunity for peace presented by a framework agreement for peace, security, and cooperation that was signed among 11 countries in the Great Lakes region earlier this year. And that framework agreement has now been bolstered in recent months by actions such as an unprecedented joint visit by the U.N. Secretary General and the President of the World Bank to the region, by the appointment by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon of the former Irish President, Mary Robinson, as special envoy, and by adoption by the Security Council of an expansion of the U.N. peacekeeping operation to include a robust intervention brigade to pursue negative forces and militia groups in eastern Congo.

The United States has also stepped up its already considerable efforts in the Great Lakes region with, for example, the appointment of former Senator Russell Feingold, a former member of this committee, as the special envoy for the Great Lakes, and just last week, Secretary of State Kerry, also a former member of this committee, hosted a meeting at the U.N. Security Council focused on the Great Lakes.

In addition to the international attention on eastern Congo, a second main area of focus must be support for improved Congolese governance. With strong international assistance, the DRC held national elections in 2006 that were generally hailed as credible and reflective of the will of the people. But we noted a setback with the

flawed 2011 elections. The Congolese now have the opportunity of upcoming regional and perhaps local elections in 2014 and 2015 and then a Presidential election in 2016 to put that right and ensure that they are afforded a free and fair choice of leaders.

A third emphasis must be on continuing to work to unleash the economic potential of this resource-rich country and its people. This means working to develop the human capital of that population. It also means working to foster a stable, predictable, and attractive investment climate in order that Congo's potential can be developed and also developed by American companies that already are invested there.

Finally, let me mention two overarching priorities that will guide my work every day, if I am confirmed as Ambassador. First, of course, I will give priority to the well-being of all American citizens in the Congo, and they number in the thousands. I also take, with utmost seriousness, my responsibility, if confirmed, to lead and ensure the safety of the entire U.S. Embassy team, including American staff of all agencies, their family members, and our invaluable Congolese colleagues.

Mr. Chairman, once again I am honored to testify before your distinguished committee and stand ready to answer any questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Swan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR JAMES C. SWAN

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am grateful to the President and Secretary of State for the confidence they have placed in me. Before beginning my formal testimony, I would like to recognize my wife, Daphne Michelle Titus, and children, Mitchell and Garner, who regrettably are unable to be here in person today.

Mr. Chairman, I have devoted the majority of my Foreign Service Career to African issues, most recently serving as Special Representative for Somalia since 2011, and prior to that as Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti (2008–2011). If confirmed as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would return to a portfolio I have known well since the mid-1990s. I served as Desk Officer for then-Zaire (1996–1998) during the rebellion that toppled Mobutu Sese Seko after 32 years in power and during the turbulent first year of his successor, Laurent Kabila. I was then assigned to our Embassy in Kinshasa for 6 years (1998–2004), including 3 years as Deputy Chief of Mission, during the peace process that led to the withdrawal of six foreign armies from Congo and an internal political settlement that resulted in a transitional government to prepare for nationwide elections. I later returned to Washington as Director of Analysis for Africa in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (2005–2006) and then Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs (2006–2008). In both of these positions, DRC issues were also at the top of my agenda. If confirmed, I look forward to drawing on this extensive background to engage the Congolese Government and people to advance the wide-ranging U.S. agenda in the DRC and the Great Lakes.

U.S. INTERESTS IN THE CONGO

Mr. Chairman, the United States has significant interests in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa (as large as the United States east of the Mississippi) and borders nine other nations. It has an enterprising population of some 70 million people, vast natural resources, and global environmental significance due to the Congo River Basin rainforest. With its size and geography, Congo's chronic instability has a destabilizing effect in the broader central Africa region, which stretches from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. A stable, prosperous, and well-governed DRC would advance peace and development throughout central Africa and the Great Lakes and could go a long way in fostering regional economic integration and realizing the Congo's significant energy potential. Regrettably, in recent decades, the DRC has instead been more notable for recurring

cycles of cross-border conflict, internal rebellion, human rights abuses, sexual and gender-based violence, humanitarian crises, and weak human development indicators. As a sign of the challenges faced by the DRC and the help it needs, the country hosts the second-largest U.N. Peacekeeping Operation in the world, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

In preparing to serve as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, if confirmed, I see three sets of issues as of particular importance to U.S. interests over the next several years.

CONFLICT IN EASTERN CONGO AND SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

First, we must intensify efforts, working with our regional and international partners, to help the Congolese resolve the longstanding conflict in their eastern provinces. There are many dimensions to this decades-long human tragedy, including recurrent meddling by the neighbors, the proliferation of armed groups, the lack of sufficiently capable and professional Congolese security forces to secure the region, impunity for human rights abusers, a horrific pattern of sexual and gender-based violence, protracted internally displaced and refugee populations, the ongoing illegal trade in conflict minerals, the absence of government services, and inadequately representative regional and local governance structures. A durable response to the conflict in the east will require a comprehensive approach that addresses all these factors, among others. A number of U.S. Government agencies, both at State and at the United States Agency for International Development, will play an important role in developing this comprehensive response, as well as in continuing to ensure the provision of life-saving humanitarian assistance.

While this array of challenges may seem daunting, we are encouraged this year by the opportunity for peace presented by the February signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework agreement amongst 11 countries in the region and the resulting increase in international attention and energy being devoted to the Congo and the Great Lakes. To address the root causes of conflict and instability in the region, the Framework agreement includes commitments by the DRC Government to undertake much-needed security, governance and economic reforms. The signing of the Framework also launched a comprehensive peace process, which has been bolstered in recent months by U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank President Jim Kim's historic joint visit to the region, the World Bank's commitment of \$1 billion in development assistance under certain conditions, the appointment of former Irish President Mary Robinson as U.N. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes to oversee the peace process, the U.N. Security Council's approval of a robust 3,000-person Intervention Brigade to strengthen MONUSCO's military capability, and the refocusing of the Congolese Government's commitment to significant security sector reform. Along with other international partners, the United States is increasing its already considerable focus on the Great Lakes, for example, Secretary Kerry's appointment of former Senator—and chairman of this subcommittee—Russell Feingold as U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, the Secretary's convening and chairing a Ministerial Debate at the U.N. Security Council just last week, and the active congressional engagement on Congo and Great Lakes issues. While a great deal of work remains to implement the Framework agreement and to translate these positive steps into lasting progress on the ground, the increased attention and commitment I have noted is an important start.

I am also encouraged by the DRC's commitment in the Framework to undertake security sector reform, or SSR, a key objective in the DRC. The people of the Congo will not know safety and security until the country has a military capable of securing the territory and protecting the people. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the DRC Government to prioritize SSR, including the army, police, and judiciary, as an integral part of combating the conflict in the East, eventually paving the way for the eventual exit of MONUSCO, and in upholding the Framework agreement. I welcome the DRC Government's recent publication of its army and police reform plans, but much more needs to be done to implement both plans, including implementing a more robust vetting system, increasing the capacity of the judicial sector, and ending impunity across all military ranks.

ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

In addition to the international attention on eastern Congo, a second main area of focus must be support for improved Congolese governance. Only through effective and representative governance at the national, regional, and local levels can Congolese leaders truly speak for their people and make legitimate decisions to address the critical policy issues facing the country. With strong international support, the

DRC held national elections in 2006 that—while not perfect—were generally hailed as credible and reflective of the will of the people. Electoral assistance from the United States and other partners was catalytic in helping Congolese institutions prepare for that vote. Regrettably, the flawed 2011 elections were widely perceived as a step backward. We now have the opportunity of upcoming regional—and possibly local—elections in 2014 and 2015 and then the next Presidential election in 2016 to ensure that the Congolese people are afforded a free and fair choice of their leaders, consistent with the Congolese constitution. This focus on elections must of course also be matched by continued attention to building strong legislative, administrative, judicial, and civil society institutions to sustain improved governance beyond polling day.

DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

A third emphasis must be on continuing to work to unleash the economic potential of this resource-rich country and its people. This means working to develop the human capital of 70 million Congolese by improving their health and education and ameliorating the country's infrastructure. USAID is a key partner in these endeavors, among many others.

In order to unleash Congo's potential, we will also need to help foster a stable, predictable, and attractive investment climate. By helping the DRC increase transparency in public finances, decrease corruption, and expand the legal and licit trade of natural resources we can help boost private sector growth that will benefit not only the Congolese population but also American firms, such as those already invested in the manufacturing, mining, oil, and telecommunications sectors in Congo. Vast natural resources in agriculture, energy, minerals, and many other sectors present real opportunities for rapid economic growth—even beyond recent levels of approximately 7 percent real GDP growth per year—if the right enabling environment can be established. The DRC's resources, of course, also include priceless environmental assets, notably the Congo River Basin Rainforest, the second-largest in the world after the Amazon, and the Congo River and its tributaries, which has the hydropower potential to help provide electricity to much of the entire continent.

AMERICAN CITIZENS AND THE EMBASSY COMMUNITY

Finally, let me mention two overarching priorities that will guide my work every day if confirmed as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The well-being of all American citizens will of course be my top priority. Americans in the DRC, working in private business, for nongovernmental organizations, on missionary programs, with U.N. agencies, or in other endeavors number in the thousands. I also take with utmost seriousness my responsibility, if confirmed, to lead the entire U.S. Embassy team, including American staff of all agencies, their family members, and our invaluable Congolese colleagues and to ensure their safety. I will advocate tirelessly for our team to have the necessary management platform and security support so that we may represent the American people to maximum effect in the DRC.

Mr. Chairman, once again, I am honored to testify before this distinguished committee and stand ready to answer any questions. Thank you.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Ambassador Swan.

We will proceed to questions. I will begin and I may be relieved by Senator Menendez. We will try to tag team on the votes a bit.

I will start with just a thank you, especially to those of you who are career State, and your families who are here. I am just really struck by the challenges of your careers. I know there are upsides. I know there is excitement. But the frequent moves and the challenges that that pose for spouses and kids are very, very notable. And you are all to be commended for being willing to serve in these capacities, and I thank you for it.

First to Mr. Wagar, I am really fascinated with the Singapore story as a small fishing village not that many decades ago that has become our 17th-largest trading partner and become really a global brand in a way of how innovation can power an economy. It is not a piece of real estate that has vast national resources, but they have a very innovative and entrepreneurial spirit.

Many of the innovations in Singapore were innovations that they went out and found, including finding them here in the United States. They had a significant effort to improve their educational system where they came to the United States and decided that rote memorization learning techniques were not getting them far enough and they needed to learn American qualities of entrepreneurship and creativity. They developed an educational philosophy called "teach less, learn more" that really focused on the learner even more than the teacher. And so they had a wonderful innovation track record.

I know as an innovator, and so I just wanted to ask you about how you think in your role as Ambassador you can both be a champion of American innovation but also bring back good innovation ideas and continue to deepen the relationships between our two countries around that central theme.

Mr. WAGAR. Thank you, Senator, and it is a great question.

One of the most fascinating things that I have learned, as I have gotten more and more familiar with the day-to-day mechanism of Singapore, is their commitment to excellence that crosses every sector and high standards and high rewards when they are met.

Senator, I am sure you are aware that Yale is starting a new project in Singapore partnering with the National University of Singapore. It is the first liberal arts college I think in Asia but certainly in Singapore. And their first class right now, I understand, is in New Haven and will be going back. They have 154 students, and there were 11,000 applicants for those spots. So this is the first year that they are trying to even go further than they have gone to, I think, experiment with our liberal arts education.

This is the kind of innovation that certainly through our shared values we can work with Singapore on a daily basis, and it is something that I think is the role of any ambassador but I think it is particularly important in Singapore.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Wagar.

Mr. Sepulveda, I would like it if you might talk a little bit about the debates going on in the International Telecommunications Union and, if you would, talk a little bit about the administration's approach to advancing our telecom-Internet objectives, technology objectives, through the ITU and what is the administration's approach in those debates for addressing concerns raised by other governments about governance issues. These have been much debated and will be much debated, and I know many of our allies and countries around the world have significant concerns. What is the administration's approach to dealing with those concerns?

Mr. SEPULVEDA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It is a longer conversation but the ITU is a body within the United Nations, a 150-year-old body. It started as the International Telegraph Union and evolved over time. Its primary purpose is to ensure that we have global communications that are interoperable, so satellite services and spectrum services, as well as wired services, historically the telephone system, that those communications work on a global basis.

There has been some question relative to the Internet because the Internet is not person-to-person communications but computer-to-computer communications which has been outside the jurisdic-

tion of the ITU and has been governed by an international multi-stakeholder system in which academics, scientists, industry, and governments all play a role in ensuring that the global information system that is the Internet continues to operate and that the technological and day-to-day functions of the Internet are managed by technological experts.

So it is our goal as the Government of the United States to continue to promulgate that system because it has worked quite well. In Reston, Virginia, for example, you have one of the capitals of the Internet where whole networks come together, and you see this Internet exchange of information and exchange of services working extremely well to generate innovation, democratic discourse, entrepreneurship, and we want to continue promoting that.

Now, the challenge at the ITU is that there are a number of developing countries who feel like they are not reaping the benefits of the Internet, that they are predominantly consumers of services. They are not producing the kind of services on the Internet that they would like to see. Their deployment is not as wide as they would like to see, and the prices are not where they would want to be.

And we share all of those concerns, and there are a number of ways to address those through the existing multistakeholder system, through capacity-building and cooperation between our Nation directly with the developing world. And the administration's current strategy is to go out to the developing world—I was just in South Africa and other parts of the developing world—to ensure that they know that we care deeply about ensuring that their people are connected to what is the world's most revolutionary communications system and that we want to see them reap those benefits and we are prepared and willing to provide the technical assistance necessary to do that.

Senator Kaine. How is the aftermath of the news about Snowden, the Snowden affair, affecting particularly our relations with European partners on some of these issues that are pending at the ITU? Just give your sense of that, please.

Mr. Sepulveda. Well, yes, sir. As you know, President Obama has directly reached out and worked with German Chancellor Merkel and others, and there is ongoing dialogue between the intelligence services in our partner countries, among our allies with our intelligence services. That is well outside of the scope of my work. But the way that it affects our work is to ensure that you do not get a conflation of these issues so that we do not have a federated system of the Internet in which there would be a cloud for Europe and a cloud for China and a cloud for India and we would lose the economies of scale and efficiencies and the benefits that come with cloud computing in a global network.

We are taking the concerns of our colleagues abroad very seriously and are working with them on a daily basis to ameliorate whatever concerns they might have.

Senator Kaine. Great. Thank you.

Ambassador McCulley, I would like you to talk a little bit further about the national reconciliation efforts in Cote d'Ivoire and how they are proceeding and what would be your sense about their progress going forward.

Ambassador McCULLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me first start by thanking you for your generous comments about our Foreign Service families. I would not have the honor to appear before you today without friends and colleagues and mentors like Ambassador Johnny Young. But of equal importance, much greater importance, is the support that I have enjoyed from my family over the years, particularly the strength and resilience and counsel of my wife, Renee, and the courage and adaptability of my sons. So thank you for those comments.

Mr. Chairman, reconciliation is absolutely essential to both the political development and economic recovery in Cote d'Ivoire. The country, as you know, went through a divisive civil war. And the reconciliation process needs to proceed, and that means reform of the security sector. It means demobilization of ex-combatants. It means accountability for those who committed crimes on both sides of the political divide, and that means justice in an evenhanded fashion.

This process is moving forward, Mr. Chairman. The Government of Cote d'Ivoire has established a national security council. They have a security sector reform strategy. The U.N., UNOCI, the U.N. mission in Cote d'Ivoire, is deeply engaged in promoting security sector reform. The United States is supporting that effort through provision of advisors. The justice sector is in the process of being rebuilt. And Cote d'Ivoire has had successful elections both legislative and municipal and will be heading toward a critically important election in 2015 in the Presidency.

It is important, going forward, that that process of reconciliation be accompanied by accountability; accountability for those who committed crimes during the post-electoral crisis. And as we discuss this issue with our Ivoirian friends, we have said that it is important that the national process be credible and transparent and that Cote d'Ivoire, at the same time, work with the International Criminal Court on the international process to assure accountability and transparency because that is really the only way to achieve reconciliation, and without reconciliation, Cote d'Ivoire's economic recovery cannot proceed effectively, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KATINE. Thank you, Ambassador McCulley.

Ambassador Swan, a question about economics and natural resources in the DRC. How would you characterize U.S. and other efforts, multinational attempts, to stem adverse impacts of illicit resource extraction in eastern Congo? I know Dodd-Frank contained a special reporting requirement with respect to this. Is that a useful tool or something that would make us feel good but that would not ultimately serve the purpose? And is there more that we can do that is calibrated toward accomplishing the right objective?

Ambassador SWAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Congo is a deeply resource-rich country, and if those resources can be properly channeled, developed, and exploited for the benefit of the people, this can truly be an engine of growth not just for the country but for the broader region.

Unfortunately, in many cases, certain minerals, known widely as "conflict minerals," have regrettably contributed, in fact, to cycles of violence and actually financed militia forces and others.

The provisions of Dodd-Frank, indeed, are designed to get at that by seeking to provide greater traceability and accountability of minerals entering the broader economic system.

The United States has supported and encouraged firms that are operating in Congo to comply with the provisions of this legislation. Their initial reporting requirement will be due in 2014 and we have urged American firms to develop the necessary information in order to be able to respond to that requirement of the legislation.

Moreover, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, we have been working on a partnership arrangement that includes both NGOs, civil society organizations, and firms that are operating in the minerals sector in Congo as a way to develop further information about additional steps that could be taken to try to ensure that conflict minerals do not enter the broader economic stream.

It continues also to be an issue that we raise regularly with the Congolese Government as an important issue that will require their continued and ongoing attention.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, and I am going to now turn the gavel back over to the Chair who has his own questions.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Well, thank you very much. I wanted to relieve Senator Kaine so he can go vote. We have a series of up to seven votes. So we are a little bit between and betwixt.

One or two final questions. Unless there are members who wish to do so, we can excuse this panel.

Mr. Wagar, you are familiar, because you and I had an opportunity to discuss the case of Shane Todd who is a U.S. citizen who was lost and who died in Singapore. And it is an important case to us. And I would hope that upon your confirmation, you would raise this issue. We have come a long way with the Singaporeans in this from where we started, but it is a continuing case that not only the Chair but Senator Baucus as well as Senator Tester, whose citizen home State is from—is an important issue. So I assume that we can count on you to continue to pursue that case upon your becoming the Ambassador.

Mr. WAGAR. Absolutely, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. I just met with the Japanese Ambassador because we are going to be having a trip to Japan during the August recess. And I was asking him what are your goals here because I understand you and the Singaporeans are getting together as it relates to TPP. And they have been good allies and certainly good economic partners at the end of the day. But I wonder sometimes what their goal is at the end of the day to try to pursue a mutual effort as it relates to their strategic pursuit in TPP. So he was very diplomatic, but he basically gave me harmonization of global rules which, of course, we are for harmonization of global rules, but how they cut depends a great deal.

So I want to commend that to your attention because, obviously, there are a lot of concerns here domestically by the domestic automotive industry, and yet there are other opportunities in many parts of our sector. So this is going to be, I think, one of the critical assignments that you will have even though you are not going to be negotiating the whole TPP, but you are going to be having a bi-

lateral relationship in which our messaging is going to be very important. So I look forward to your efforts in that regard.

Mr. WAGAR. Thank you, Senator, and I look forward to working with this committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, with reference to Mr. Sepulveda's position—congratulations to all of you on your nominations. I think Senator Kaine may have pursued this, but I want to get a sense of whether you think your challenges were heightened as a result of Mr. Snowden's actions? And if so, how do we continue to overcome those challenges? Because obviously it is in the global interest of the United States playing a global leadership position in this regard in telecommunications and information technology in the world. So what do you think will be your challenge? And I apologize if you already addressed this question, but it is important to me.

Mr. SEPULVEDA. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the question.

As you know, in the short term, obviously, this raises a number of diplomatic challenges. The President has reached out at the highest levels to our colleagues abroad. The Secretary has as well to ensure that the intelligence communities work with each other on those questions relative to what nations can do to protect themselves in an age of mass information and the Internet.

As it relates specifically to the economic aspects of our work and the diplomatic work that we do abroad, our goal is to retain an international, global, functional, and open network. And I think as more information comes out about how these different areas of governance play in terms of how our Government deals with these situations, you will see that we remain the strongest champion for Internet freedom in the world, whether that be the freedom to engage in commerce or the freedom to engage in discourse, assembly, speech. And that is the message that we are taking out to the world.

Particularly as it relates to the developing world, I know you are deeply concerned about much of the developing world particularly in Latin America. We have built very strong relationships in Colombia, Chile, and elsewhere and are working with our colleagues in Brazil to get a united and regional understanding of the virtues and value of having an open Internet, of having open communications, and having an open platform for entrepreneurship.

So in the short term, yes, the disclosures have led to some degree of diplomatic difficulty, but we believe that through continued discourse, through open engagement at the highest levels throughout both the national security community and our economic channels, that we will continue to be able to protect what is the most revolutionary communications system the world has ever seen, which is the Internet.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. McCulley, let me ask you. How do you view the success of the Cote d'Ivoire Government in reviving the economy of the country and particularly in creating employment especially for demobilized former combatants?

Ambassador McCULLEY. Thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman.

I think the Ivorian Government has made enormous strides in bringing the country back from a position of considerable decline. Cote d'Ivoire, before the coup in 1999, represented about 80 percent of the West African Monetary Union's gross GDP. That had fallen considerably over 10 years of crisis. It has now come back to the point where Cote d'Ivoire represents 40 of the West African Monetary Union's GDP. I think that is a signal and a symbol of President Ouattara's success in building an economic team to address Cote d'Ivoire's economic decline.

But you are correct. In order to proceed to the most difficult part of demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration, it is critically important to provide jobs for the some 64,000 ex-combatants who need to be demobilized. And so the government needs to do more particularly in creating conditions that attract investment especially in the agricultural sector to grow the economy.

Senator, if confirmed, my goal will be to continue that dialogue with the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to encourage them to take greater steps to combat corruption, take greater steps to create a better investment climate, a more transparent public procurement process so that Cote d'Ivoire can benefit from its considerably advantages, a great port, a significant cocoa sector, to grow its economy to create the kind of jobs that will provide employment for the number of ex-combatants, to continue with economic recovery, and to conclude this important process of political and economic reconciliation, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, Mr. Swan, what do you think about—the President has appointed a special envoy to the Great Lakes region. Given the heightened interest in the conflict in the eastern DRC, in your view how successful have past appointments of special envoys been in focusing the U.S. Government's attention on the Great Lakes conflict? And what more can we do to elevate this issue?

Ambassador SWAN. Thank you very much, Senator, for the question.

Mr. Chairman, former Senator Feingold's appointment as a special envoy for the Great Lakes I think is a further signal of the additional attention that the United States—

The CHAIRMAN. Excuse me. I am sorry.

I want to hear your answer and I cannot do it when staff was talking in my ear. So go ahead.

Ambassador SWAN. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The appointment of former Senator Feingold as a special envoy for the Great Lakes I think is a strong additional signal of U.S. interest in the Great Lakes region and particularly in trying to help the region resolve the conflict in eastern Congo.

It should not be seen, however, as an isolated measure being taken by the United States. We have also seen just last week Secretary Kerry's personal engagement by convening a meeting at the ministerial level in New York. And that meeting itself should be seen in the context of a broader international effort to bring further attention to this problem set. An international effort reflected particularly in a framework agreement, was concluded among the countries of the region. That has been reinforced by recent travel of the U.N. Secretary General to the region, by the appointment of

a U.N. special envoy, former Irish President Mary Robinson, and by efforts through the Security Council to ensure that there is a more robust capability of the peacekeeping operation there.

So despite the, frankly, huge challenges that we see still in eastern Congo and in the Great Lakes region, there is an intensified energy and new focus, and we very much believe that the appointment of someone of the caliber and the deep knowledge of Africa represented by Russell Feingold adds to that and will, indeed, contribute to our efforts to assist in resolving the situation.

The CHAIRMAN. On a different topic, what about the election process? We put a lot of effort in 2006. It turned out to be a pretty successful election process. In 2011, there was a lot of dispute and concern about the results. How do we move forward and prepare for the appropriate next set of elections that ultimately can create a sense of confidence and transparency and honesty in the process?

Ambassador SWAN. Mr. Chairman, the 2006 elections were quite successful. I think that a good deal of the reason for that was related to catalytic U.S. involvement several years in advance in terms of assisting the Congolese both with the constitutional reform process and with putting in place a capable electoral commission and drafting electoral legislation. So I think the lesson of 2006—and I think it is a lesson that we learned in other electoral cases also—is that engagement must happen as far upstream as possible to help shape the whole environment around which the elections will take place.

And I believe that there is an opportunity, as we now look out to planned regional and provincial elections in 2014 or 2015, then the next Presidential election in 2016, that if we are able to engage early, along with other partners, in support of the Congolese, that we do have an opportunity to help them shape this to be a much more successful election. But we will need to engage early. I can assure you, Senator, that if I am confirmed for this position, that will be a high priority for me.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate hearing that.

Well, I understand there are no members that were seeking to at least appear and ask questions. There is a variety of votes going on. So with the thanks of the committee to all of you for your willingness to serve, the record will remain open until the close of business today. If there are any questions, we urge you to answer them because it is the Chair's intention to seek to place these nominees at a business meeting toward the end of the week so that we can get you on to your posts and begin to represent America abroad. And we thank you all for joining us.

The Chair will call the committee into recess so that the tranche of votes that are presently before the floor can be voted on by members. And then Senator Markey will return and chair the final panel of nominees here. So we ask those nominees to bear with us as we deal with votes on the floor. Until then, the committee stands in recess.

[Recess.]

Senator MARKEY [presiding]. We will reconvene the committee, and we will begin by hearing from John Phillips. He is the grandson of Italian immigrants. He is a leading attorney and litigator. His ability to negotiate and his legal acumen will serve the United

States very well. We recognize you, Mr. Phillips, for an opportunity here to address the committee.

STATEMENT OF JOHN R. PHILLIPS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Senator.

Let me start out by first congratulating you on your recent election. I understand this is your first hearing.

Senator MARKEY. Sitting in this chair.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Sitting in this chair. And so it is a privilege and honor for me to be your first witness of your first hearing.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

Mr. PHILLIPS. It is a great honor to appear here today.

First, I want to acknowledge my wife of 40 years, Linda Douglass, who spent many years up here covering this Congress as the chief Capitol Hill correspondent for ABC News, and my daughter, Dr. Katie Byrd, an emergency room doctor at George Washington University Hospital, and her husband Keith, a fire and explosives investigator here in the District. I am proud to have them with me here today. I am grateful for their love and their support.

The United States and Italy enjoy a robust and vibrant relationship, something that was on full display when President Napolitano visited President Obama in the White House as recently here as last February. And Secretary of State Kerry recently made Rome the centerpiece of his first trip to Europe as Secretary of State.

But as strong as the ties are between our leaders, the bonds between our people are what make the relationship stand out. More Americans visit Italy each year, about 5 million, than visit any other non-English speaking country. When it comes to studying abroad, Italy remains a top choice of American students, with some 35,000 a year. What is more, 20 million Americans trace their ancestry back to Italy. Italian Americans have been some of the most outstanding contributors to the growth and success of our country in a wide variety of fields.

While it may not be apparent—my last name is Phillips—I am one of those 20 million Americans with Italian ancestors. My grandparents, Angelo Filippi and Lucy Colussy, left their villages in Friuli of northern Italy to come to America over 100 years ago. They settled down in a small town near Pittsburgh where others from their hometown in Italy had come before them. When my father's older brother, my Uncle Louie, went to school for the first time, the teacher showed him how to write Filippi in English: "Phillips." So my brothers and my cousins and I have always regretted losing our distinctive Italian heritage.

My interest in Italy and in the United States-Italian relations has grown over the years from an initial desire to connect with my roots to personal engagement committed to bringing our two nations closer together. This effort has brought me to Italy 50 times in the last decade alone. I have had the honor of serving as a trustee of the American Academy in Rome, perhaps the preeminent in-

stitution in Europe promoting United States-Italian cultural exchange. I also learned a great deal about Italian local government and cultural and historic preservation when I, in 2001, invested in an abandoned group of five 800-year-old houses in Tuscany and worked over an 8-year period to bring them back to life, always mindful of, and faithful to, the region's proud cultural and historic heritage.

I believe my professional career as a lawyer involved in public policy issues over 40 years has prepared me well for this challenging new assignment. In 1970, I cofounded one of the first Ford Foundation-funded public interest law firms which, for two decades, successfully brought important cases on public policy issues.

In the mid-1980s, I worked closely with Senator Charles Grassley and Congressman Howard Berman to strengthen the Civil-War-era False Claims Act, which was designed to root out fraud against the taxpayers. Since 1986, when President Reagan signed the amendments that we worked on together into law, more than \$55 billion has been recovered by the United States Government from companies that defrauded it. My firm, Phillips & Cohen, is responsible for about 20 percent of those recoveries, or \$11 billion.

In 2009, I was appointed by President Obama to serve as chairman of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships, considered by many to be the Nation's premiere fellowship program. While I have not previously served as a diplomat, I believe my experience in public policy and public service will serve me well in leading our mission and engaging Italy on a full range of issues.

That engagement is a crucial job. Italy is a leader and contributor to peacekeeping missions worldwide and has committed to continuing its leadership role in western Afghanistan as part of the NATO mission in that country. Italy works hard with us to find resolutions to violence and unrest in many parts of the globe, including Syria and the Middle East. Italy is also an important partner for building regional stability in North Africa. We are grateful that Italy hosts approximately 15,000 U.S. military personnel at United States and NATO military bases on Italian soil.

In an increasingly globalized world, economic ties with Italy remain important for the health of the United States economy. The United States remains the largest source of foreign investment in Italy. If confirmed, I would promote United States exports to Italy and support the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership as a way to boost economic growth in the United States and the EU.

Once again, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity. I am humbled and honored to receive this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and the other Members of Congress in advancing United States policy and interests in Italy and in the Republic of San Marino. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Phillips follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN R. PHILLIPS

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today. I want to express my gratitude to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the trust and confidence they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to Italy and to the Republic of San

Marino. I also want to acknowledge my wife of 40 years, Linda Douglass, who spent many years up here covering the Congress as the Chief Capitol Hill Correspondent for ABC News, my daughter, Dr. Katie Byrd, an emergency room doctor at George Washington University Hospital, and her husband, Keith, a fire and explosives investigator. I am proud to have them with me here today and am grateful for their love and support.

The United States and Italy enjoy a robust and vibrant relationship—something that was on full display when Italian President Giorgio Napolitano visited President Obama in the White House this past February. Secretary of State Kerry made Rome a centerpiece of his first trip abroad as Secretary and has consulted closely with our Italian partners since that time.

But as strong as the ties are between our leaders, the bonds between our people are what make the relationship between the United States and Italy stand out. More Americans visit Italy every year than any other non-English speaking country. When it comes to studying abroad, Italy remains a top choice of American students. What's more, more than 20 million Americans trace their ancestry to Italy. Italian Americans have been some of the most outstanding contributors to the growth and success of this country in a wide variety of fields.

While it may not be apparent from my last name, Phillips, I am one of those 20 million Americans of Italian descent. My grandparents, Angelo Filippi and Lucy Colussy, left their villages in the Friuli region of northern Italy to come to America to seek a better life. They settled down in a small town near Pittsburgh, where others from small towns in Italy had come before. When my father's older brother went to school for the first time, the teacher showed him how to write Filippi in American: Phillips. My brothers, cousins, and I have always regretted losing that distinctive Italian identity.

My interest in Italy and in U.S.-Italian relations has grown over the years—from an initial desire to connect with my roots, to personal engagement committed to bringing our two nations closer together. For several years now, I have had the honor of serving as a trustee of the American Academy in Rome, perhaps the pre-eminent institution in Europe promoting U.S.-Italian cultural exchange. I also learned a great deal about Italian local government and cultural preservation when I invested in an abandoned group of houses in Tuscany and worked to restore them, always mindful of, and faithful to, the region's proud cultural heritage.

I believe my professional career as a lawyer involved in public policy issues for over 40 years has prepared me well for this challenging new assignment. In 1970, I cofounded one of the first Ford Foundation-funded public interest law firms which, for two decades, successfully brought important cases on major public policy issues. In the mid-1980s, I worked closely with Senator Chuck Grassley and Congressman Howard Berman to strengthen the Federal False Claims Act, which is designed to root out and deter fraud against the taxpayers. Since 1986, when President Reagan signed the amendments we worked on into law, more than 55 billion dollars have been recovered by the U. S. Government from companies that defrauded it. My firm, Phillips & Cohen, is responsible for recovering \$11 billion of those 55 billion dollars.

Since 2009, I have been privileged to serve as Chairman of The President's Commission on White House Fellowships, considered by many to be the Nation's premiere fellowship program. Each year the Commission selects 12 to 15 outstanding candidates to be future leaders of America and to work for a year at the highest levels of government. While I have not previously served as a diplomat, I believe that, if confirmed, my experience in public policy and public service will serve me well in leading our mission and engaging Italy on a full range of issues.

That engagement is a crucial job. Italy is a leader and contributor to peacekeeping missions worldwide, and has committed to continuing its leadership role in western Afghanistan as part of the NATO mission in that country. Italy works hard with us to find resolutions to violence and unrest in many parts of the globe, including Syria and the Middle East. Italy is also an important partner for building regional stability in north Africa. We are grateful that Italy hosts approximately 15,000 U.S. military and civilian personnel at U.S. and NATO military bases on Italian soil.

In an increasingly globalized world, economic ties with Italy remain important for the health of the U.S. economy. The United States remains the largest source of foreign investment in Italy. If confirmed, I would promote U.S. exports to Italy and support the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as a way to boost economic growth in the United States and the EU.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the relationship between the United States and San Marino. The United States cooperates closely with this small but proud nation on many important issues, including the fight against international terrorism and serious crime. We also maintain excellent collaboration in the United Nations and other international organizations.

Once again, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity. I am humbled and honored to receive this nomination to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to Italy and San Marino. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and the other Members of Congress in advancing U.S. policy and interests in Italy.

Senator MARKEY. I thank you very much. You are an excellent choice to be Ambassador. I am sure your grandparents are very happy right now knowing that you will go back to Italy as the United States Ambassador, something I am sure that they could have never thought possible. But congratulations.

Our next nominee is Kenneth Francis Hackett, the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Holy See. He is uniquely qualified to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, having served a long and distinguished career in international human development and relief.

To mention only a few highlights of Mr. Hackett's career, he served as CEO/President of Catholic Relief Services from 1993 to 2012. He is still an advisor for the University of Notre Dame Institute of Global Development and was Director of the Millennium Challenge Corporation from 2004 to 2010.

The election of Pope Francis, the first Pope from the southern hemisphere, and one who gives every indication of being fully engaged in the pursuit of social justice, gives Mr. Hackett a unique opportunity to reengage the Vatican on these issues of pressing mutual concern. His lifelong dedication to helping the less fortunate around the globe and working within Catholic institutions make him an excellent choice to be our Ambassador to the Holy See.

And finally, relevant at least to me and to Mr. Hackett, as a graduate of Boston College class of 1968, the two of us sit here today I think amazed that I am chairing and he is being nominated to represent our country at the Vatican as graduates of this Jesuit university up in Boston.

So we welcome you, Mr. Hackett. Whenever you are ready, please begin.

STATEMENT OF HON. KENNETH FRANCIS HACKETT, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE

Mr. HACKETT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And let me extend my congratulations to you for your new position. It is wonderfully ironic that we are here together.

It is also a great honor for me to appear here today. I want to express my gratitude to President Obama and to Secretary Kerry for the trust and confidence they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See.

Of course, I could not be here today without the love and the support of my wife, Joan, behind me, my children, Jennifer and Michael.

Growing up in Boston, I never expected that my life would be dedicated to international service. My model was my dad, a telephone worker who returned from World War II, started climbing poles for the New England Telephone Company, and rose through the ranks into senior management.

At Boston College, I studied business. You were in the smart school over at Arts and Sciences, Mr. Chairman. And I thought for

sure that I would work at a major U.S. corporation after graduation.

But as chance would have it, in my senior year, a Peace Corps recruiter convinced a friend and me to sign up for the Peace Corps, and a few months after graduation, I find myself in Ghana working in an isolated farming and fishing community. I began my journey in international service in a very rural area of a place called the Afram Plains where I was assigned to live at a Catholic mission with a priest from the former Czechoslovakia. It was 1968, the year of the Prague Spring. And as we listened on a short wave radio each night, my host would interpret and explain what was happening in his country. After 3½ wonderful years in Ghana, I knew that I wanted to dedicate my career to international relief and development.

So when I returned home from Ghana, I applied to work for Catholic Relief Services. Initially they turned me down but I was not going to give up. And finally I was hired and sent back to West Africa. I spent 18 years as President and CEO of Catholic Relief Services and a total of 40 years at the organization. And throughout those four decades, I encountered many inspired, dedicated, and heroic people in countries around the world. Whether they were lay people, clerics, or religious, they exhibited true witness to faith through acts of compassion during times of hardship and often physical danger.

During those years, I had numerous opportunities to engage with leaders of the Catholic Church in countries where CRS works. And in many cases, my work led me to the Vatican. And as you can read from my record, I served for many years as a member of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Holy See's coordinating body for Catholic charitable endeavors and as the North American Vice President of Caritas Internationalis, a confederation of national Catholic charitable entities. I have met frequently with staff and the leadership of the Secretariat of State at the Holy See and other offices in the Vatican.

If confirmed, I would expand not only my connections with the Holy See in Rome, but with Catholic leaders and workers whom I came to know in over 100 countries over my 40-year career. Over the years, I have found that cooperation and communication with leaders and lay people of other faiths was crucial as well. I look forward to expanding these interreligious ties in advancing U.S. policy goals.

Recent profound social changes across the world have highlighted the important role of religion and religious tolerance in our foreign policy. The Obama administration considers religious freedom a strategic national interest and has made it a diplomatic priority. President Obama has called for integrating religious leaders in the faith community into the policy process to address the critical global issues of our day. The Holy See represents, I would suggest, one of the most significant religious entities able to affect the course of development around the world. Since President Reagan established diplomatic relations with the Holy See almost 30 years ago, the United States and the Vatican have enjoyed strong cooperation on many issues of mutual importance such as the pursuit of peace,

interreligious dialogue, environmental protection, spurring human development, and promoting human rights.

With the Senate's consent, I would look forward to continuing that work with the Holy See and its global network of dioceses, religious workers, and charitable and humanitarian agencies on these critical issues. And let me expand on just two areas that are priorities for the United States and where the global network of allies, including I believe the Catholic Church, is necessary.

The first is the area of human trafficking, an issue where our interests overlap. We have done much with the Holy See already and we look forward to doing much more on this terrible scourge.

Just recently, the Holy See welcomed President Obama's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to contribute to a resilient, low-emission world. I believe the President's plan provides a renewed opportunity to work more closely on environmental advocacy with the Holy See.

Once again, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity. I am humbled and honored to receive the nomination to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hackett follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNETH FRANCIS HACKETT

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today. I want to express my gratitude to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the trust and confidence they have placed in me with this nomination to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. Of course, I could not be here today without the love and support of my wife, Joan, and my children, Jennifer and Michael.

Growing up, I never expected that my life would be dedicated to international service. My model was my dad, a telephone worker who returned from World War II, started climbing poles for the New England Telephone Company, and rose through the ranks into senior management. At Boston College, I studied business and thought for sure that I would work at a major U.S. corporation after graduation. But as chance would have it, in my senior year, a Peace Corps recruiter convinced a friend and me to sign up. A few months later, I found myself in Ghana working with isolated farming and fishing communities. I began my journey in international service in a very rural village on the Afram Plains where I was assigned housing at a Catholic mission with a priest from the former Czechoslovakia. This was 1968: the year of the Prague Spring. As we listened to the short wave radio each night, my host would interpret and explain what was happening in his country. After 3½ wonderful years in Ghana I knew that I wanted to dedicate my career to international relief and development work.

When I returned home from Ghana, I applied to work at Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Initially, I was turned down by CRS but I was persistent and finally was hired and sent back to West Africa. I spent 18 years as President/CEO of CRS and a total of 40 years at the organization. Throughout those four decades, I encountered many inspired, dedicated, and heroic people in countries around the world. Whether they were lay people, clerics, or religious, they exhibited true witness to faith through acts of compassion during times of hardship and often physical danger.

During those years I had numerous opportunities to engage with leaders of the Catholic Church in countries where CRS works. And in many cases, my work led me to the Vatican. As you can read from my record, I served for many years as a member of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Holy See's coordinating body for Catholic charitable endeavors, and as the North American Vice President of Caritas Internationalis, the confederation of national Catholic charitable entities. I have met frequently with staff and leadership in the Secretariat of State and other offices of the Holy See in the Vatican.

If confirmed, I would expand not only on my connections with the Holy See in Rome, but with Catholic leaders and workers whom I came to know in over 100 countries over my 40-year career. Over the years, I found that cooperation and com-

munication with leaders and lay people from other faiths was crucial as well. I look forward to expanding these interreligious ties in advancing U.S. policy goals.

Recent profound social changes across the world have highlighted the important role of religion and religious tolerance in our foreign policy. The Obama administration considers religious freedom a strategic national interest and has made it a diplomatic priority. President Obama has called for integrating religious leaders and the faith community into the policy process to address the critical global issues of our day. The Holy See represents, I would suggest, one of the most significant religious entities able to affect the course of developments around the world. Since President Reagan established diplomatic relations with the Holy See almost 30 years ago, the United States and the Vatican have enjoyed strong cooperation on many important issues of mutual interest such as the pursuit of peace, interreligious dialogue, environmental protection, spurring development, and promoting human rights.

With the Senate's consent, I would look forward to continuing to work with the Holy See—and its global network of dioceses, religious workers, and charitable and human development agencies—on these critical issues and others where we share a common purpose and cause. Let me expand on two areas that are priorities for the United States, where a global network of allies, including, I believe, the Catholic Church, is necessary for meaningful progress.

Human trafficking is an issue where our interests clearly overlap. The Holy See and the United States see trafficking as a human rights issue, and have already worked closely together to prevent and address this crime. Pope Francis has been at the forefront of advocacy for concerted international action to combat trafficking and is a natural partner for us. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Holy See on this priority and build on successful programs supported by the Embassy, like the training programs for male and female religious in antitrafficking skills, strategies, and networking that have made a real difference in this fight.

Just recently, the Holy See welcomed President Obama's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to contribute to a resilient, low-emissions world. I believe the President's plan provides a renewed opportunity to work more closely on environmental advocacy with the Holy See, a priority issue for the Church, linked to its goal of safeguarding the world's resources, and making them available equally to all.

Once again, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity. I am humbled and honored to receive this nomination to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress in advancing U.S. policy and interests with the Holy See. I am more than happy to answer your questions.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

And next is Alexa Lange Wesner. As the President of Be One Texas, Austin, Texas, she has pursued an impressive career in civic engagement and public service. She is an accomplished leader and has successfully built productive civic partnerships among the business community, all levels of government and civil society. A seasoned spokesperson, organizer, and philanthropist with lifelong multicultural experience and German language ability, Ms. Wesner will bring essential skills to the task of furthering bilateral relations with the Government of Austria, a key U.S. partner within the European Union. I am sure Ms. Wesner will prove an extremely distinguished United States Ambassador to Austria. Welcome and whenever you feel comfortable, please begin.

**STATEMENT OF ALEXA LANGE WESNER, OF TEXAS,
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA**

Ms. WESNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to echo my colleagues in offering congratulations. Good evening, Senator Kaine.

I am honored to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Austria.

I am deeply grateful for the confidence and the trust that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me. I am humbled by this opportunity, and if confirmed, I will proudly represent our country abroad.

With the chairman's permission, I would like to acknowledge the family members who have joined me today. I particularly wish to thank my husband, Blaine, for his unwavering support in this new endeavor. I would also like to recognize my three young children, Natalie, Tennyson, and Livia, who are with their grandparents this evening. My children continue to inspire me to enter public service, just as they inspired me to take leadership positions in the non-profit sector, a segment of society that has helped strengthen our country's democracy through the promotion of civic values.

I come before you today as an accomplished business woman. If confirmed, I will bring to our Embassy in Vienna more than 15 years of founding leadership in business and not-for-profit endeavors. My professional experience has deepened my appreciation for international trade and global economic vitality. This experience will serve me well in promoting United States exports and advocating for United States firms doing business in Austria. I will also bring to bear my passion for cultivating business and social entrepreneurship. If confirmed, I will draw upon all my knowledge and experience to successfully advance United States interests in Austria and enhance our strong cooperation with this important partner.

If confirmed, I will give the highest priority to ensuring the safety of the United States citizens living, working, and traveling in Austria. I will also seek opportunities to enhance our cooperation and mutual understanding on international security issues, as Austria plays an important role in international peace and stability. Austria contributes to peacekeeping missions around the world, most notably in the Balkans and Lebanon. Austria also contributes personnel to the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan and has pledged resources through 2017 to help sustain the Afghan National Security Forces following the 2014 security transition. I will encourage Austria to continue to contribute to these important security efforts.

If confirmed, I also look forward to continuing our productive dialogue with Austria to promote the stability, democracy, prosperity, and Euro-Atlantic integration efforts of the countries of the western Balkans region.

While our approaches to regional and international issues may differ at times, the United States and Austria share many common values and perspectives. These include a commitment to reducing the threats posed by climate change and nuclear proliferation, and the promotion of economic development and environmental sustainability through new and renewable energy supplies. We also share an agenda of broad support for human rights and the rule of law, stabilization in the western Balkans, and a common vision of peace and freedom for all.

To build upon these commonalities, if confirmed, I will draw on my ability to build strong partnerships for a common cause, uniting the force of government with the private sector and NGOs. In addi-

tion, it is my hope that I can help further Austria's dedicated pursuit of a tolerant and inclusive society.

Both the United States and Austria currently occupy seats on the U.N. Human Rights Council. This gives our two countries real opportunities to ensure that our mutual aims of global security, prosperity, and the protection of human rights are achieved together. If confirmed, I will work with Austria to encourage the leadership and innovation it takes to strike that important balance.

Austria is a great friend to the United States. Indeed, this year we are celebrating our 175th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries. We have strong trade and investment in both directions. We are bound together through myriad people-to-people contacts in business, the arts, education, tourism, and a host of other exchanges.

If confirmed, I pledge to do my best in advancing America's interests and values. I look forward to working with this committee and Congress in that effort.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wesner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALEXA LANGE WESNER

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

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I am deeply grateful for the confidence and trust that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me. I am humbled by this opportunity, and if confirmed, I will proudly represent our country abroad.

With the chairman's permission, I would like to acknowledge the family members who have joined me today. I particularly wish to thank my husband, Blaine, for his unwavering support in this new endeavor. I would also like to recognize my three young children, Natalie, Tennyson, and Livia, who are with their grandparents today. My children continue to inspire me to enter public service just as they inspired me to take leadership positions in the nonprofit sector, a segment of society that has helped strengthen our country's democracy through the promotion of civic values.

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Thank you, again, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

So now we will begin questions from the members, and we will begin by recognizing Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And it is a treat to be on this committee with you. Your background as a leader on foreign relations issues is decades-long, and it is going to be wonderful to work together in this way.

And to the nominees, congratulations to all of you. I feel personal connections. I have personal connections to two, and as a Jesuit educated former missionary in Honduras, a Jesuit Pope from the Americas is warming my heart virtually every day, including today with a front page article that made me very happy in the Washington Post. So that is all I will editorialize.

But to begin, Mr. Phillips, one of the things that we probably hear most about with respect to Italy—and I am not on the Europe Subcommittee of Foreign Relations, but the significant economic challenges and how they play in terms of the broader eurozone and the European efforts to find a path forward. If you would, just talk a little bit about the challenge currently facing the Italian Government and your sense, as you are getting ready to take this post, about the tasks ahead of them in dealing with these significant issues.

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

These are challenging times for all the EU countries and particularly Italy. It has had a period of nine consecutive quarters of negative growth. Its GDP today is lower than it was 10 years ago. Italy has had a strong record of success, but it really has to confront some of the important issues that will establish growth and establish opportunity. They have a very high percentage of unemployment among youth, 40 percent right now. And so the key for Italy is to increase demand to get more of the companies, the small- and medium-sized business companies, to have access to credit. They are not getting access to credit.

Their financial problems did not stem like others did from mortgage failures or from exotic financial instruments. It is really created from a period of stagnation and no growth. And when they have, they have had a very high percentage of loans in trouble with

Italian banks, and the Italian banks today have had to increase their own capital. So they have not been able to make loans to these small businesses that have not been able to hire people. It is not unlike a lot of the other EU countries.

I think the real way out here is to figure out how to establish greater demand in the EU zone. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership treaty negotiations which are beginning—have just begun I think are really important for Italy and for EU. Everybody will benefit if they can come up with more standardized ways of exchanging materials and having agreed upon rules. That is going to be a very ambitious undertaking but I think now they need the political will to face up to a lot of the things that have stymied the growth in Italy.

I think the Italian people are resilient. I think they want to find a way out just like all of EU does. And the ways that we can help them try to get real progress on the trade agreement and really develop our relationships on trade issues with them so that growth will expand and more opportunities will expand for them.

Senator Kaine. Thank you very much, Mr. Phillips.

Ambassador Hackett, welcome. What an exciting time to be taking on your role.

And you mentioned religious freedom. I think that is a fertile ground for work between our government and you in particular and the Holy See. So much of what we deal with, sadly, on this committee is starting to take on the tones of sectarian challenges between religious factions. The hearings that we have on the Middle East—it often seems that that is at the core. We have Christian communities, Coptic communities in Egypt, and Christian communities in Syria. We have Bahais in the Middle East and other smaller segments of the Muslim population that feel oppression. It is a fundamental value. It is in the first amendment for a reason in our country, the freedom to worship as you please and not having an established state religion. Our birth of that idea that if you do not punish or prefer someone for their religious views, you will do the right thing by government and the right thing by religion is one of the best things about our country.

And I just would like you to talk a little bit more about how you see working with the Vatican on spreading that message of religious liberty and religious freedom because I think the partnership could be a very powerful one.

Mr. Hackett. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

As I mentioned, this is an important—and I just learned in the last few weeks in being briefed for this new possible assignment—an important new part of the Obama administration's agenda. Diplomatic priority is being given to it. Focus is being given to it. And it offers a great opportunity both through collaboration and joint efforts with the Holy See, of which there have already been some, but they can be expanded far beyond where they are now particularly if it is given a priority within the administration.

But even beyond that, in my understanding of where the Holy See sees this kind of issue, it takes it beyond just collaboration in a one-path way to engagement in interfaith as well as ecumenical efforts and to put behind those efforts real type of collaborations and not just dialogue. So we can work together with Jewish groups

and Muslim groups around taking care of refugees who have left Syria. This is where you put the heart into the whole religious liberty and freedom question. So I believe we can do much, much more in that regard, and I have to believe that the door is open on the Holy See as well.

Senator Kaine. Everything I have seen from the Holy See in the last few months would suggest that that would be a topic of great interest to them as well. And I will look forward to watching your progress in that way.

Ms. Wesner, finally, one of the things I think is interesting about Austria is not only the bilateral United States to Austria—and they have been a very strong ally—but also that Vienna is a city that is a very international city and a lot of international organizations like OPEC and others are headquartered there.

The one that I am really focused on that is going to be getting an awful lot of attention is the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, the inspectors. You know, we spend probably more time in this committee talking about the Iranian nuclear threat than virtually any other issue. The United States has to have a strong, credible military response to not allowing Iran to get nuclear weapons. We have to continue powerful sanctions. But there is no substitute ultimately for good diplomacy because I do not imagine Iran or any other country is ever going to back away from something because somebody else made them. There has to be strong diplomacy. There is going to be a new President of Iran in on Saturday who was elected with a strong and surprising majority vote from a public that was demonstrating a desire for reengagement with the West and with the United States. And I think the role of the U.N. agencies and particularly the IAEA in Vienna could be very powerful.

So I just want to encourage and then if you have any comments on it, I would love to hear. I just really want to encourage, take advantage of those other international partners in the international city of Vienna because some of them are—OPEC also will be playing very critical roles to broader global peace efforts in the coming years.

Ms. Wesner. Senator Kaine, thanks for the comment. I could not agree with you more. We have a trilateral mission in Vienna. There are three missions there, the United Nations and then the OSCE and the bilateral relationship, the Embassy, of course, and other international organizations that are there. And working with them is going to be very important, if confirmed. I know that I and colleagues at the trilateral missions will be working with those agencies.

Senator Kaine. Great. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator Markey. I thank the gentleman.

Let me just follow up on Senator Kaine's question going to Austria again and its international role as a place where energy policy is created and ask you about natural gas in Austria. About 51 percent of its natural gas comes from Russia. And one of the issues, of course, that we have is this ongoing effort by Russia to use natural gas as an economic weapon and, as a result, a political weapon. The central European gas hub is located in Austria, and the

Russian Government has been seeking to purchase a 50-percent control or more of that.

So I guess what I was wondering about was, from your perspective, what the role do you think the United States can play with Austria in helping to create an alternative energy view that can help Austria and help other countries to break this kind of vice-like control which the Russians seek to use as part of their natural gas political strategy.

Ms. WESNER. Thank you, Senator, for the question. It is a very important issue.

As you know, Austria's petroleum company, OMV, was recently the lead support of a project, one of two competing pipelines. They were leading the Nabucco West pipeline to get gas from the Caspian Sea. Now, in June the consortium did not choose the Nabucco West pipeline, and since OMV has stated that they will now explore production and exploration in the Black Sea.

It is a very important issue for the United States and for Austria—energy diversification. And the Embassy has done great work, and if confirmed, I will continue that great work to work with the Austrian energy officials to work on their diversification of their sources and their roots as a form of energy security. It is very important.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

Mr. Phillips, could we talk a little bit about nuclear weapons in Italy and the role that the United States has in partnering with Italy on this issue and get your perspective in terms of the role which Italy plays as a security partner with the United States, not just in nuclear weapons deployment but also in terms of the military bases which are there in Italy and the role which it plays in helping to project American power?

Mr. PHILLIPS. Well, with respect, Senator, to nuclear weapons under the NATO program, that is not something I am fully briefed of. That is more of a NATO issue and stationing of nuclear weapons in the country. I certainly will look into it and be glad to get back to you with respect to that regarding policy.

Italy has been a tremendous partner with the United States on defense-related issues. It has played a critical role because of its strategic location especially. If you go back in the 1990s in Bosnia, the three major bases that are now stationed in Italy—American bases and NATO bases—have been utilized very effectively to provide safeguard and defense both there, Afghanistan—they are great partners in Afghanistan. There are 3,000 troops there now. They have made a commitment post-2014 to commit to spend 120 million euros a year and have their own troops there on the training of the Afghan forces after we exit. They have been very helpful and active in north Africa, in Libya, given their longstanding relationship. They were part of a no-fly zone.

It is a critical relationship for us and for all the NATO countries. And Italy has been very forthcoming and very supportive. And if confirmed and I am serving there as an Ambassador for the United States, I will want to really continue to develop that relationship because it has been so important to us.

Senator MARKEY. Good. Thank you.

Mr. Hackett, the Pope, the new Pope, has been now speaking about the poor of the world in a way which I think is refreshing for many people on the planet. Could you give your insight as someone who ran one of the major Catholic Relief organizations what you think might be a partnership that the United States could create with the Vatican and perhaps even with Catholic Relief organizations to better serve the poor people of this planet?

Mr. HACKETT. I think we have all been deeply impressed at what Pope Francis has been saying in a lot of different areas.

We have had a longstanding relationship between the development and relief efforts of our Government with Catholic organizations throughout the world. There is much more that could be done. The network of Catholic hospitals, Catholic development groups, Catholic charitable groups is enormous. It stretches from the capital cities into the most rural and isolated areas. And I believe that the people at USAID and other people in the administration, Millennium Challenge Corporation that I was associated with for a while, recognize that capacity. And I just see the time being right to expand it and to move it even further, adding dimensions of religious freedom, human rights to long-term development efforts.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

The gentleman from Virginia, do you have any additional questions?

Senator Kaine. No. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MARKEY. Why do we not do this? I would like to give each one of you 1 minute just to summarize from your perspective the job that you are asking for the United States Senate to confirm you to, and just give us your 1-minute summation. We will begin with you, if we could, Ms. Wesner.

Ms. WESNER. Certainly. Thank you so much for allowing us the opportunity to talk about that.

You know, Austria-United States relations are very strong. As I said, it is the 175th anniversary of our bilateral cooperation. We are their fourth-largest trading partner. There are approximately 340 United States companies doing business in Austria. Yet, we do not want to be complacent as it relates to the economic issues of our time.

If confirmed, I would like to increase trade and use TTIP as a tool to do so. I would like to further the security cooperation that my predecessor has begun. And I would like to continue the dialogue on energy security, very important. And last, I would like to harness my experience as an entrepreneur. I view entrepreneurship not only as an export but as an American value as it relates to individual empowerment, to regional security, and to global growth.

Thank you.

Senator MARKEY. Mr. Hackett.

Mr. HACKETT. Mr. Chairman, as you and Senator Kaine have recognized, this is a very unique and poignant time in regard to the relations between our country and the Holy See with the new Pope. The relations are strong and good and longstanding. The Holy See has no battalions, has no nuclear arsenals, but it has credibility and influence around the world, as you well know. I believe that this is a time where we can enhance and expand our contacts with

the Holy See in important areas, areas such as the care of refugees, conflict resolution, trafficking of persons, wider religious freedom issues, and of course, dealing with the insidious problems of poverty that still infect so many communities around the world. It is an opportunity for us to take our message to them and expand on what is already happening.

Senator MARKEY. Mr. Phillips.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Well, what I would like to do, if confirmed as Ambassador, is first to work with the mission there. It is a large mission. There are 500 people in Italy alone and it is so important to establish the relationships with everybody, everybody working on the same page, everybody understanding what the goals ahead are and moving ahead. Morale is very important and you have to have a strong team to achieve all of your objectives.

I think the security issues that we talked about are going to be a fundamental focus to sustain that relationship, to improve it. Italy is such a strategically located country with respect to northern Africa and southern Europe, and we have to maintain and continue to develop that relationship.

But third, Italy is such an amazing place. That peninsula—you think about 2,000 years what has gone on in Italy. They have probably delivered more to civilization to benefit civilization in the world than any place in the world. When you go to the Pantheon in Rome and you see 2,000 years old. Look at that amazing engineering and brilliance and genius that produced this. And you look at everything else that has gone on in Italy from the Renaissance to art, this is an amazing place. These people who live there now on the Italian peninsula inherit this. They have a great opportunity ahead.

What I would like to see as Ambassador is to help get their economy going with our joint efforts on our trade agreements, create jobs, create demand so Italy feels very secure going into the future. And I think they have a great future ahead.

Senator MARKEY. Well, thank you.

Senator Kaine, anything?

Senator Kaine. Congratulations.

Senator MARKEY. Ms. Wesner, I think you did a fantastic job. Thank you for being here, and we know you are going to represent our country very well.

Ms. WESNER. Thank you, Senator.

Senator MARKEY. I think we are sending a dream team here, Mr. Hackett and Mr. Phillips, to Rome and to Italy, and you can just see it in this hearing. And we thank you both for your willingness to serve our country. We thank you. I think we are sending America's finest to Italy with the pair of you. Thank you.

So we thank everybody for your attention to this hearing.

And for the other members, questions for the record must be filed by the close of business today if any committee member or staff wishes to pose questions to the witnesses. And we request that each of the members respond promptly to that request.

So with that, we wish you all Godspeed in your mission, and this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 6:50 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF MATTHEW BARZUN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

Question. It was been 15 years since the Good Friday Accords were signed, a triumph many thought impossible. While there has been peace, many would argue that it has been a cold peace and that the political peace that was expected to grow over time from the Accords has not, in fact, taken root. Deep rooted divides continue to exist between the Catholic and Protestant communities. These divides are exacerbated by events like the annual Protestant street parades through traditionally Catholic neighborhoods in Belfast. A decision this year by the Parades Commission to alter the route away from these neighborhoods set off 5 days of protests by Protestant loyalists. In the wake of the riots, members of the legislature have agreed to form an all-party group aimed at addressing hot-button issues such as parades. The all-party process will be chaired by Richard Haass, a former U.S. special envoy to Northern Ireland.

- What rôle can the United States play in helping to resolve these tensions and to support the peace? Do you anticipate working closely with Envoy Haass on these issues?

Answer. The United States has remained strongly engaged both politically and economically with Northern Ireland for decades. The administration continues to support the vision that was set out in the Good Friday and subsequent agreements. The Department maintains our support through the U.S. Consulate General in Belfast, through contributions to the International Fund for Ireland, and through strong and vibrant academic and cultural exchanges with the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Over the past year, the administration has increased cooperation in science and technology with Ireland and Northern Ireland through the U.S.-Ireland R&D Partnership, which is working to accelerate economic development and research by encouraging collaboration between United States, Irish, and Northern Irish scientists and industries to bring innovations to market. The United States will continue to fully support Northern Ireland as it works to build a brighter future for its people.

In his capacity as the independent chair of the All-Party Talks, Dr. Richard Haass will be assisting Northern Ireland leaders address historically divisive issues such as parades and protests, flags, symbols, emblems, and issues related to the past to encourage community reconciliation. While he is not a U.S. envoy, the Embassy in London and the Consulate General in Belfast are prepared to offer Dr. Haass and the All-Party Group every support in this endeavor. On July 15, Vice President Biden spoke with Dr. Haass, as well as First Minister Robinson and Deputy First Minister McGuinness, to welcome the launch of an All-Party Group process and to express the full support of the United States. As President Obama said in Belfast in June, it is essential Northern Ireland leaders tackle sensitive issues to create a lasting and prosperous peace in Northern Ireland. The administration stands ready to assist the political parties in this crucial work. If confirmed as Ambassador to the United Kingdom, I will ensure the Embassy in London and our consulate in Belfast remain fully engaged in advancing reconciliation and the peace process.

Question. The United States has relied on British military support, in the gulf war, the NATO air war over Serbia, the war in Iraq, Libya, and the ISAF mission in Afghanistan—it is a visible manifestation of “the special relationship” in the post-cold-war world. This spring, there were reports that the Cameron government’s budget cutting might reduce the defense budget below 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product. Ongoing cuts have already led to the Ministry of Defense losing 30,000 personnel and the elimination of major weapons systems.

- Mr. Barzun, are you concerned about the United Kingdom’s ability over the medium or long term to participate in military actions to address challenges overseas, and what’s the significance for “the special relationship” with the United States?

Answer. If confirmed, it is certainly an issue on which I intend to engage. The United States-United Kingdom special relationship is grounded in our shared history, values, and traditions. It remains as vibrant and as relevant today as it has ever been. We count on each other, and the world counts on our alliance. The administration is in constant communication at all levels of government and work together on a wide range of political, economic, and security issues. And we respond in like fashion to the shared challenges we face around the globe: on Iran, Syria, Middle East Peace, Mali, and instability elsewhere in Africa, terrorist threats, and

humanitarian crises. The United Kingdom is our closest, and one of the most capable, NATO allies. It is also one of the few countries in NATO that continues to meet the 2 percent of GDP defense spending target. I am gratified by Chancellor George Osborne's recent announcement that the United Kingdom would continue to meet this important target through 2016, thus demonstrating the kind of leadership we count on the United Kingdom to show at NATO. The United Kingdom plays a vital role in NATO's most important mission, ISAF, and within NATO HQ is focused on improving the efficiency of NATO structures so they are as efficient as possible.

The United States-United Kingdom defense relationship is as strong as ever. The administration honors the commitment and sacrifice of the U.K.'s soldiers and civilians who serve alongside our forces in Afghanistan and around the world. We are committed to working with the U.K. Armed Forces to help ensure they remain a full-spectrum defense and security partner, maintain interoperability with U.S. forces, and continue to lead in the full range of NATO missions.

RESPONSES OF STEVE LINICK TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Both the OIG and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security conduct investigations into allegations of passport and visa fraud and investigate alleged misconduct by State Department employees. Over the years, this practice has led to concerns about duplication of effort, conflicting investigations, and competition for jurisdiction.

- How will you ensure that these two organizations work in a complementary fashion?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet on a regular basis with senior management officials from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and other affected offices to ensure that investigations are complementary, adequately supported, and appropriately leveraged. To that end, I will work to ensure that OIG investigative resources are used wisely and efficiently, which will include an assessment of how to avoid duplication of effort, conflicting investigations, and competition for jurisdiction.

Question. In January 2013, the OIG released a report highly critical of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)—an institution whose FY13 budget exceeded \$750 million. The report cited a dysfunctional structure, limited Board oversight of the institution, and inadequate self-governance policies, among other issues.

- What steps will you take to follow up on this report?

Answer. I have read the January 2013 OIG inspection report and its recommendations. I recognize that oversight of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) is an important part of OIG's mission. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that OIG provides ongoing independent and effective oversight of the BBG. Such OIG oversight will include vigorous followup efforts to prompt BBG compliance with the recommendations in the 2013 report.

RESPONSES OF STEVE LINICK TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BOB CORKER

IMPROVING OIG'S INDEPENDENCE AND CREDIBILITY

Question. Are you aware of the challenges identified by GAO about lack of adherence to proper auditing standards and a lack of independence within the State OIG and are you willing to make policy and, if necessary, staffing changes to restore the credibility and independence of the Office? What do you think can be done to address these issues?

Answer. I am aware of the challenges identified by GAO and have read the GAO reports regarding the issues. As I noted in my written testimony, if confirmed, I pledge to ensure that the Department of State OIG is an independent and objective organization that provides timely, robust, oversight, transparency, and accountability to the programs and operations of the Department of State. After I have had time to study the key issues identified by GAO, I will be prepared to make any needed changes to achieve my goals. I also will devote considerable time to meeting with stakeholders interested in and affected by the work of the OIG, including Department of State management, Congress, GAO, and other interested groups, as appropriate.

Question. Do you agree that a constantly rotating staff of Foreign Service officers and other State Department employees at OIG prevents the OIG from having insti-

tutional, investigative know-how? If confirmed, what will you do to address these issues?

Answer. I believe that it is important for the Department of State OIG to employ dedicated individuals who have experience, skill, and expertise in the core mission areas of the OIG, including investigations, inspections and/or audits. I agree that a constantly rotating staff can adversely affect institutional, investigative know-how. At this stage, however, it would be premature for me to reach any conclusions or make recommendations without first-hand knowledge of the surrounding facts and circumstances.

CONTRACTOR OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Question. Should you be confirmed as the next inspector general, how would you use the Office of the Inspector General to assist the Department to make better use of this important contracting oversight and accountability tools such as suspension and debarment?

Answer. The Department of State uses substantial taxpayer dollars to fund its various programs and operations. Protecting taxpayer funds from potential misuse is a core OIG function. Suspension or debarment remedies should be pursued when contractors and other awardees violate the public trust through poor performance, noncompliance, misconduct, or other actions. If confirmed, I will review carefully the Department's suspension and debarment program and make any necessary recommendations for improvement. In addition, I will take steps to enhance OIG referrals for suspension and debarment.

Question. Based on your experience with procurement related investigations and oversight, what are the acquisition-related challenges the Department faces that you feel best equipped to address, and how do you plan to tackle each one?

Answer. Based on my experience as the former Director of the Department of Justice (DOJ) National Procurement Fraud Task Force, I am well equipped to address the challenges associated with procurement issues, particularly in high risk areas. Under my guidance, the task force investigated and prosecuted individuals and companies for corruption and fraud related to contracts and grants, with a special emphasis on overseas programs focused on the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Department of State OIG has identified contract and procurement management, including grants and cooperative agreements, and the military to civilian-led transitions in Iraq and Afghanistan as two of the Department's 10 most serious management challenges. If confirmed, I expect to focus audit, investigative, and inspection efforts on these acquisition related challenges. In addition, I will look at systemic problems related to acquisition practices and make necessary recommendations to address these problems.

RESPONSES OF DANIEL SEPULVEDA TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. Last year there were several proposals put forward at the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT) that could have fundamentally harmed the free flow of information and negatively impact the Internet. Moving forward, I am especially concerned about the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) adopting detailed, binding, technical solutions that could have unintended consequences that lead to censorship or stifle innovation. On the other hand, many countries do struggle with the problem of bringing broadband access to their citizens and look to the ITU for solutions to that problem.

- What do you see as your and the State Department's roles in preparing for the 2014 Plenipotentiary Conference and engaging stakeholders inside and outside government?

Answer. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) will convene a Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-14) from October 20 to November 7, 2014, in Busan, Korea. This conference, which takes place every 4 years, is the highest policymaking body of the ITU and will adopt the strategic plan for the ITU; consider proposed amendments to the ITU Constitution and Convention; and adopt resolutions and other nontreaty decisions.

Consistent with prior PP meetings, the Department of State will lead the U.S. delegation to PP-14 and our delegation will include representatives from the private sector and other federal government agencies. In leading the delegation, the State Department will engage stakeholders inside and outside government to develop

American proposals and positions for the PP. The State Department will also work to promote international support for our positions.

U.S. proposals and positions will reflect the following objectives:

- Ensure that the ITU continues to perform vital functions in the area of radio communication and other telecommunication areas efficiently and effectively.
- Maintain the ITU's existing mandates while allowing the institution to remain relevant and evolve relative the needs of member states.
- Promote a proactive strategy of institutional reform in order to improve member state oversight of the organization, strengthen the accountability of ITU officials, enhance overall efficiency, and increase transparency of ITU activities.
- Secure sufficient budgetary support within the current zero nominal growth limits of the overall ITU budget for the efficient operations of the ITU Radiocommunication (R), Standardization (T) and Development (D) Sectors.
- Ensure that the ITU promotes predictable, transparent, procompetitive regulatory policies for radio communication and other telecommunication areas that will lead to increasing investment in the world's wireless and wired broadband telecommunications infrastructure.
- Preserve the role of sector members in the ITU and expand the participation of civil society, the technical community, and academia in Internet-related discussions.

Question. Does the State Department plan to facilitate bringing American technical expertise to countries that do not have deep knowledge in deploying broadband and ensuring that the ITU does not adopt heavy-handed regulation or expand its reach?

Answer. Yes. The State Department is committed to working with other countries to foster accelerated growth of broadband and the Internet sector in such countries, especially by promoting private investment and helping facilitate sharing of U.S. expertise. Our experience at WCIT-12 in Dubai has further crystallized the need to focus on greater Internet access and broadband infrastructure development, especially in developing countries. For example, with funding from USAID, we are developing a "Technology Leadership Program," through which we will provide direct technical assistance and expertise to countries that do not have deep knowledge in deploying broadband. So far, in FY13, we have funded eight projects, which included bringing a high-level Burmese delegation to Washington for intensive training in telecommunications regulations, sending expert groups to Iraq and Mexico to assist in systems modernization, and sending U.S. Government experts to conduct workshops at regional meetings. We also coordinate closely with USAID's programs in this area, including its Global Broadband and Innovation Program, and we support public-private partnerships, such as the U.S. Telecommunications Training Institute, which are active in providing technical assistance.

Question. Did the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) overstep its jurisdiction at the 2012 WCIT by adopting the revised International Telecommunications Regulations that included Internet provisions?

Answer. The United States approached the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT) as an opportunity to promote continued development of international telecommunications services by updating the International Telecommunications Regulations (ITRs) in a way that would avoid unnecessary regulation and support liberalized markets. The United States stated clearly in the runup to the event that we opposed any effort to expand the scope of the treaty to address issues related to the Internet.

The United States remains unsatisfied with the ITRs as finally adopted because they include provisions and a resolution that address issues which relate to the Internet and therefore lie outside the scope of the ITU's existing remit to address international telecommunications. And although the WCIT did not result in a consensus, we can draw valuable lessons from it about the way ahead for both telecommunications and Internet policy. It is around these outcomes that we seek to strengthen our coalition of likeminded states as well as build much broader global consensus around the importance of telecommunications services and support for the highly successful, existing framework for Internet governance.

Question. Do you believe that there should be more transparency at upcoming ITU meetings? If confirmed, will you ensure that ITU meetings are not closed to scrutiny and input from civil society and the general public, and how?

Answer. The Department of State believes that there should be more transparency at upcoming ITU meetings. If confirmed, I will work with other Department officials to build on existing international support to broaden the role of both the

civil society and the public in the proceedings of the ITU. We will stress to senior ITU officials and other senior government officials the need for the ITU to engage in open consultations with stakeholders, so that they can bring in their unique and invaluable insight to issues central to the activities of the ITU. We will also stress the importance of conducting meetings and deliberations in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, making documents freely accessible, broadcasting proceedings, and taking steps to enable greater remote participation. We will continue to welcome members of civil society as members of the United States delegation to ITU meetings.

Because of the State Department's efforts, the proceedings at the ITU's recent World Telecommunications/ICT Policy Forum for the first time gave industry and civil society the opportunity to voice opinions and concerns during the Forum's deliberations. This, along, with additional participation from new voices into the Forum's opinions greatly benefited the outcome of the event. We are hopeful that this trend will continue for future ITU meetings.