

NOMINATION

TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, Portman, Paul, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

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

The CHAIRMAN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order. Today we are considering the nomination of Ambassador Samantha Power to be administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, known to all of us as USAID.

Ambassador Power, congratulations on your nomination. Thank you for your willingness to return to public service. It is a pleasure to welcome you back before the committee.

When I chaired your 2013 hearing to be U.N. Ambassador, I said you were, quote, “impeccably qualified for the position.” Your experience, drive, and dedication to the advancement of humanitarian principles also, I believe, make you impeccably qualified to be the next USAID administrator.

Before I go any further, I understand that our distinguished colleague from Massachusetts, a member of the committee, wants to introduce you this morning. So we will turn to him first.

Senator Markey?

STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much, Ranking Member Risch. It is my absolute honor and pleasure to introduce our nominee today, Ambassador Samantha Power, nominated to be the administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, and more importantly, a cherished Massachusetts resident.

I would also like to welcome Ambassador Power’s husband, Cass, and their two young children, Declan and Rian, who are right behind us here today.

Samantha is a friend, a constituent, and, of course, a fellow Irishman—Irishwoman in her case. As noted in a New Yorker profile of her, Ambassador Power’s last name, Power, comes from the Irish “de paor,” meaning “of the poor.” Fittingly, she has dedicated her entire life in the service of others, using her razor-sharp intelligence and fierce advocacy as a journalist, activist, and diplomat to stand with the world’s voiceless masses, all while simultaneously advancing United States interests by building bonds in every corner of our world.

Ambassador Power has been known to be ferocious in the pursuit of justice, human rights, and democracy, always taking the time to hear other points of view with great humility.

While she disagrees with Henry Kissinger on everything from politics to the no-brainer debate of Red Sox versus Yankees, he has said that Samantha, quote, “has—

The CHAIRMAN. Do not ruin the nominee’s opportunity here, Mr. Markey.

[Laughter.]

Senator MARKEY. Ambassador Henry Kissinger has said that Samantha “has an excellent analytical mind, and even on matters where I might have come to different conclusions, I respected her analysis,” perhaps the highest praise ever given by a Yankees fan to a member of Red Sox Nation.

As an immigrant from Ireland, Ambassador Power’s personal background gives her a unique and deep respect for this country and all it stands for. Spending time between Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Dublin, and Boston, she received her bachelor’s degree at Yale University and went on to obtain her law degree at Harvard University.

She served in several key positions during the Obama administration, including as the Special Assistant to the President, the National Security Council, Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights and, notably, as the youngest ever United States ambassador to the United Nations.

Prior to entering government service, she began her career as a war correspondent, reporting from the seas of Sarajevo. She became a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and served as the founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University.

As she takes on the important work of the challenges Ambassador Power will face are daunting: recovering from the global pandemic, revamping the state of global democracy, tackling the climate crisis, and extending life-saving assistance to the nearly 1 billion people around the world who go to bed hungry every night.

I know of no person more qualified to take on this task. She embodies that bold red, white, and blue USAID logo which states “From the American People.”

In 2015, Ambassador Power invited me to be her guest to attend His Holiness Pope Francis’ address before the United Nations General Assembly. For two Irish Catholics from Massachusetts, it was the experience of a lifetime.

On that day, Pope Francis spoke of the need for compassion, inclusivity, and action in tackling the world’s shared challenges.

Ambassador Power's career personifies each of these qualities, and I know she will take her compassion, her inclusivity, and her unwavering desire for action to achieve great things for the people of the United States and the world at USAID.

So welcome, Ambassador Power. We are pleased to have you here. We cannot wait to see you get to work over at USAID and I thank you for your service to our nation.

It is my privilege, Mr. Chairman, to introduce Ambassador Power to the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Markey. We know that you both sit here and in other committees. So if you have other work to do, we certainly invite you to join us if you can. If not, we will see you back a little later.

That was a rousing introduction and with—but with one flaw. I thought it was extraordinary. So as a Yankee fan, I just—I just cannot be quiet.

So, anyhow, let me start off. Ambassador, in his inaugural address, President Biden said that, quote, “We will lead not merely by the example of our power, but by the power of our example.”

The work that dedicated professionals of USAID do exemplifies that example, supporting people around the world to advance democratic and citizen-responsive governance, to help ensure fair treatment and access to opportunity for vulnerable minorities, and provide life-saving relief on behalf of the American people.

We know that these core values are the strength of our own country and that promoting them abroad contributes to more stability and stability worldwide.

As I emphasized to Secretary Blinken at his nomination hearing, the U.S. must reassert itself as a global leader capable of confronting complex challenges.

As we work to address COVID-19 inequality, migration, climate change at home, if the U.S. is not contributing leadership and resources to address these issues globally, then our security at home is tenuous at best.

There are few people as familiar with many of today's complex long-running conflicts as you are. As you well know, if confirmed, you will be responsible for responding to new and renewed conflicts from Venezuela to Ethiopia to Burma, human- and resource-driven conflicts which have victimized hundreds of thousands of civilians, forcing millions to flee their homes.

Political crises in Latin America have caused unprecedented humanitarian disasters. I am encouraged by the Biden administration's plans to renew our commitment to achieving a diplomatic solution to the Venezuela crisis where USAID has provided significant humanitarian and development assistance.

In the Northern Triangle countries, addressing rampant crime, weak governance, corruption, and displacement must also be a top U.S. priority, as stability there directly impacts the security and prosperity of the United States.

Across Africa we have seen democratic backsliding in various countries, along with persistent terrorist threats and conflicts that have cost thousands of lives and displaced hundreds of thousands more.

In particular, the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray Province has contributed to destabilizing the whole Horn of Africa while increased terrorism has thrown the Sahel into chaos.

Meanwhile, climate change is increasing food insecurity and natural resource scarcity, and threatening the very existence of many small island nations, while COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world.

At the same time that you will be confronting these global challenges, you will also need to rebuild and restore USAID as an institution. Successful U.S. foreign policy rests on the appropriate utilization of the three D's: defense, diplomacy, and development.

Unfortunately, the previous administration had anywhere from skepticism to disdain for the last of those two. While I believe Ambassador Green who—for whom I have great respect, believed and invested in the mission of the agency, the years after his departure have taken a serious toll on the agency morale, strained USAID's relationships with its implementing partners, and weakened trust in America.

The agency needs internal attention, and I recommend that if confirmed you listen to USAID's civil servants, Foreign Service officers, and Foreign Service nationals to explain what USAID needs.

As you may know, USAID underwent a major reorganization spearheaded by Ambassador Green, and while I believe he approached this effort with the best of intentions, the ultimate execution was lacking.

I do believe the agency must be nimble enough to respond to changing and pressing challenges, and I trust that you will make the ongoing reorganization work better and consult with this committee on how that might be achieved.

So, in conclusion, if confirmed, you will have your work cut out for you. However, I have great confidence in your experience and abilities, not to mention your passion for making this world a better place.

But we would expect you to engage with this committee as a partner and asset in accomplishing USAID's mission. This committee has a long bipartisan history of support for USAID, and I expect you to engage in frequent and open dialogue to help sustain that support.

I look forward to hearing from you today. We welcome your family, who is always part of the sacrifices that those of us who are in public service make.

And with that, let me turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Risch.

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

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Menendez. I appreciate that, and Ambassador Power, thank you for agreeing to take this on and thank you to your family. As the chairman noted, there is always sacrifices that are shared, sometimes not equally by the family.

The role of the USAID administrator is an important one. We all know that. In order to accomplish the goals of our—as a nation, we need a development agency that reflects the challenges of the 21st

century and is staffed and resourced to be strategic, efficient, effective, and accountable.

USAID must be led by someone who understands that aid is most effective when it is targeted toward clearly-defined U.S. national interests and those who are committed to advancing good governance, economic growth, and self-reliance.

The challenges before us are immense. An estimated 80 million people globally have been displaced from their homes, 26 million of whom are now refugees. The conflict in Syria has entered its tenth year and has left more than 12 million people food insecure.

Ebola has reemerged in West Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the COVID-19 pandemic has shuttered schools, destroyed livelihoods, and pushed millions of people into poverty around the world.

USAID has a successful record of responding to emergencies, and we will count on the next administrator to put dollars provided for humanitarian assistance to good use.

The agency has also done tremendous work in combating food insecurity, expanding access to water, and empowering women to participate in their economies.

USAID needs to work on coordination with the CDC. This is why the largest U.S. global health program, PEPFAR, is coordinated by the Department of State.

As we continue to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, I look forward to working with the department, USAID, the CDC, and my colleagues here in Congress on a more comprehensive approach to global health, security, and diplomacy.

Senator Menendez and I have been discussing that issue in particular, and we have talked about a path forward to where we can get a bipartisan piece of legislation that will be one of the most important things we do as far as global health is concerned and as far as the people of the world are concerned.

We must put in the work now so we can get ahead of the next pandemic and keep Americans safe from infectious disease threats before they cross our borders again. We should also maximize the impact of U.S. contributions to COVAX and GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, and through the Global Fund's COVID-19 response mechanism.

Beyond pandemics, I am interested to learn more about how you, if confirmed, will position USAID to counter China's malign development model. That model is something that many of us consider to be one of the greatest threats to U.S. national security.

I would also like to better understand your view on promoting democracy, good governance, and the rule of law, the foundations of healthy and stable societies. The United States cannot, should not, and should not even consider singlehandedly trying to solve the world's problems. Difficult choices must be made.

But while the administrator is not empowered to make those choices independently, USAID does remain under the foreign policy direction of the Secretary of State.

I am pleased to see that the next administrator will have a seat at the principal's table on critical matters of development and humanitarian response.

If confirmed, I am eager to work with you to ensure that USAID remains strategic focused and accountable.

Thank you, Senator Menendez.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

With that, Madam Ambassador, the floor is yours. Your full statement will be included in the record. We ask you to summarize it, and then we will have a conversation with you.

STATEMENT OF HON. SAMANTHA POWER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ambassador POWER. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee. It is a tremendous honor to appear before you today. I am humbled by President Biden's trust in me and by the opportunity to join such an indispensable agency at such a critical time.

I would like to begin by thanking my mother, Veera Delaney, a doctor whom I have watched care for her patients during the darkest hours of this pandemic, my father, Eddie Bourke, whose curiosity about the world helped spark my own, my husband and best friend, Cass Sunstein, an American original, and my 11-year-old son, Declan, and eight-year-old daughter, Rian, whose shared love of animals and nature remind me daily of our responsibility to our planet.

Public service does ask a lot of families and I am indescribably grateful for the support and generosity of mine. I would also like to thank the members of this committee.

While bitter political winds blew, continued bipartisan support for the U.S. Agency for International Development has saved and improved millions of lives while enhancing U.S. security and U.S. prosperity.

I was fortunate to work with many of you when I last served. If confirmed, I will be eager to build on these relationships and forge new ones.

I first saw USAID's impact in war-torn Bosnia, where I started my career in 1993 as a reporter. I saw USAID staff and partners deliver food to the vulnerable while supporting mothers as they tried to locate their missing sons and husbands.

Since then, wherever I traveled, whether in East Timor just after became the world's newest nation, Darfur in the middle of this century's first genocide, or West Africa at the height of the Ebola epidemic, USAID was there. America was there, identifying needs and moving heaven and earth to meet them.

In my work, I have seen how the investments the United States makes in other countries are investments in our own security. I have seen the inextricable linkages between political freedom and broad-based economic growth.

I have seen that the most effective development is driven by those on the ground with local knowledge and expertise, and I have seen the overwhelming power of individual dignity as a driver of world events.

Even as China increasingly uses its financial leverage to sway other nations, citizens everywhere are insisting that they be able

to exercise agency, provide for themselves, and exercise their fundamental rights.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the institution of USAID and invest in the capabilities of the agency's dedicated 10,000 Foreign Service officers, civil servants, locally employed staff, contractors, and other personnel.

This means seeking out and amplifying their insights, learning about specific local needs, and adapting our programs. It means addressing the issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and advancement within USAID's workforce, and it means emphasizing what President Biden himself and both of you, I think, already have stressed.

Development is critical to America's ability to tackle the toughest problems of our time, economic, humanitarian, and geopolitical. In consultation with you and others in Congress, I will aim to ensure that USAID enhances its long-standing leadership in food security, education, women's empowerment, and global health, while also addressing four interconnected and gargantuan challenges confronting the world at this moment.

First, the COVID pandemic and the development progress that has been imperiled in everything from food security to gender equality to access to education to economic growth.

Climate change, and the surge in droughts, storms, food shortages, and climate-associated humanitarian emergencies.

Third, with more conflicts occurring today than at any point since the end of the Cold War, conflict and state collapse.

And fourth, finally, with freedom declining around the world for the fifteenth straight year in a row, democratic backsliding.

In tackling these and other challenges, I want to assure the committee that I will work every day to expand burden sharing in the international system. At the U.N., working with my administration colleagues, I was able to help secure major commitments from other countries to care for refugees, respond to the Ebola epidemic, strengthen peacekeeping, and adopt the sustainable development goals.

U.S. investments are catalysts that can be used to mobilize governments, international organizations, foundations, and businesses to help countries achieve their own development goals.

If I am confirmed to lead this great agency, I will work tirelessly with members on both sides of the aisle to ensure that taxpayer dollars are well spent. Guided by evidence, I will work with you to adapt or replace programs that are not delivering. I will be transparent and accessible as together we chart a course that meets the needs of the current moment.

In 1979, as Senator Markey alluded to, my mother brought my younger brother and me to America from Ireland, blessing me with a life full of opportunity. As one who has been given so much by the United States, I would take it as an incomparable privilege to lead the world's premier development agency in order to expand the opportunities available to others.

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

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. SAMANTHA POWER

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is a tremendous honor to appear before you today. Thank you, Senator Markey, for your kind introduction.

I am humbled by President Biden's trust in me, and by the opportunity to join such an indispensable Agency at this critical time.

I would like to begin by thanking my mother Vera Delaney, a doctor whom I have watched care for her patients during the darkest hours of this pandemic; my father Eddie Bourke, whose curiosity about the world helped spark my own; my husband Cass Sunstein, an American original; and my 11-year-old son Declan and 8-year-old daughter Rían, whose shared love of animals and nature remind me daily of our responsibility to our planet. Public service asks a lot of families, and I'm indescribably grateful for the support and generosity of mine.

I would also like to thank the members of this committee. While bitter political winds blew, continued bipartisan support for the U.S. Agency for International Development has saved and improved millions of lives while enhancing U.S. security and prosperity. I was fortunate to work with many of you when I last served. If confirmed, I will be eager to build on these relationships and forge new ones.

I first saw USAID's impact in war-torn Bosnia, where I started my career in 1993 as a reporter. I saw USAID staff and partners deliver food to the vulnerable, while supporting mothers as they tried to locate their missing sons and husbands. Since then, wherever I travelled—whether to East Timor just after it became the world's newest nation; Darfur, in the midst of this century's first genocide; or west Africa, at the height of the Ebola epidemic—USAID was there—America was there—identifying needs and moving heaven and earth to meet them.

In my work—as a writer, professor, human rights advocate, national security staffer, and diplomat—I've seen how the investments the United States makes in other countries are investments in our own security. I've seen the inextricable linkages between political freedom and broad-based economic growth. I've seen that the most effective development is driven by those on the ground with local knowledge and expertise. And I've seen the power of individual dignity as a driver of world events. Even as China increasingly uses its financial leverage to sway other nations, citizens everywhere are insisting that they be able to exercise agency, provide for themselves, and exercise their fundamental rights.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the institution of USAID and invest in the capabilities of the Agency's dedicated 10,000 foreign service officers, civil servants, locally-employed staff, contractors, and other personnel. This means seeking out and amplifying their insights, learning about specific local needs, and adapting our programs. It means urgently addressing the issues relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, and advancement within USAID's workforce. And it means emphasizing what President Biden himself has stressed: Development is critical to

America's ability to tackle the toughest problems of our time—economic, humanitarian and geopolitical.

In consultation with you and others in Congress, I will aim to ensure that USAID enhances its longstanding leadership in food security, education, women's empowerment, and global health, while also addressing four interconnected and gargantuan challenges confronting the world at this moment:

- *The COVID-19 pandemic.* With decades of development gains shattered by COVID, imperiling progress on everything from food security to gender equality and access to education, USAID's support to partners will be vital for recovery, including by building more robust and durable health infrastructure for the future.
- *Climate Change.* With the surge in droughts, storms, food shortages, and climate-associated humanitarian emergencies, USAID can help countries become more resilient, while supporting their efforts to reduce carbon emissions.
- *Conflict and state collapse.* With more conflicts occurring today than at any point since the end of the Cold War, USAID assistance will continue to mitigate suffering, while working with U.S. diplomats and our international partners to address the root causes of such crises.
- *Democratic backsliding.* With freedom declining around the world for the fifteenth year in a row, USAID's democracy, rights, anti-corruption, and governance programming must nimbly support democratic and civil society actors as they push back against creeping authoritarianism and seek to build lasting democratic institutions.

In tackling these and other challenges, I want to assure the committee that I will work every day to expand burden-sharing in the international system. At the United Nations, working with my administration colleagues, I was able to help secure major commitments from other countries to care for refugees, respond to the Ebola epidemic, strengthen peacekeeping, and adopt the Sustainable Development Goals. U.S. investments are catalysts that can be used to mobilize governments, international organizations, foundations, and businesses to help countries achieve their own development goals.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador Power.

We will start five-minute rounds of—in order of those who have appeared either in person or virtually, and I will start with the chair.

USAID plays a central role in the U.S. government's humanitarian response to conflict and forced migration. Last year, I released a comprehensive report on forced displacement, which found that the vast majority of the 80 million displaced people worldwide are not displaced for months but for years or decades at a time.

How will you lead efforts at USAID to ensure coherence between the U.S. humanitarian and development programs and to ensure that a maximum impact is achieved in assisting protracted displacement?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Well, first, let me say that those displacement numbers, as you know, are the highest since World War II. Every year, we see that number go up. When I was U.N. Ambassador, it was the highest since World War II, and it gets worse and worse.

Climate-related events, of course, are a factor, and I think you are likely to see a surge and displacement stemming from the economic fallout from the COVID pandemic.

It is important to look behind the numbers at the causes of displacement, which vary. I alluded in my testimony to the fact that more conflicts are occurring now than at any point since the end of the Cold War. As you noted just now, conflicts are lasting longer.

So it used to be that one conflict would start but another might have been brought to an end and that, therefore, again, those numbers were not just continuing to grow.

But as a new conflict starts, other conflicts are just lasting longer and longer, and so the protracted refugee population is higher than it has been since World War II.

The investment that President Biden has committed to making in diplomacy is a critical part of this. We have seen, for example, in Libya, diplomacy produce, for the first time in many years, a U.N.-brokered transition government.

We need diplomacy to pay dividends in Yemen, which is facing the worst humanitarian crisis of any place on earth. And when it comes to a place like the Northern Triangle, where you have been

so active, it is critical to look at the different drivers of migration, which range from physical personal insecurity and gang violence and corruption to the lack of economic opportunity.

And USAID, again, I think has a really important role to play in mitigating humanitarian suffering, but also looking upstream at why people are leaving their homes in the first place.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me ask you this. Under the last restructuring of USAID, the Democracy Rights and Governance Center was moved under the new development, Democracy and Innovation Bureau.

My question is, I think this is a very significant part of the mission of USAID. I noticed you mentioned it among your four pillars.

How will you elevate and integrate democracy and human rights in USAID's response both to the COVID pandemic, which has provided cover for autocrats to attack civil society and diminish human rights, but even more broadly?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator. Well, there is a contest in this world occurring now between two models, the democratic model and an authoritarian model. The trends were not pretty before COVID struck and, as you note, they are getting worse in terms of human rights recessions, even in established democracies around the world.

I think that there would be no question to any of the wonderful USAID staff as to the level of priority that I give democracy and human rights. My whole career has been in that field.

I was moved to go into foreign policy by the massacre in Tiananmen Square that occurred in June of 1989 when I was still a college kid.

And so on the specifics of whether the Democracy Rights and Governance Center and that programming belongs within the DDI Bureau where it is now, I would love to revert.

But on the substance, I would just like to note that, again, this is incredibly important programming, partnering with the Department of State and their Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau, looking at anti-corruption work specifically, which is a real Achilles for authoritarian and illiberal countries, I think one we have not taken full advantage of.

This will be a huge priority for me, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. And finally, you mentioned in your comments, and I think it is one of the central issues that we need to face as we deal with the challenges of migration and the challenges that we have at the border, having AID address violence, corruption, and other drivers of migration in the Northern Triangle countries are incredibly important as part of—Vice President Biden was—when he was vice president he had a plan then.

Unfortunately, it was not continued. There is another provision in—that he has put forth. How do you see the key components of a joint USAID–State Department strategy as part of that the Northern Triangle effort?

Ambassador POWER. Well, just to note that I have been very heartened in the briefings that I have been able to have from out-

side by the reliance on data and evidence in tailoring those programs.

USAID actually gets data from the International Organization of Migration and CBP, the Customs Border Protection, to find out why individuals are leaving their homes, to dig into the specifics, to dig into the localities from which they are fleeing.

And USAID—prior to the funding suspension under the Trump administration, USAID actually has tailored programs around those places where people are most likely to flee and tailor programming around, again, the causes of migration.

So I think that is the right approach. It will take us some time to ramp back up, unfortunately, because some of those programs were suspended. But the infrastructure is in place and I look forward to working with you again to dig into specifics.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you.

Ambassador Power, first of all, thank you for taking the time yesterday and previously for you and I to talk about this position and your confirmation, and one of the things we talked about yesterday was National Security Memorandum No. 1 that President Biden has executed in which the Secretary of State will lead and, in coordination with the USAID administrator, the development of the U.S. Government wide plan to combat COVID-19 pandemic.

Can I get your thoughts on the record for that, please, briefly?

Ambassador POWER. Specifically on COVID-19 or on the structural—

Senator RISCH. Well, generally on the structure and then as it relates to COVID-19.

Ambassador POWER. Yeah. I mean, I think that as actually COVID-19 illustrates probably better than any contemporary threat, our fates, and the fates of the American people, are connected to health infrastructure, economic prosperity, the curbing of extremism and radicalization internationally.

And so programming that USAID does in that regard, in cooperation with the State Department and other agencies, is incredibly important for our security and what President Biden has done in elevating USAID and giving it a seat on the National Security Council and in the Principles Committee, I think, has just effectively enshrined that reality, which is that our development efforts and our diplomatic efforts have to be resourced and prioritized alongside, of course, our essential defense efforts.

So I think that is the logic. You know, from having spoken with him about this decision, that is the logic of elevating USAID. The expertise is there, the know-how is there, and I think what is really important about doing this is it means that that expertise and know-how will be reflected in the interagency, not only at high levels but at every level.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thanks for that answer.

Moving offshore, the memorandum also refers to a diplomatic outreach plan for enhancing the United States response to the COVID-19 pandemic by engaging partner nations.

Could you give me your thoughts on that, please?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

When I was U.N. Ambassador, I had the privilege of being part of President Obama's effort to mobilize a large anti-Ebola coalition to prevent, in that instance, an epidemic, a horrific epidemic from becoming a global pandemic of the kind that we are now living through.

I think the United States is at its most powerful, effective, and efficient when it leverages the support that it offers international institutions or the resources that it dedicates to combating global challenges, when it leverages that to get others to do more.

And that is what President Biden, I think, has already done in the context of announcing the \$2 billion that you allocated late last year for GAVI, for the vaccine effort, that that \$2 billion is going to be contributed.

But it is also going to be leveraged to get other countries to do more before the next \$2 billion is obligated, and I think that is just one example. There has not—there has not been, I should say, optimal coordination, I think, in the international global vaccine area and that is something that I am very eager to dig into, if I am confirmed.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. I appreciate those thoughts.

The Global Health Diplomacy and Security Act, which I introduced, creates a coordinator position at the State Department that is consistent with the type of framework I believe that President Biden intends in his memorandum.

Are you familiar with that, by any chance, and go ahead. Your thoughts?

Ambassador POWER. The prior version of the bill I was familiar with. I have not seen—I think the bill that you either are on the verge of introducing or have just introduced.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that. And as I indicated, Senator Menendez and I have been talking about the global health issue and an effort by this committee in that regard, and I intend to work with Senator Menendez on the creation of the framework because, obviously, the success is going to depend on that framework and I hope to engage you and your agency as we move forward on that.

And with that, my time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

Senator Cardin, who is with us virtually?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and, Ambassador Power, thank you very much for your willingness to continue to serve our nation.

I want to follow up on comments that you made earlier this year, which was something I was pleased to see where you indicated that anti-corruption would be a centerpiece of President Biden's foreign policy agenda.

And you have already answered some of that with Senator Menendez in regards to how you are using the DRG Center. You specifically mentioned in those comments the use of the tools that are at your disposal, including Magnitsky sanctions.

Can I take it that you will work with us as we look at permanently authorizing the Global Magnitsky statute today? It is by executive order and by statute that expires. We take pretty much

what was in the executive order, Senator Wicker and I, and codified that as permanent authorization.

Do we have your support on that legislation?

Ambassador POWER. Unequivocally, and let me just thank you for the Magnitsky Act where your leadership was so pivotal. As you know, it has now been replicated to a large extent in Europe and in Canada.

I think one of our tasks is to ensure that other countries adopt similar measures so that we can multilateralize these corruption and human rights sanctions.

Senator CARDIN. And Senator Young and I have introduced legislation to try to build on it to give capacity for our missions to evaluate how well the countries in which they operate are dealing with corruption.

So it is a way of using a standard similar to what we do in trafficking in persons to monitor progress made in fighting corruption. You mentioned in your article anti-bribery statutes and dealing with those—the laundering, anti-laundering statutes, et cetera.

Will you work with us as we look to enact this law to give you additional tools to help fight corruption?

Ambassador POWER. Yes, Senator. Always looking for additional tools. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

So let me talk a little bit about Central America. You already talked a little bit about that with Senator Menendez, and I know that President Biden is looking at providing help to the Central American countries in order to do what is right in our hemisphere from the humanitarian point of view as well as the practical aspects of migration.

But there is systemic corruption in these countries that if we do not deal with it we are going to be giving money that will not get to its intended purpose.

So how do you intend to make sure that our assistance to the Central American countries are used for the people to deal with the problems of Central America and not just fuel corruption?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

You put your finger on a real inhibitor of progress—above all progress for the people of that region. Let me say that, from what I understand of USAID programming up to this point, there is, of course, a recognition of the barrier that corruption has constituted to economic progress, to progress in combating threats to physical security, and thus, much of the programming is routed, for example, through local officials who have been identified as reformers or—and/or civil society partners.

And, indeed, many of those partners, as you know, are doing work to hold the central authorities accountable for transgressions and for different forms of corruption.

It has been disappointing to see some of the strides that were made, for example, in Guatemala and Honduras through CSIG. CSIG was actually the most popular and I know you were critical in pushing for its mandates to be renewed successively in Guatemala. It was the most popular institution in Guatemala before it was shut down, and so that is disappointing because it had a really

important role to play. Then Vice President Biden was also critical in ensuring that it was preserved there.

But I think, thinking through at the central level, how—what more we can do for civil society actors that are holding government accountable to try to change the equation so that those governments that are trending in worrying directions reverse that tide.

Senator CARDIN. I know that we can help you in this regard. I strongly support our involvement in Central America. But when we put conditionality on aid, it gives the administration, I think, the additional strength in dealing with the governments to indicate there has got to be progress made in dealing with the governance issues.

So I hope you take that as friendly help when we look at conditionality to make sure that we do achieve progress in dealing with systemic problems in these countries.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Portman, who is with us virtually, I understand?

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ambassador Power, and also thank you to your husband, Cass Sunstein, for his willingness to come back into public service. We appreciate your willingness to step up again.

I enjoyed our conversation, and let me follow up a little bit on what Senator Cardin just talked to you about.

As you know, I suppose, we have spent \$3.6 billion of taxpayer money in the Northern Triangle countries—El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala—in the past five years. The results are not impressive, understanding that recently some of the natural disasters in that area, particularly the hurricanes, added to this.

But I will tell you, I just got the numbers this morning from last week. Five hundred and fifty kids per day came into the United States, mostly from the Northern Triangle countries, which is five or six times more than in January when there was less than a hundred.

In terms of families—and by the way, there were 300 in February so we are going up and up and up—in terms of families, 1,500 per day last week, as compared to a thousand in February, on average, less than a hundred in January, again, a 15 times increase.

So the push factors are not being addressed effectively. People are coming. The pull factors are that the changes were made in policies to allow people to come and they are responding and the traffickers are responding.

So I guess what I would ask you is how you would do it differently. Senator Cardin rightly asked you about corruption, and I believe insisting on transparency and rule of law and tying our aid is important.

By the way, of that \$3.6 billion, as you know, much was sent through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, MCC, which has precisely those criteria and others to ensure the money is well spent.

But I guess I would ask you also about tying it to immigration and specifically requiring those countries to work with us to have people apply for asylum from their country of origin or if they feel

it is unsafe to do it in a safe third country, which is one of the programs that was discontinued by the current administration.

In other words, someone could apply in Guatemala for asylum if they are from Honduras, which would be the first country that they would come into, a safe third country.

Do you believe that that is an appropriate condition to us spending what President Biden has now suggested, which is another \$4 billion on top of the \$3.6 billion that has been set in the last five years?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

Well, first, just to embrace the premise of your question that we have a responsibility to be effective vigilant stewards of taxpayer resources, this is an immensely challenging set of problems, and as you called them push factors out of the region to deal with there are no silver bullets. Needless to say, if there were someone would have found one along the way.

But I guess I would just offer a few thoughts. I mean, first of all, there is actually compelling data, and I look forward to digging into the numbers further if I am—if I am confirmed, but that shows that, for example, in the districts where USAID had programming aimed at curbing violence—for example, in El Salvador between 2015 and 2017, there was a 61 percent drop in homicide rates.

There are comparable numbers in terms of the statistics in districts that USAID programming was set up in Honduras, with a slightly smaller drop but, nonetheless, a very substantial drop in homicide rates.

I think that is encouraging. I think, you know, suspending the programs, unfortunately, gave us less influence in using our programming to work with those reformist officials who were willing, again, to crackdown on violence within their neighborhoods.

Senator PORTMAN. Ambassador, let me interrupt you just for a second—

Ambassador POWER. Of course.

Senator PORTMAN [continuing]. Because I want to cover another topic as well. But just on this topic, having just been at the border the last few days, I did talk to a lot of unaccompanied kids and also to families and single men coming over from Central America and, as you know, the constant refrain is, “I can make 10 or sometimes 20 times as much in America. I want to take care of my family.”

So I agree that dealing with the violence is important and I applaud those changes. And, in fact, not only has violence been dealt with in those countries so that the numbers are a little better, generally, but also the economic situation is a little better, although the hurricanes and the COVID-19 numbers are probably not going to be as good.

But it is—it is an economic issue, primarily. In other words, people will still be looking to come to the United States. And my question to you was, should we condition billions of dollars in taxpayer money not just on the important things that Senator Cardin talked about but also on working with us on this issue of immigration and, specifically, on asylum claims? Do you agree with that?

Ambassador POWER. Well, I think that one of your premises, if I understood it, of putting individuals in a position where they

could apply for refugee status or asylum in the region rather than entrusting, for example, their children to coyotes—

Senator PORTMAN. Right. And taking a dangerous course, which is—

Ambassador POWER. I do not think any parents, you know, relishes the entrusting of one's child, again, to a smuggler. So one of the things that we looked at in the Obama administration, as you know, was setting up these UNHCR offices in the region. I think that is something that President Biden is looking at again, and that is very important.

But you put your finger, again, on one of the major causes of migration, which is the lack of economic opportunity, and that is something that USAID has a lot of experience investing in.

You are right, we have not produced the same kinds of results, as I have pointed to, when it comes to physical security and crime. But I think, you know, now with tailored programming, not being everywhere but being specifically in those communities where we know that there is the highest concentration of migrants, we can, working with you and being held accountable, hopefully, begin to make a dent.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, Ambassador, I hope you—I hope you work with—my time is getting toward the end here. But my question is specifically dealing with the economy—

The CHAIRMAN. The senator's time has past expired so—

Senator PORTMAN [continuing]. And the violence issues, but also if you could work with us on this issue of immigration and asylum so people can apply from their home country or a safe third country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons, who just returned from the Tigray region in Ethiopia on a mission and we appreciate his work, and you are recognized.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and Ambassador Power.

Welcome, and thank you for your willingness to serve our nation again, and to Cass and to Declan and to Rian, thank you for supporting your wife and mother in her tremendous service to our nation.

You are taking on this role, hopefully, once confirmed at a critically important time. We all saw how, in the last year of the previous administration, the absence of a Senate-confirmed administrator.

The absence of clear and forceful leadership led to real drift and some challenges operationally and organizationally.

There are humanitarian crises all over the world, as many of us will comment today, from Venezuela to Yemen to Burma to Ethiopia to many other nations, and clear and capable leadership at USAID is critical.

I have profound respect and appreciation for the work of the USAID, the folks who are deployed around the world. I just had the opportunity to meet with a number of the humanitarian partners and leaders that USAID is relying on in Ethiopia, as I have elsewhere.

I also think it is critical we continue to explain to the average American how the work of USAID overseas helps keep us safer, healthier, and more prosperous.

And, tragically, COVID-19 is an opportunity for us to remind folks exactly how vaccinating the rest of the world is critical to preventing new variants from breaking out and from harming all of us.

So I look forward to working with you in my role as the chairman of the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee and to having a meaningful dialogue.

Let me dive in first, if I could, to what I just saw. If confirmed, can we count on USAID to work with this committee and with all of us in Congress to ensure that we are addressing the humanitarian crisis throughout Ethiopia and, in particular, in the Tigray region?

Ambassador POWER. Absolutely. Thank you for taking the trip that you took. USAID, as you know, just made an announcement of an additional \$52 million dollars in humanitarian support. I think that makes the contribution so far \$150 million plus since the crisis began.

But the humanitarian—mitigating the humanitarian suffering, of course, is not all we need to be doing. We need to get at the root causes of that suffering and secure access so that that food can be delivered.

So thank you for what you have done to try to make that happen.

Senator COONS. And I am optimistic we will make progress now on humanitarian access.

I also met with the head of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, Daniel Bekele, and discussed with him and with other international leaders about carrying out a thorough and independent investigation of human rights abuses.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, has also talked recently about doing a joint investigation.

From your career working in human rights issues, what kind of investigation do you think would be most effective and have the greatest impact in getting to the root of human rights violations that have occurred?

Ambassador POWER. Well, the biggest challenge, traditionally, for international human rights investigations, especially independent ones, is securing access, and so the key is not only getting the approval from the Center and from the prime minister for something like that, but making sure that that agreement trickles down and that there is a willingness on the part of the authorities who have granted access to ensure that, you know, the checkpoints do not go up then as soon as the investigators deploy.

There are many, many countries where atrocity allegations have occurred, have developed. Unfortunately, creative traditions of erecting roadblocks, you know, where it matters—in other words, harassing, intimidating witnesses and so forth, denying visas to particular communities, blaming so-called uncontrolled militia, you know, without, at the Center, really taking steps to make sure that those militia allow investigators to do their work.

Senator COONS. Well, I look forward to partnering with you and relying on your advice in exactly how to make sure that this commitment that has recently been announced by the prime minister to investigate and this partnership that I think is quite possible is successful.

And there is a number of things I look forward to working with you on: the implementation of the Global Fragility Act, a bill that I helped lead that has been signed into law that is a new tool to ensure that development and diplomacy take the lead in support of defense work in securing countries from the Sahel to the Northern Triangle, the Nita Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act and ensuring that we are investing in both people-to-people programs and joint economic ventures to facilitate the conditions for a possible two-state solution, and then ways in which we can keep the Development Finance Corporation a development finance corporation and to best use the MCC.

My last question will be for you about the critical role that delivering safe and effective vaccines to the developing world can play in continuing our role as one of the world's leading supporters of effective public health programs.

There has been a significant increase in the appropriated funds available through COVAX. We have rejoined WHO.

What do you think we most need to do to ensure the prompt and equitable distribution of effective vaccines globally?

Ambassador POWER. Well, let me just cite, Senator, the International Chamber of Commerce report—I think we discussed it on the phone a month or two ago—but that shows that until and unless there is economic recovery by virtue of vaccinations and curbing of the pandemic in the developing world, it is going to cost the global economy \$9 trillion, including developed countries \$4.5 trillion. Between that and the issue of variants, where as long as the pandemic is raging somewhere there is a chance of some mutation and variants moving aggressively, it is so in our interest to make that happen.

COVAX, if fully funded, will vaccinate 20 percent of people, they hope, by the end of this year—20 percent of the people in developing countries.

That is not sufficient, and so looking to see how COVAX is being supplemented by bilateral donations, surplus donations, and other contributions, I think, is really important.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Madam Ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Paul?

Senator PAUL. Good morning. Welcome.

Ambassador POWER. Good morning.

Senator PAUL. Many on the left are horrified at being associated with the neocon foreign policy. But it is no small irony that the end results of responsibility to protect are, in reality, little different than the interventionist policies of John Bolton and Bill Kristol.

Like the neocons, the liberal advocates of responsibility to protect have advocated for military intervention in Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

Sure, the reasoning might be more humanitarian than geopolitical, but the advocacy for military intervention ends up looking pretty much the same.

I remember liking what candidate Obama said about military intervention, that without congressional approval it was only justified when there was an imminent threat.

After President Obama began bombing Libya, I asked him at lunch one day, what about your pledge to ask and seek congressional permission unless it was an imminent threat.

He responded that there was an imminent threat to Benghazi. I looked at him incredulously and responded, “Really? An imminent threat to a foreign city is your justification for an unauthorized war?”

The responsibility to protect ideology did not learn much from the Libyan debacle and immediately pushed the Obama administration to jump into Syria. Many on the left, like Secretary Blinken, do not admit that there was too much intervention. They actually believe in Syria that they failed because there was too little military intervention.

Several hundred thousand people have died in Syria and more than a million refugees have been displaced. If you are talking about humanitarianism, famine, the wars, really, other than natural causes war is the number-one cause of famine around the world.

An argument can be made, though, that Assad would probably massacred far fewer people had the West and the Gulf States stayed out of the civil war.

Are you willing to admit that the Libyan and Syrian military interventions that you advocated for were a mistake, and that going forward, you will be more conscious of the unintended humanitarian disasters that seem to occur again and again with our military interventions in Africa and throughout the Middle East?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

Well, first, if I may, just talk about USAID and its role, which I think can be very important in Libya today.

I think before you arrived I mentioned that there is—a power-sharing government has finally been set up in Libya. USAID right now, because of the security conditions, operates its programs, largely, from the—

Senator PAUL. You would acknowledge Libya is worse now than it was before we started bombing them?

Ambassador POWER [continuing]. I think it is really important with Libya having the opportunity to have elections at the end of this year for us to do what we can to support those elections. I think it is in the face of mass atrocities there are a whole set of nonmilitary tools that are—I would hope that you would support deploying.

We had some successes with them, for example, in helping bring about the South Sudanese Referendum, which was a risk of grave atrocities occurring back in the first term of the Obama administration, an attempt to steal an election in Cote d’Ivoire where diplomatic pressure averted mass atrocities, and even sending technical advisors, military advisors, to Central Africa to combat the Lord’s Resistance Army, which kidnapped children and—

Senator PAUL. Do you think we were successful in Libya, that Libya is a better place because of our military intervention, or Syria?

Ambassador POWER. The decision that President Obama made when confronted with the risk to the people of Benghazi and other civilian centers was an incredibly difficult one, and again, in sitting in the Situation Room, I think it is hard now to remember—you know, with the United Nations, NATO, the Arab League, this body, the Senate, unanimously calling for a no-fly zone, President Obama made the judgment that the risks of allowing Benghazi to fall and the slaughter that would ensue were not—

Senator PAUL [continuing]. I know it is a tough decision, but in retrospect, was Libya a good idea to militarily intervene in Libya? A good idea to militarily intervene in Syria, in retrospect?

Ambassador POWER. I think the challenge is that we do not have the counterfactual and, certainly, the fallout in the—in the wake of the intervention, the centrifugal forces have been incredibly difficult to manage and, above all, hard on the Libyan people.

Senator PAUL. But we have to learn lessons sometime. I mean, we went into Libya. We went into Iraq. We destabilized Iraq. We are still dealing with that. We went into Libya, destabilized Libya. We are still dealing with that. Syria, the same thing, and Yemen as well.

So, I mean, there should be an accumulation of knowledge and a learning curve here that our interventions make things worse, not better.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you. Thank you, Senator.

I, certainly, agree that nonmilitary tools in the toolbox are—carry with them far fewer risks. I opposed the war in Iraq. I agree with you on Yemen.

All I am trying to describe is that when these situations arise, it is a question almost of lesser evils, that the choices are very challenging.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations, Ambassador Power, for your nomination.

You have been a human rights activist. You have played a number of roles with the Obama administration, including U.N. ambassador, and now you are poised to take the helm of a critical engine of humanitarian assistance around the globe.

So I am going to ask you questions that kind of combine all the roles, both about what you might do at USAID but also how you see some of the challenges that affect the committee.

You began your prepared remarks with four gargantuan challenges, and one was democracy backsliding, and I want to talk to you about that. We are seeing it everywhere.

We are seeing it in every continent. We are seeing, as you indicate, declines in freedom and democracy indices, whether you are looking at, you know, Freedom House annual reports or the Economist Democracy Index annual reports.

President Biden has indicated that sometime either later this year or earlier next year he wants to convene a summit of democracies, which I think is a great idea.

How would you foresee USAID being part of what the U.S. might do in convening such a summit? Just share your thoughts on that. Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

If I might, just because the democracy and human rights numbers are so unfortunate and depressing, just to offer something on the other side of the ledger.

Prior to the pandemic, there were more political protests that occurred in more places than at any point in modern recorded history.

So on the one hand, you have states increasingly repressing their people and growing more sophisticated in shutting down the internet and in stifling space for civil society.

On the other hand, many, many people are not getting that memo and are insisting on taking their protests and their concerns to the streets and holding governments accountable.

So I think there is a lot to work with out there of concerns about violations of dignity and rights and a desire for the United States to play a leadership role in promoting human rights, of course, with humility.

With regard to the summit, I am not privy to the deliberations and sort of what the planning and thinking is either on timing or on the details of substance.

But I think there are a lot of opportunities to collaborate and for USAID to play an important role, for example, in combating misinformation and sharing best practices for doing so in protecting election infrastructure, not only from misinformation but from hacking and other forms of intrusion, the anti-corruption programs that have been effective in holding governments accountable and bringing civil society into conversations that are too often top down.

I think there are a lot of lessons that can be imparted in that regard. And often, Senator, I think it is—it is countries that themselves are at different stages of democratic progression that have the most valuable lessons to impart to those countries that are just becoming democratic.

For example, the country of Sudan, which is experiencing a political transition, is a long way from being a full and—a full Jeffersonian democracy, that—

Senator KAINE. Sudan is a good example of something. I agree with you.

You would agree with me that in something like a summit of democracies it would be very important not to just focus on, like, a NATO like U.S. and Europe or an OECD, just kind of the big developed nations, but we should include large and small democracies, mature and nascent from every continent on the planet.

I mean, should not that be the goal of such a summit?

Ambassador POWER. Again, I do not know how the current administration is thinking about the summit. I can tell you, Senator, from having helped design invitation lists as a U.N. ambassador that questions of who is in and who is out are actually quite challenging.

Senator KAINE. And but I am not asking about particular nations. I am just saying it would have less utility if it is just seen as kind of a U.S. and Europe thing or a big nation thing, right?

If we are going to have a summit of democracies, there are democracies on every continent. They are big and small and nascent and mature. And if we are going to try to uphold the model and share best practices, we should not have kind of a U.S. or U.S. and Europe-centric view. We should try to include democracies from everywhere.

Ambassador POWER. I think the more demographically and culturally and regionally representative we can be in general in talking about democracy and human rights the better.

The progress I was able to make as U.N. ambassador on LGBTQ rights would not have happened without the leadership of Latin American countries, who were at the forefront there.

So I agree with the premise of your question. I am just not familiar with what the plans are for the summit.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. I do not have any other questions, Mr. Chair. Thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Welcome, Ambassador, and congratulations on your nomination.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. As you know, the People's Republic of China is using development dollars to advance its foreign policy goals through programs like the Belt and Road Initiative.

Some have proposed expanding DFC's work to enable it to more effectively combat China's investments by targeting middle-income countries or perhaps utilizing DSC to support the export of U.S.-made emerging technologies.

Whether through USAID or DFC, it is absolutely essential that our development dollars, I think, be used to advance our geostrategic priorities.

So, Ambassador, how would you like to see our development agencies improved so that we are able to more effectively compete with China?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

The way in which, and I alluded to this in my opening statement, but that China is using its economic leverage and heft not only to, in often a predatory way, but not only to change governing practices within countries but in my old place of work the United Nations to actually leverage those financial commitments to change the rules of the road altogether and to water down international human rights commitments and so forth, for fear that those laws and norms will be used against China. It warrants urgent, immediate, and well-resourced attention.

I think you asked about improvement and I am, again, incredibly impressed with what USAID staff have done and was very impressed with the leadership of Mark Green in this area.

I think you and Senator Coons and others have worked on making the DFC a much more powerful tool in the American toolbox. I think increasing coordination between the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the DFC, USAID, and the range of other development actors is one answer.

I think recognizing our comparative advantages—you know, we actually believe in local self-reliance. That is what we are working

toward. We want countries not to be dependent on international assistance.

So the investments we make are in their ability to have agency and to dictate their own affairs. This is very—

Senator YOUNG. Sure.

Ambassador POWER [continuing]. Different, I think, than the China model. Go ahead, sir.

Senator YOUNG. No. So you mentioned local self-reliance. I am going to get into that momentarily since you brought that up.

Might you support expanding DFC's mission to target areas in the developed world where China is attempting to make inroads?

Ambassador POWER. I would want to look into that and hear from you and others, just, again, having not worked yet within the administration or dug into DFC-related questions, if I could.

But I think, certainly, the question for American foreign policy, broadly, is not only, you know, how do we deal with China in sub-Saharan Africa and the inroads they are making there, but across the developed world as well.

Senator YOUNG. You mentioned self-reliance, that emphasis on making countries self-reliant, I think, is itself an advantage, right, because all people—so I think not just most people but all people want to be more self-reliant, less reliant upon foreign nations and others. It is sort of wired into our DNA.

How would you say America's national security interests are helped by making countries more self-reliant? Is that consistent with your thinking?

Ambassador POWER. Absolutely consistent with my thinking, and I think you put your finger on it. It is you cannot travel the world and talk to individuals, whether they are those who are receiving U.N. food assistance or those receiving technical assistance in a government ministry, without being struck by how eager they are to not be dependent on international assistance, and I think that is something USAID staff have taken to heart. So—

Senator YOUNG. Is there—is there a way that we might, or how should we measure self-reliance?

Ambassador POWER. Well, I think domestic resource mobilization is something that USAID has invested a lot in, so making sure that countries are able to collect their own tax, infrastructure, strengthening the rule of law, so that there is an ability, you know, not only for NGOs to hold governmental actors accountable for potential corruption or malfeasance but also the courts, and making sure there is an independent judiciary. So work in those domains, I think, is one—

Senator YOUNG. Then, lastly, in summary fashion, I will just ask you, how would you use your seat on the Development Finance Corporation's executive board to ensure that DFC and USAID's complementary missions are furthering achieving self-reliance in our targeted countries?

Ambassador POWER. I really look forward to that individual being named, nominated, confirmed, and sitting down with them. I think a critical answer to your question about China but also our larger question about just enhancing development for the sake of U.S. security and prosperity lies in that partnership.

And the resources that DFC bring to bear but also, specifically, they bring to bear what countries most want, which is private sector investment and, really, to move away from assistance to a more equal relationship of that nature.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Ambassador. I will be submitting some questions for the record about Burma.

Ambassador POWER. Okay. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

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

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ambassador, for being willing to serve. Again, thank you to your family.

USAID is already leading in climate in our foreign assistance. We see that in the work of the bureaus, the various offices, and the regional missions.

But I do think there is more that we can do to make sure that there is leadership at the top to help to steer the agencies' climate work so there is an advocate for consistent and reliable funding, and someone to establish a clear set of priorities for USAID's mission.

Can you talk about where we might make some permanent structural changes at USAID so that our emphasis on climate is embedded into our budget, our priorities, and our objectives, going forward, and so that it does not swing back and forth depending on who is the president of the United States?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your leadership on climate.

I am struck by how much work is already being done, and you are alluding to this at USAID as it relates to disaster risk reduction, helping those countries that want to transition to clean energy or to lower their carbon emissions, above all, dealing with something that I know you have worked on in the Pacific Island context, which is mitigation and adaptation for—especially with Pacific Island countries, those countries that are only a few feet above sea level and really suffering devastating effects of climate events and just the rising sea levels.

But you asked a question more about the sort of bureaucratic instantiation of these efforts. I think, for starters, I will want to get smarter at a granular level about what USAID is already doing and was doing under the prior administration.

I think, as well, thinking through what it means to acknowledge that climate touches just about every aspect of USAID programming, from food security to displacement and humanitarian emergency to we had an exchange earlier about conflict and the causes of conflict and how we can address root causes.

So given that, what is the appropriate bureaucratic sort of structure for that disaster risk reduction, adaptation, mitigation, emissions reduction expertise? You know, what is the best way to channel all the expertise that exists within the building so that it is reflective of the fact that this expertise needs to permeate so many domains?

And so I do not have an answer for you today, Senator. If you have ideas, I would love to hear them. But I think it is incredibly

important to make sure that the structure is fit for purpose at this moment.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

I want to stay in Oceania and talk a little bit about not disaster response but disaster preparation. You know, the United States government is very effective in disaster response.

I think of the Fukushima Daiichi earthquake and tsunami. I think of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that impacted coastal Thailand, among other places, and, of course, we were there for the rescue.

But for such a small amount of money, we were able to prevent some of these disasters. Obviously, the natural disasters are unpreventable, but for the simple price of about \$500,000, we were able to deploy some sea level gauges so that people would get early warning about tsunamis and save life.

And I just wonder how you are looking at not just disaster response and mitigation in terms of hard infrastructure, but especially early warning systems and those relatively easy to deploy and inexpensive to purchase the kinds of assistance that really help island nations, and whether USAID would be amenable to really taking a look throughout Oceania about that.

Ambassador POWER. I cannot wait to dig into that set of questions, if I am confirmed. I do—I did read a little bit about it, just as I was been preparing these last weeks for this hearing.

And, as you said, just with such modest financial investments, I read about these beetles that were working with NOAA to provide countries that, in low connectivity areas, allow people to communicate warnings of extreme weather events to come.

I think that is just a great example of the kinds of uses of technology, the uses of satellites, the uses of surveillance that we can bring to bear to mitigate harms.

So eager, all ears, and look forward to hearing more about what USAID staff, which have been so creative in this domain, have already done.

Senator SCHATZ. Sea level gauges, DART buoys, drones for reconnaissance and disaster response—all of these are really inexpensive, even in the context of USAID but, certainly, in the context of our overall foreign aid and defense budget.

So I look forward to working with you on all these things. Thank you, Ambassador.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand Senator Hagerty is with us virtually.

Senator HAGERTY. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, I would like to commend your two children for attending today. I know that it takes a lot for a family to be as supportive as they have been of their parents, and I hope they obtain a great civics lesson today and I commend them for joining you and for being so supportive of your service.

To the extent that the United States spends development funds overseas, I know we all want to make certain that those funds are spent in a manner that is efficient and as effective as possible at serving our interest.

So I would like to turn our attention to women's empowerment. As you know, to the extent that women flourish in a nation their economies flourish, their democracies flourish, and we tend to see more stability.

The previous administration put together a tremendous program, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative, and Congress has allocated some \$200 million this fiscal year.

It enjoys great bipartisan support from this committee. And I think it has tremendous potential.

Ambassador, I would like to ask you, first, if you are aware of this program, and then further, how would you go about the implementation and making sure that we see this program through as it is intended?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator, just to wholeheartedly agree with your various premises about the link between women's empowerment and education and increased GDPs. Peace processes last longer if women are included in at the table.

As to the program that you are referencing, I have, certainly, read about it. I would like, if I could, to dig into it, again, if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, and look at also how it fits alongside other USAID investments, for example, in girls' education, in other efforts to catalyze entrepreneurship for women and girls.

But, again, I share your premises and happy to consult with you on that, going forward.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate that, and I would underscore that this is a terrific program and I think it has tremendous potential. So I hope that it will take a premier role as you evaluate what you may do, if confirmed, in the implementation of programs that will help advance our interest overseas.

Along those same lines, I would like to shift gears and talk a bit about nations that are vulnerable to Chinese influence and, specifically, the implementation of Chinese technology into their networks and their infrastructure.

Are there things that you might be able to accomplish, that USAID could accomplish, that would help make these nations less vulnerable to Chinese penetration, to help them stand up against the—this sort of incentivization that the Chinese often will give to get other types of benefits? Can you address that concern, please?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

Well, I think some of the answer is diplomatic. You know, the last administration, I think, exerted a lot of diplomatic pressure on countries and some of it was proved, I think, ultimately effective. For example, the United Kingdom reversing its prior decision on Huawei and 5G.

So I look forward to working with Secretary Blinken in that regard. But also, I had a couple exchanges earlier, sir, about the comparative advantages of USAID assistance and U.S. development assistance, more broadly, and I do think the fact that we stand for digital and secure—secure and open digital infrastructure is a comparative advantage.

It is something that aligns with the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people around the world, and so part of the investments that USAID makes in civil society and in nongovernmental actors,

part of our work with the DFC, knowing how much countries value private sector investment from the United States.

I think linking these conversations and recognizing that for American companies, for example, the investment climate is more hospitable in the event of an open and secure digital infrastructure. I think that can be part of our leverage alongside questions of how USAID spends—expends its resources.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate your time and effort looking at how we might better leverage our position to ensure that the networks around the globe remain free and clear.

Thank you very much for your time.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, for this hearing. And, Madam Ambassador, it is great to see you. Thank you for your past service to our country and for your willingness to serve again in this capacity, if confirmed, and it is great to see your family.

Senator Murphy and I have proposed a new foreign policy budget to really meet the needs of this century in the year 2021, recognizing that many of the threats that we face are transnational, global, from climate change to pandemics to cybersecurity, and we look forward to working with you to explore that budget.

It includes a significant increase in the budget for AID, among other things, and part of the idea is also to combat what Senator Hagerty was just discussing, which is China's very active and aggressive effort to export its model of authoritarianism to the developing world through a number of instruments, including debt trap diplomacy, the Belt and Road Initiative.

Their focus has been on sort of major infrastructure projects and, you know, decades ago, AID was also very focused on building larger infrastructure projects.

If you could just comment on how you see the role of AID in the developing world in the context of China's ongoing efforts, but with the toolbox that you have. I mean, should we consider changing the mix in our toolbox as we go forward and how do you see that challenge?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

Understandably, this has come up a good bit today, just as it comes up every day in the world, and I should say thank you to you and Senator Murphy for looking into this question of how development diplomacy, our foreign affairs budget, should be tailored for this moment.

So I look forward to seeing what comes of that exercise. I have seen the preliminary numbers, but look forward to more.

You know, I think that the phrase I keep coming back to is comparative advantage, and you alluded to debt trap diplomacy.

I think, you know, on the one hand, this has been a year of tremendous Chinese expansionism and aggressiveness when it comes to developing countries and when it comes to its near abroad as well. We have seen that in Hong Kong. We have seen it in the South China Sea. We have seen it on the Indian border.

But it has not gone that well for China. Their—you actually see, you know, very poor polling when it comes to China's standing in the world. Even with the donations of protective gear in light of the COVID pandemic, you do not see increases in soft power.

Quite the contrary, in light of COVID and the status of the global economy and how much different countries have suffered from that, and I think it is in part because people recognize that this coercive and predatory approach, which is so transactional and, seemingly, not really rooted in encouraging countries to achieve their own destinies, their own development objectives.

I think it is not going over that well, and that creates an opening for the United States. I think our comparative advantages are our support for accountable governance, which aligns with what citizens want worldwide, our ability to not only bring in the DFC but, in parallel, private sector investments, which countries hunger for, the fact that we are carrying out programming that is supportive of various countries' environmental objectives, so many of these countries cherish the natural resources that they have been given.

And so I think our approach, which is helping them sustain those resources rather than pillaging them, is something that also gives us a comparative advantage.

So I can go on and, again, I think it is country specific in terms of how the programming should be tailored. But, fundamentally, it is about supporting those countries achieve their objectives and their goals of becoming self-reliant and not being dependent on assistance.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. I also want to follow up briefly on the line of questioning from Senator Coons regarding our role in working with others in the world to defeat the coronavirus.

As you indicated, the COVAX facility, we hope, will vaccinate about 20 percent of the developing world. But it is in their interest and in our interest, obviously, to stop the spread of variants as quickly as possible, variants that could, potentially, you know, become more immune to vaccines. And then there is the economic fallout, both in those countries and the global economy.

What do you see as AID's role specifically in trying to expand the vaccination effort and the use of excess U.S. vaccine supplies?

Ambassador POWER. Well, because it will be some time before everyone is vaccinated in the world and in the developing world, it is really important not to lose sight of the diagnostic and the treatment support that we can offer, the support as well as we go in rebuilding health infrastructure that has been completely overwhelmed by the human costs of this pandemic.

I also think, you know, there is no question that the humanitarian toll when it comes to severe malnutrition is going to be substantial, and USAID, of course, brings great assets when it comes to meeting humanitarian emergencies and supporting organizations like the World Food Programme and others in meeting food needs and humanitarian needs.

So I think there is—to look at the pandemic both as the vaccination challenge, which we have talked about earlier, as a treatment challenge, but then not to lose sight of the fact that measles and TB and polio treatments and vaccines, all of those have lagged behind, and nor to lose sight of the need to ensure that this is the

last pandemic that does this kind of damage and to be building again in the infrastructure that these countries need to be able to fend for themselves in the future.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Madam Ambassador.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good to see you, Ambassador. Thank you for your willingness to serve again.

Let me just quickly associate myself with a few comments and lines of questioning from other members on the committee.

First, let me join with Senator Young in recommending that you play a forceful role at the DFC with respect to increasing their capability to be able to finance projects abroad. We have, obviously, targeted DFC's financing towards the developing world for good reason.

But China plays a different game. We carved out a billion dollars through legislation written by myself and Senator Johnson about a year ago to allow for energy projects to be financed in nondeveloping countries.

I think we are going to have to continue to expand the aperture when it comes to the type of countries and type of economies the DFC is able to do business in in order to compete with China.

Let me just associate myself with Senator van Hollen's comments. You and I have talked ad nauseam about the need to dramatically increase our nonmilitary toolkit, and now you will be in a perfect position to advocate for those resources.

My hope is that the administration, when it submits its budget, you know, will make a substantial down payment on those smart power tools. Just no way to compete with China or prevent the next pandemic or fight climate change if you are still funding, you know, more employees at military grocery stores than diplomats representing America abroad.

My lines of questioning are on the ability of USAID to be able to be nimble enough to meet the changing nature of very complex challenges.

The first is on the topic of how we get our USAID team outside the wire. We have significantly downsized—as an example, we have significantly downsized our embassy in Baghdad. I think right now we have four USAID officers overseeing a billion dollars of funding there.

But it is not unfamiliar what is happening there. All over the world we are having a harder time getting our diplomats and our economic development officers outside of embassies.

Second, we also have a lack of flexibility in the way that USAID can deploy funds. Congress tends to compartmentalize and earmark dollars so that when a challenge pops up it is difficult for the USAID administrator to put the dollars into the place that really needs it.

So I wondered if you would talk for a second about the need to be able to move USAID personnel around to places that need to see American presence but also the need for Congress to work with you

to try to give some more flexibility to the accounts that you are going to oversee.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator. Both such important questions.

So when it comes to the circumstance for USAID personnel and U.S. diplomatic personnel, as you know, it is very challenging, with more conflicts happening than any point since the end of the Cold War.

With extremists, you know, who do harbor depending on, again, where we are talking about can harbor ill intent towards U.S. personnel, you know, we need to take security precautions and keep our personnel safe.

At the same time, you will never meet people more eager to be out in the communities where the beneficiaries of U.S. programming are than USAID's personnel. I mean, that is what drew these extraordinary men and women to this agency in the first place.

You know, many of them are former Peace Corps volunteers or people who have taught English when they were, you know, practically in high school, you know, living in these communities.

So I think—I look forward to working with Secretary Blinken and our security professionals to being sure that we have the balance right there.

And then when it comes to flexibility in deploying funds, I do think this relates to the conversation that we have been having about China. You know, we—and actually, the Ranking Member Risch and I spoke about this a little bit in his office yesterday—we want our assistance to be fit for purpose.

We want our rules and regulations to be fit for purpose. We need to be accountable to the American people, given the generosity and the spirit behind the investments that are being made through USAID.

I, certainly, if confirmed, want to be responsive to the objectives that people have up here, and that is why you see a lot of those earmarks is that people have strong commitments and want to see particular programming.

And from what I can tell, you know, that is the kind of programming that I would wish to see as well. But we really do need to make sure that we are able to move quickly.

I know Administrator Green made some inroads on this issue. But I do think there is more to be done to make sure that we are—we are able to be a 21st century agency meeting the challenges of the moment.

Senator MURPHY. Agree. Circumstances change, and these days they change very quickly, and so I think there is probably a way for us to maintain accountability for funds, maintain programmatic earmarking but, perhaps, allow for a little bit more flexibility with regard to country and geography.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, welcome.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

Senator CRUZ. So, Ambassador, you and I have had a good working relationship. We had a very good conversation in my office. We have worked together, in particular, concerning humanitarian crises and dissidents.

I appreciated your willingness when serving as U.N. ambassador to speak out for Meriam Ibrahim, who was wrongfully imprisoned in Sudan and sentenced to torture and death for the crime of being a Christian, and you showed courage speaking out for her.

As you know, I was very frustrated President Obama would not speak out for her, but I was grateful that you did. But I also had very significant disagreements with you during your time as U.N. ambassador and nowhere were those disagreements stronger than concerning Israel and concerning Iran.

Concerning Israel, I think, perhaps, the most shameful moment of the Obama administration was after the election in November of 2016 and was the Security Council's passage of Resolution 2334, which I do not think it is coincidental that the Security Council passed it after the presidential election and not before.

And that resolution was passed with, at best, the acquiescence of the United States and of you as U.N. Ambassador and, at worst, the active encouragement of the Obama administration and you, as U.N. Ambassador.

I believe Resolution 2334 is a pile of lies, that it is a resolution that is motivated by anti-Semitism, by hatred for Israel. Resolution 2334 declares much of modern-day Israel is illegitimate and illegally occupied territory.

It declares the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem as illegitimate and illegally-occupied territory. It declares the Wailing Wall as illegitimate and illegally-occupied territory.

The much-circulated picture of President Obama in a yarmulke paying respects at the Wailing Wall, to see the Obama administration put through a resolution designed to attack Israel, was quite dismaying.

So I guess my first question is, do you agree with Resolution 2334?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

I had—there were two sort of guiding principles that I relied upon as U.N. ambassador as it relates to Israel. The first was to combat bias and anti-Semitism and the unfair way that Israel has been treated at the U.N. and is treated at the U.N., and the second, following President Obama's direction, of course, was to preserve space for a two-state solution.

I want to make sure I have the chance to just describe a little bit what I did, and I am disappointed we did not get to talk about this in your office, what I did in the first category because I think your question does not reflect the reality of my four years at U.N.—

Senator CRUZ. With respect, Ambassador Power, the time is limited—

Ambassador POWER. Right.

Senator CRUZ [continuing]. And so if you could just answer the question I asked. Do you agree with Resolution 2334?

I recognize you may well have done other things that were positive concerning Israel. I am focused on this action at the United Nations.

Ambassador POWER. I just would like to get on the record that under my leadership we secured Yom Kippur as a U.N. holiday. We convened the first ever General Assembly condemning anti-Semitism in the same chamber as the Zionism is racism resolution was passed decades before.

And we integrated Israel in a way that had never been done before: chairing committees, being able to actually be part of groups from which they had been traditionally excluded.

I do not think there is a record that looks as substantial when it comes to integrating Israel.

On the resolution itself, it is a resolution in keeping with President Obama's desire to encourage the parties to avoid unilateral steps, including terrorism, incitement to violence, and the building of settlements.

Those dimensions of the resolution—I think, if you read my explanation of vote at the time, the problem with the resolution and the reason President Obama decided to abstain was, by and large, the venue because the U.N. has been so biased, because they are 18 General Assembly—

Senator CRUZ. So let us get to a little bit more granularity.

Ambassador POWER. Yeah.

Senator CRUZ. Do you believe the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem is illegitimate and illegally-occupied territory?

Ambassador POWER. I do not.

Senator CRUZ. So do you disagree with the substance of Resolution 2334? Because that is what it says?

Ambassador POWER. Senator, President Obama's desire was to encourage the parties to avoid unilateral steps. That is the essence of that resolution and I think the reason that he made the judgment to instruct me to abstain.

Senator CRUZ. So encouraging the party to—parties to avoid unilateral steps. Resolution 2334 was a unilateral step. Israel had no say in it. It was a step taken by the enemies of Israel to condemn Israel.

Ambassador POWER. Again, the desire that animated me in my time at the U.N. was to fight bias and to preserve space for a two-state solution.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. A final question. Can you please describe the role played by Iran and by the Houthis, in particular, in deepening the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and assess whether the Biden administration's moves to relieve terrorism sanctions on the Houthis has played a role in that humanitarian crisis?

Ambassador POWER. The Houthis, when I was at the United Nations, the Houthi overran a sovereign government, used military force for territorial acquisition, have used food as a weapon of war.

I mean, again, I am on record condemning Houthi actions and specifically, again, the use of humanitarian aid. I think the challenge is the vast majority of Yemenis live under Houthi control at the moment unless and until there is a political settlement.

And so it is really important, given that that is the world's largest humanitarian catastrophe right now, that we find a way to get food to those vulnerable people.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator CRUZ. But the Biden administration's lifting the terrorism sanction—

The CHAIRMAN. The senator's time has expired, and—

Senator CRUZ. I was just asking her to answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN. I know. I have let more time than other colleagues.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. I would still like her to ask the question.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure you can submit it for the record and you will get a response.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. So you do not—

The CHAIRMAN. No, I want to observe the time I have for everybody else.

Senator CRUZ. She could still—

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Booker?

Senator BOOKER. I am really grateful. We are all juggling hearings today and I appreciate the yielding of my friend from Texas and the considerations of our chairperson on a tight day.

I am very happy to see Ambassador Power. I have known her for years. She is a woman of extraordinary integrity, commitment, and has lived a life of service to our nation on many fronts that no matter what your political bias is it is laudatory the kind of dedication she has had to the best interest of America and issues of human rights and human decency.

I want to ask Ambassador Power, really quickly, about the—around the issue of preventing future pandemics. Last week, it was reported that wildlife farms that were encouraged by the communist Chinese government to breed exotic animals were most likely the source of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The senior senator from Texas and I—Senator Cornyn—introduced a bill called the Preventing Future Pandemics Act, which authorizes funding to USAID to work on reducing demand for consumption of wildlife from wildlife markets.

Will you work with us to reduce the global demand for wildlife that could lead to another zoonotic disease outbreak and will you work with us to invest in food systems and alternative sources of food protein to move food-insecure communities away from the consumption of wildlife?

Ambassador POWER. Yes, Senator, and I appreciate the integrated approach that that you bring to this issue, the idea that environmental, agricultural, health—that these sectors can be separated, I think, is—has been proven anachronistic and, if confirmed, part of my challenge at USAID is to bring about that integration and make sure that our experts are working together across what have been silos in the not so recent past.

Senator BOOKER. Thank you.

Ambassador, I know, from a friendship with you spanning from years, that you are—you have an incredible and courageous empathy for humanitarian crises around this planet and I know how seriously you take that.

We are in the midst right now in 2021 with a record 235 million people who are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. That is an increase of 40 percent since 2020.

I am really honored to be working with Senator Young. He and I co-chair a task force at CSIS to look at the humanitarian access, which has been increasingly constrained as violent conflict has escalated.

The NGO partners we worked with identified both international—in other words, the willful obstruction by governments, as we are seeing, frankly, in Ethiopia, and bureaucratic obstruction of humanitarian access.

And the humanitarian groups really argued to Senator Young and I that in the complicated environments like Yemen and Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, northeast Nigeria, and elsewhere, compliance with some USAID policies related to potential materiel support to terrorist groups has made it nearly impossible to operate.

And so in my final question to you and respectful of the time of other senators, I just want to know, can you outline the steps that you are going to take to work internally at USAID and with colleagues at the State Department to try to streamline and improve the regulatory process itself so that humanitarian NGOs are really on a sound legal footing when carrying out humanitarian assistance that is funded by the United States?

And will you work with us to find ways to ease some of the regulatory burdens on frontline humanitarian NGOs to make sure they are on legal—sound legal footing in carrying out humanitarian assistance funded by the U.S.?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you. Thank you so much. My gratitude to our partners working in those difficult environments and my gratitude to USAID staff who do the same at great risk.

I think part of the reason that you are seeing humanitarian access denied is a sense of impunity on the part of various actors, and it does create immense challenges for our partners on the ground.

With regard to vetting and the challenges of complying with regulations and certification, I think, Senator, that is something absolutely I would love to sit down with you and talk through.

I think we have to make sure that our—we are doing everything in our power to ensure that our assistance reaches our intended beneficiaries, given the kinds of actors that inhabit these conflict areas.

At the same time, if there are efficiencies to be achieved, of course, we would strive to achieve them. So absolutely happy to sit down with you and talk that through, consistent, again, with following the law and the requirements that this body has put forward.

Senator BOOKER. I look forward to that partnership. I yield. But I would like to just say I am so grateful to the state of New Jersey for giving me the privilege of being a United States senator.

I will count it as one of the great honors of my experience as a senator to vote for your confirmation on the Senate floor.

You are an extraordinary human being that will do not just the United States proud but the world proud with what I believe will

be extraordinary efforts to make this planet more just for humanity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Barrasso?

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

Congratulations. Good to see you. The kids have grown up since you were last here. Cass is behind you, and as you say, he is—

Ambassador POWER. He has not grown up.

Senator BARRASSO. No. No.

[Laughter.]

Senator BARRASSO. I would like to—if I could—before I start on some other questions, just if you could please answer Senator Cruz's question about if, when the Biden administration lifted the terrorism sanctions on the Houthis if that made the humanitarian crisis worse.

Ambassador POWER. In lifting the designation—that is an empirical question. I do not have an answer to the question and I had not heard the full question before. So I do not know the answer to that question.

Senator BARRASSO. I want to move to energy development in Africa. You know, worldwide 840 million people are living without electricity. Five hundred and seventy-three million live in—of these live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Power Africa was launched to increase the number of people with access to power. Energy development can lift people out of poverty, improve their education, health, well-being. On my multiple trips to Africa, what I see is humanitarian problems when they do not have electricity, when they do not have power, whether it is to charge a phone or to deliver a baby and use the suction apparatus at the time of the birth of the baby with—it can make the difference between life and death.

So developing countries desperately need access to a steady supply of affordable reliable electricity to support their economic growth as well. So, you know, people back home in Wyoming know firsthand the benefits of developing abundant energy resources.

The solution to ending energy poverty does not lie in limiting options but, I believe, using all available options. I mean, you read about the most threatening environmental hazard to people it is—it is cook smoke. It is indoor smoke because they are using dung and wood to cook indoors.

I think we have to be diligent in promoting all-of-the-above energy strategy that helps alleviate energy poverty.

So will you commit to helping developing countries use all energy resources, including coal and oil and natural gas, so they can get electricity?

Ambassador POWER. Senator, I know that many of our partners, you know, are seeking to transition, in part because of pollution. I think Power Africa, and grateful from afar for the last four years for your leadership on Power Africa.

I think it has been a tremendous boon to many communities, both in poverty alleviation and in providing energy.

I gather that more than 18 million new power connections for homes and businesses have been established through Power Africa

and that means first-time energy access for more than 88 million people in sub-Saharan Africa.

You know, on the specifics of what the energy sources are, if I could—if I could get back to you I would be grateful. Again, I know that there has been a shift over time, including in the last administration, toward renewable sources. But I also know that the all-of-the-above approach has been one that has been the standard since the inception.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, there have been issues about what loans would be made to which countries, and China is rushing in with—if the United States does not want to be active in providing opportunities for affordable energy, China is happy to become a partner with many countries that, I think, are ones that we would rather those be working with us, and sometimes the purity of the climate alarmists, as I call them, is harmful to the economic needs and the health needs of people in these areas, parts of the world.

Moving ahead, due to coronavirus, countries all around the globe are struggling to support the health and safety of their citizens. We see that—you have seen it firsthand.

There are limited resources to address incredible and growing needs that we just heard about from Senator Booker. Given the increasing needs for humanitarian assistance, global health, and food insecurity, I am concerned that precious resources are going to be redirected away from that in terms of focusing on international climate change. Will climate change be your top priority as the administrator of USAID?

Ambassador POWER. Well, as you know, climate-related events and the changing climate and the warmer climate is affecting USAID returns on investments. You know, more droughts have made an impact on our agricultural and food security programming.

So I think what we would be looking to do is within current programming, for example, on food security, to think about climate resilience.

You know, when it comes to humanitarian emergency funding, you know, since there are more natural disasters happening statistically, as a general rule, each year, thinking about how to do disaster risk reduction, so there is less damage.

And so we, thus, you know, need to provide less humanitarian emergency funding because buildings were built more securely in the first instance. So I think it is less a zero sum trade off and more about integration.

Senator BARRASSO. Mr. Chairman, my time is expired. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador, I am going to just draw your attention to a few things. I am going to submit those questions for the record. I would like a substantive response to them instead of going through it here. But I want to draw your attention to just a couple things.

We have challenges in the hemisphere, like Venezuela and Colombia, and I would like to hear your assessment on how AID can provide development assistance to countries like Colombia that are hosting refugees and doing a good neighbor and a hemispheric good neighbor.

But I think we need to help countries like that that are in the midst of doing that.

Second, I would like to draw your attention to the challenges that the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh continues to face in the light of last fall's attack by Azerbaijan.

In the short term, USAID can help address food, water, health care, and COVID assistance need, particularly for displaced Armenians. But I am concerned the U.S. has not done enough to date.

So I would like to look forward to hearing from you on that. I would like to hear from you how the administration seeks to address the interconnected security governance and climate-related crises that are feeding the humanitarian emergency in the Sahel.

And then lastly, I would like to draw your attention to the U.S.-India relationship. We introduced the prioritizing clean energy and climate cooperation with India to boost U.S.-India cooperation. I would like to hear the role you envision USAID playing in boosting U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy.

And last, last year's appropriation omnibus authorized the USAID administrator to establish the United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation, which would attract public and private capital to fund grants to address development priorities in India. I would like to hear your views on that foundation.

So we will submit those for the record. If you give us a substantive response, I would appreciate it.

I want to salute Declan and Rian, who have done such an extraordinary job of listening to all these in-depth questions and had patience through this whole period of time.

As the hearing comes to a close today, I want to thank Ambassador Power for her time and her thoughtful testimony. It is my intention, working with the ranking member, to hold the markup for Ambassador Power as soon as possible after the recess.

The record will remain open until Thursday, March 25th. I would urge you to answer any questions that are submitted for the record so that you can be in a position to be considered at a business markup.

With thanks to the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:53 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEZES

Refugees from Venezuela

Question. I support a strong U.S. response to the Venezuela humanitarian crisis given the regional implications, particularly for neighboring Colombia, which has received the vast majority of Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

- While the State Department leads on the refugee and migrant response (with the exception of food aid), what is your assessment of how USAID can provide development assistance in countries hosting large numbers of refugees?

Answer. Thank you for your support. USAID works closely with the State Department to coordinate response efforts across Latin America and the Caribbean, as these countries have received an unprecedented number of migrants and refugees from Venezuela. Since 2018, USAID has provided more than \$298 million in human-

itarian assistance supporting Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and host communities in Colombia with food assistance, direct cash assistance, and health support. USAID is also supporting the long-term development challenges in Colombia resulting from the Venezuelan migration crisis. In Colombia, I gather that USAID has dedicated more than \$77 million in development funding to provide long-term assistance for Venezuelan migrant receptor communities with the aim of expanding health, education, and justice services. Colombia recently granted ten years of legal status to all Venezuelan refugees who have fled to the country, making it possible for Venezuelans to live and work openly. This is an important step for Colombia to harness the economic potential of the many Venezuelans it hosts and, if confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on how USAID can support this effort.

Central America Regional Security Initiative

Question. The Trump administration sought to include funding for reintegration services for migrants returning to Central America as part of all of its programming for the region. As a result, existing programmatic initiatives such as the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) were significantly distorted to address reintegration initiatives for deportees from the United States—something never previously conceived to be a part of the CARSI framework.

- As USAID Administrator, will you work to ensure that well-established initiatives are used for their intended goals, and that security initiatives such as CARSI are never utilized for deportee reintegration services?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed as USAID Administrator, I will work to ensure that well-established initiatives, including CARSI, are used for their intended goals.

Internal Displacement in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras

Question. Humanitarian organizations report that internal displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean has increased over the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the region has seen an uptick in gang and criminal violence, especially in El Salvador and Honduras. Women, children, and LGBTQI+ individuals are at heightened risk of violence, intimidation, and forced displacement.

- Given recent commitments by governments in the region to address forced displacement, including the early 2020 passage of an IDP-focused law in El Salvador, what more can USAID do on the humanitarian and development fronts to respond to internal displacement in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras?

Answer. I agree this is a crucial issue. With growing needs from COVID-19, food insecurity, and the continued impact of recent hurricanes, USAID is looking to further expand humanitarian assistance in the region, for example increasing support for child protection. Following the hurricanes, USAID has been instrumental in providing emergency assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) ensuring they have safe shelter, food, clean water, health and protection services, in addition to helping them recover their livelihoods. The Agency utilizes several sets of data to understand internal displacement flows and dynamics and inform assistance, such as its InfoSegura regional project on security information management, implemented with the United Nations Development Program, and the International Organization for Migration's displacement and shelter mapping. This data collection and analysis informs evidence-based policies on human mobility in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. To increase protection for IDPs, USAID's Regional Human Rights Project supports strengthening early warning systems that track IDP dynamics, preventing and alerting their potential human rights violations, including referral programs for possible victims. Such efforts with the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman, are now being expanded at the regional level through joint work with the human rights ombudsman from Honduras and El Salvador. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID remains focused on internal displacement data to inform programming in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

Gender-Based Violence

Question. Will you ensure that USAID targets gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, women at risk of GBV, and LGBTQI+ individuals for humanitarian programming in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed as USAID Administrator, I will ensure that USAID continues to support gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, women at risk of GBV, and LGBTQI+ individuals for humanitarian programming in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. I understand that in the Northern Triangle, USAID supports civil society and independent watchdog institutions to deter human rights abuses, respond to human rights violations, and support vulnerable populations. This includes

forcibly displaced persons, women, children, and youth affected by violence and insecurity, indigenous and Afro-descendent communities, and LGBTQI+ individuals.

Nagorno-Karabakh

Question. The Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh continues to face serious challenges in light of last fall's attack by Azerbaijan. In the short term, USAID can help address food, water, healthcare, and COVID assistance needs, particularly for displaced Armenians.

- If confirmed, what will be your plan of action for providing needed assistance to ethnic Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh, including those displaced to Armenia, in both the short and long term?

Answer. This has been a horrific chapter in the lives of the civilians impacted by the recent conflict. President Biden has made clear his intention to look at enhancing humanitarian assistance in the region due to the displacement caused by the conflict. I believe USAID has an important role to play in supporting peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts, and supporting citizen-responsive governance and durable economic growth. If confirmed, I will continue to pursue all appropriate avenues for helping the people who are suffering in the aftermath of this war. Since September 2020, USAID has provided more than \$4.5 million in total assistance to effectively respond to the complex humanitarian crisis resulting from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and associated COVID-19 resurgence. USAID provided food, shelter, emergency health assistance, and social services to communities displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia.

Question. What do you view as the biggest challenge to providing assistance at this time, and how will you address that challenge?

Answer. Both the Armenian government and humanitarian actors estimate that 35,000-45,000 spontaneous arrivals will permanently remain in Armenia, which is a major challenge moving forward. While the displacement situation is dynamic and continues to evolve, USAID continues to work closely with the Department of State to assess urgent post-conflict humanitarian needs and possible future U.S. Government engagement on an ongoing basis.

The Sahel

Question. The Sahel region of West Africa is facing a significant humanitarian crisis due to armed conflict, poor governance, and the impacts of climate change. Last year, the efforts of U.N. and humanitarian agencies in the region were severely underfunded.

- How will you, if confirmed, plan to address the interconnected security, governance, and climate-related crises that are feeding the humanitarian emergency in the Sahel?

Answer. I am concerned about rising violent extremism, growing humanitarian needs, and increasing governance challenges in the Sahel. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID continues to align with regional, national, and local efforts to expand economic growth, improve human capital, counter violent extremism, strengthen governance, and build resilience to climate risks. Gains in these areas will help communities be less vulnerable to shocks and violent extremism. Complementing these efforts, USAID carries out and coordinates resilience programs with a longer term aim to reduce chronic vulnerability that underlie the crisis and the need for recurrent humanitarian assistance. These investments aim to lift people out of poverty and improve on successful interventions to facilitate increased resilience to climate change and self-reliance in the Sahel. In addition, the administration will take advantage of the authorities provided in the Global Fragility Act to move this work forward. If confirmed, I hope to build on USAID programs already in place to counter violent extremism in the Sahel. I will also continue to work with my counterparts to find effective programming to address and combat violent extremism throughout the African continent.

Support for Cuban Civil Society

Question. For more than two decades, USAID has co-led U.S. government initiatives to promote democracy in civil society, and to provide support for courageous human rights defenders, as well as civil society leaders and journalists who work independently of the Cuban regime.

- As USAID Administrator, what steps will you take to continue this important work and ensure U.S. support for human rights defenders, independent civil society leaders, and independent journalists in Cuba?

Answer. Cuba is one of the most repressive countries in the world. The country is ruled by a dictatorship that flagrantly abuses human rights, controls information among its populace, inhibits meaningful civil society activity—including free press—and criminalizes political dissent. The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I gather USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners and persecuted activists. USAID-supported NGOs continue to defend the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs. If confirmed, I will ensure these critical programs continue. Also, as one of my first acts as U.S. Ambassador to the UN, I raised the case of Oswaldo Payú directly with the Cuban Foreign Minister, pressing him to allow an independent investigation of the circumstances in which Payú had been killed, and I continued to advocate publicly in support of Payú's family. During my time at the UN, I repeatedly called out Cuba for its abhorrent treatment of Cubans like José Daniel Ferrer, José Antonio Torres, Julio Ferrer, and Antonio Rodiles. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out against Cuba's persecution of its citizens and human rights violations.

Haiti

Question. Haiti's humanitarian situation is rapidly deteriorating, with the U.N. reporting extremely high levels of food insecurity, a 377 percent increase in gender-based violence over the past year, and lack of access to education.

- What more can USAID do to support protection-related needs, such as child protection and prevention, and respond to gender-based violence?

Answer. COVID-19 has had devastating direct and indirect impacts on women and children in Haiti. Supporting key initiatives that protect and empower vulnerable people is a priority for USAID. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to build on USAID investments in Haiti that support protection-related needs. For example, USAID has provided approximately \$2.3 million in fiscal year 2020 funding to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and four non-governmental organizations to provide protection services such as psychosocial support to Haitian children, families, and frontline health care workers affected by COVID-19. In addition to prioritizing protection activities, USAID also requires partners to adhere to COVID-specific gender and protection mainstreaming requirements to ensure all programming is safe and accessible to the most vulnerable. USAID has also provided \$500,000 to support activities in child-friendly spaces for vulnerable children and adolescents. USAID partners have also organized awareness campaigns that bring attention to gender-based violence services; trained journalists on how to ethically report on gender-based violence; and developed referral networks to connect survivors to safe spaces, legal aid, and other lifesaving services.

U.S.-India Cooperation

Question. I am a strong supporter of the U.S.-India relationship, and I was proud to introduce the Prioritizing Clean Energy and Climate Cooperation with India Act to boost U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy.

- What role do you envision USAID playing in boosting U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy?

Answer. The U.S.-India development relationship spans more than 70 years. India is a partner in advancing our shared objectives to support inclusive economic growth, reduced carbon emissions, open and inclusive digital ecosystems, and the global health security agenda across South and Central Asia and the Indo-Pacific. India is a priority country for our climate diplomacy strategy, both because of its current emissions trajectory, which is concerning, but also because we see India as an important partner on future clean energy research, development, and deployment. If confirmed, I envision that USAID will work with its clean energy transition as part of our shared objective of meeting the climate challenge.

U.S.-India Cooperation and Congress

Question. How can Congress and USAID work together to strengthen that cooperation?

- While India is the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases globally, the Government of India has demonstrated in recent years a commitment to reducing emissions and combating climate change, including by setting ambitious targets for power sector-led emissions reductions. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress in support of India's climate priorities through programs and

partnerships that prioritize climate change mitigation, clean energy development, sustainable landscapes, and disaster risk reduction.

United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation

Question. Last year's appropriations omnibus authorized the USAID Administrator to establish the United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation, which would attract public and private capital to fund grants to address development priorities in India. What are your views on this Foundation? If confirmed, what will be your first actions regarding the Foundation?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act, which calls for professional exchanges and the establishment of the U.S.-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation in coordination with the Government of India. The Foundation presents a unique partnership opportunity for the United States to work with the Government of India in leveraging India's domestic public and private resources to combat its most pressing development challenges. I look forward to advancing this partnership and honoring the legacies of both Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and Mahatma Gandhi. If confirmed, I will support the establishment of the Foundation which will include coordinating with the relevant Government of India ministries and stakeholders and creating a roadmap for next steps in establishing the Foundation.

Labor Rights in Bangladesh

Question. In March 2020, I released a SFRC report highlighting the growing threats to labor rights and trade unions in Bangladesh. The U.S. must respond to this threat by increasing our support for unions, not abandoning them. Under the previous Administration, USAID moved away from using its Bangladesh labor rights appropriation to support the development of unions, even though unions have been clear that they want, and can use, such support.

- If confirmed, will you commit to directly and robustly supporting the development of trade unions in Bangladesh, including with the funding from the annual appropriation for labor rights in Bangladesh?

Answer. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. Labor rights are actively threatened and diminished in Bangladesh, as was made clear in your 2020 Report commemorating the seventh anniversary of the Tazreen Fashions and Rana Plaza tragedies. I understand that USAID has a robust labor program in Bangladesh, and if confirmed, I commit to continuing this important work. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to help ensure the findings of your report are central not just to USAID's labor programming in Bangladesh, but also the Agency's entire global labor program.

Tigray

Question. The ongoing conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region has triggered a large-scale displacement crisis, regional instability, and a humanitarian emergency with constrained outside access.

- Under what conditions should the U.S. restore full foreign assistance funding to Ethiopia? Should the U.S. increase assistance for critical development programs that address the drivers of the conflict and strengthen political reforms?

Answer. The loss of life and mass displacement resulting from the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region is profoundly disturbing. The violence against civilians must end, and unimpeded humanitarian access to the region must be granted without further delay. Ultimately, what is required is a constructive political dialogue between the parties and accountability for the atrocities committed by all sides. Ethiopia's successful transition to a more democratic, inclusive, and prosperous society is critical to U.S. interests. I understand that the Administration is reviewing our diplomatic, security, and other assistance to the region. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging in this conversation and commit to keeping you informed.

Question. Do you believe that, under current circumstances, Ethiopia can hold credible elections in June? What steps will you take, if confirmed, to address closing political and media space, and intercommunal violence in Ethiopia?

Answer. For the June elections to constitute a step forward in Ethiopia's political development, they will need to be seen as credible by a majority of Ethiopians, result in more inclusive political representation, and lay the foundation for broader political dialogue across Ethiopia. If confirmed, I look forward to working with inter-agency partners to determine how USAID can best strengthen democratic processes in Ethiopia, especially at a time of such grave crisis.

COVID-19

Question. Diseases do not recognize borders, so challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic necessitate a global response that the U.S. must help lead.

- How will USAID ensure its COVID-19 aid response is conflict sensitive and takes a peacebuilding and trauma-informed approach to reduce the risks of further violence and advance effective recovery?

Answer. Around two-thirds of the countries where USAID works are beset by or at risk of violent conflict, and COVID-19 is putting further stress on fragile systems in these nations. Dozens of countries have curtailed free expression, assembly, and media; more than 70 countries postponed elections; and a number have experienced civil unrest. Disinformation is rampant. Loss of jobs and lack of adequate education and basic services create contexts ripe for conflict. I understand that USAID applies principles of conflict-sensitivity throughout all programs, including its COVID-19 response. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to support conflict-sensitive approaches across all USAID programming.

Question. What steps will you take to address secondary impacts on health, education, poverty, and human rights in countries where USAID has programs and activities?

Answer. No matter where in the world we live, we all share the goal of ending this terrible pandemic, restoring normalcy in our daily lives, and beginning to rebuild from the devastation caused by COVID-19. We will not be safe here at home from COVID-19 and its variants unless the rest of the world makes significant progress on getting the pandemic under control. If confirmed, I will prioritize preventing COVID-19 transmission through public health and vaccine interventions; alleviating worsening humanitarian crises and food insecurity; and addressing the long term second order impacts on the global economy, democracy and human rights, education, and livelihoods. USAID will work with partner country governments, civil society organizations, and other partners to address the second order impacts through a conflict-sensitive, rights-based approach to health, education, poverty reduction, and governance.

Question. Will you revise the USAID-State COVID-19 strategy to ensure a peacebuilding and conflict prevention perspective is integrated?

Answer. As directed by President Biden's first National Security Memorandum, USAID is working with interagency counterparts to develop a whole-of-government response plan for combating the global pandemic. That document will provide a framework for State and USAID's forthcoming work on COVID-19 and will prioritize addressing second-order effects of the pandemic. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's programs incorporate and address the evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including issues related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

Question. In what ways can USAID respond to governments using COVID-19 to justify closing civic space, curbing fundamental freedoms, committing human rights abuses and expanding authoritarianism?

Answer. COVID-19 is not just a public health crisis but also a crisis for democratic governance, fundamental freedoms, and civic space. According to Freedom House, the condition of democracy and human rights worsened in 80 countries during the pandemic, with a range of countries using the crisis to tighten their grip on power, crackdown on political targets, and restrict the rights of vulnerable populations. The Administration will restore democracy and human rights to the center of U.S. foreign policy, strengthening the protection of human rights worldwide and re-establishing government-wide attention to atrocity prevention and the protection of civilians in war. USAID will ensure that programming to address COVID-19 is implemented in a conflict-sensitive, rights-based approach. If confirmed, my seat at the NSC will allow me to ensure that these issues are engaged at the highest levels of decision-making within the USG.

Environmental and Social Safeguards

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure adequate environmental and social safeguards are in place for all of USAID's programming?

- How will you support USAID's development of this mechanism to ensure that it effectively addresses impacts that could undermine U.S. foreign policy objectives?

Answer. USAID has guiding regulations for examining the environmental impact of all projects, as well as a commitment to protect and advance vulnerable populations; to seek to do no harm; and to promote human rights. I understand USAID

is designing an Agency-wide accountability mechanism that will further enable beneficiaries and the project affected community to express environmental, social and economic concerns and grievances. If confirmed, I commit that the project design and implementation for all USAID programs, projects, and activities will include strong safeguarding for beneficiaries, especially the project affected community, including Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable populations.

USAID Resources

Question. Many USAID officials have argued they need greater flexibility in managing appropriated funds in order to adjust to rapidly changing global circumstances and achieve the greatest impact, while respecting Congressional priorities and maintaining high levels of accountability.

- How would you approach the question of increasing flexibility for USAID?
- Are there resource management tools you need immediately as you address the challenges presented by the pandemic, and adjustments needed in the near term as we move to post-Covid-19 requirements?

Answer. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss ways to improve USAID's ability to align its resources with its strategic objectives and priorities, including increasing our ability to adapt and pivot to emergent needs and opportunities as they arise, while of course making sure to provide Congress with complete and useful information on the use of appropriated resources in a timely manner.

Accountability

Question. Accountability of resources and programs through transparency, monitoring, evaluation, and learning is an important aid reform pillar that strengthens the ultimate impact of programs, and ensures sustainability of investments.

- Is it your intention to prioritize accountability across the agency, especially the role of monitoring, evaluation, and learning to improve programs and strengthen their impact?

Answer. Yes, it is my intention to prioritize accountability across the Agency, and especially the role of monitoring, evaluation, and learning. It is important for USAID to act in the interest of the American people. Measuring and analyzing results and learning and adapting when programs fall short are essential aspects of day-to-day management of USAID's operations. USAID is recognized as a leader among federal agencies in using evidence from monitoring and evaluation for accountability and for learning. Of course, there is always room for improvement and innovation. If confirmed, I look forward to pushing USAID even further on finding innovative ways to quickly gather information to adapt programs and achieve results.

Question. What is your vision for ensuring important aid effectiveness tools will receive priority under your leadership?

Answer. The key principles of development cooperation effectiveness include transparency, accountability, a focus on results, and inclusive partnerships. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to ensure that USAID deepens its commitments to these principles in all aspects of its programs. I will also ensure that USAID remains a leader in the international aid community in championing these principles and promoting learning and exchange among donor and partner countries. For example, if confirmed, I will ensure that USAID will continue to support international accountability through USAID's leadership on remote monitoring and real-time evaluations, among other newer mechanisms. These innovative approaches have allowed USAID to maintain oversight of programs following the onset of the pandemic despite constraints placed on travel.

American Recovery Plan Funding

Question. The American Recovery Plan provides \$41 million for COVID-related operational expenses at USAID; \$905 million for global health response activities; and an estimated \$900 million for international economic stabilization efforts. The United States has both a national security and economic interest in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic's potentially crippling and destabilizing effects on regional and local foreign economies.

- With regards to the economic stabilization allocation: where do you see the economic risks created by the pandemic as being most acute?

Answer. The pandemic has had devastating impacts on households in the U.S. and around the world, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, especially in humanitarian settings. The reverberating socioeconomic impacts of this

global crisis are, and will continue to be, widespread and have already led to major backsliding in development and governance. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID remains committed to addressing urgent humanitarian needs, providing immediate economic relief by forging sustainable pathways out of poverty, and working with partner-country governments, civil society, and other actors to stabilize economies.

Question. Will you commit to fulsome engagement with this committee on the Agency's use of these funds?

Answer. Yes, I commit to fulsome engagement with this committee on the Agency's use of the American Rescue Plan funds.

Question. The GAO recently published a report finding that the previous administration gave USAID plenty of marching orders, but consistently neglected to involve USAID in strategy development and decision-making around USAID's CARES Act allocation.

- Will you commit to asserting USAID's appropriate role in COVID decision-making processes, and in budgeting the Agency's American Recovery Plan funds?

Answer. Yes, I commit to asserting USAID's appropriate role in COVID decision-making processes, and in budgeting the Agency's American Recovery Plan funds.

USAID Vaccine Allotment

Question. It was widely reported that the previous administration failed to acquire an allotment of the COVID vaccine for USAID employees from Health and Human Services.

- Will you commit to prioritizing the health and safety of USAID personnel, and use the Recovery Plan's operational resources to ensure a healthy and safe work environment at USAID?

Answer. The safety of USAID's workforce is my highest priority. I commit to prioritizing the health and safety of USAID personnel and to using the American Rescue Plan's (ARP) operational resources to secure a healthy and safe work environment at USAID. The Agency has recently partnered with the Department of State to vaccinate its overseas and domestic personnel with critical in-person continuity of mission functions. The Department of State is covering USAID personnel overseas while, domestically, USAID received a direct vaccine allocation from HHS. The Agency will continue to make every effort to keep USAID staff safe in its domestic facilities. The Agency will use ARP funds to augment its staff to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to improve the Agency's operational readiness.

USAID's Global Labor Program

Question. I need your commitment to restore and expand USAID's Global Labor Program. It is the agency's only multi-country program to empower marginalized workers to advocate for their rights and livelihood. Workers around the world are struggling amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, with women workers suffering disproportionately.

- Do you believe USAID currently has the staff capacity and expertise to develop the worker rights programs and approaches that marginalized workers so desperately need right now?

Answer. Empowering workers is relevant both globally and in the United States, and I appreciate your longstanding leadership on this critical issue. Work is central to people's daily lives, and labor issues and the ways in which workers express their rights affect many of USAID's development objectives. We already know, for example, that women are over-represented in a number of the industries (like retail and hospitality) most impacted by the pandemic around the world. USAID's Global Labor Program (GLP) was created to increase the capacity of worker organizations, and I look forward to working with our partners to ensure our strategy adequately promotes labor rights and access to justice in a fair and equitable manner. If confirmed, I will ensure that the high capacity and expertise of USAID staff to address these issues remains an Agency priority.

Climate

Question. President Biden is hosting a Climate Leaders' Summit on April 22, 2021. How will USAID participate in this summit? Do you anticipate building global support and financing for climate adaptation at the Summit?

Answer. I understand that USAID is actively participating in preparations for the Summit, and that the Agency welcomes the opportunity provided by the event to highlight their work with developing countries on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. A key theme of the Summit will be mobilizing public and pri-

vate sector finance to drive the net-zero transition and to help vulnerable countries cope with climate impacts. USAID has extensive experience improving policies, strengthening institutions, and mobilizing finance for climate adaptation and mitigation that also advances countries' development priorities. If confirmed, I will continue to elevate these issues within the interagency and with our developing country partners, and look forward to engaging in the Summit.

Question. Climate adaptation is currently vastly underfunded, and USAID's work in this area needs improvement in terms of execution, transparency and reporting.

- What are your initial ideas for how USAID can improve its support for the needs of those communities hardest hit by climate change to adapt in place?

Answer. I agree with your concern that adaptation programs are vastly underfunded. USAID works with vulnerable countries to implement their adaptation priorities and is committed to further mainstreaming climate considerations into its work to intensify efforts to increase climate security and resilience. USAID helps partners access and use climate and weather data and tools, and develop strategies to build resilience to climate risks, whether from sudden events such as floods and storms or from slower-moving events such as droughts and sea-level rise. If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring that our efforts on climate are informed by on-the-ground knowledge and in consultation with stakeholders.

Question. Many developing countries have made greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments to the Paris Agreement that are contingent upon support and assistance from multilateral finance institutions and/or bilateral assistance from developing countries.

- Is it important for U.S. support and assistance to developing countries to be consistent with host country climate change mitigation commitments?

Answer. Yes, and with the U.S. having rejoined the Paris Agreement, USAID will play an important role in working with developing countries to set and achieve more ambitious targets under their Nationally Determined Contributions to the Agreement. Developing countries produce about two-thirds of annual global greenhouse gas emissions and are integral partners in limiting climate change. USAID will provide assistance to partner countries to achieve their climate mitigation commitments and low-emissions economic development goals through concrete actions like transitioning to renewable energy and improving conservation and management of carbon-rich forests and landscapes.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. Across Sub-Saharan Africa, democratic gains are under threat as long-serving rulers manipulate constitutional and electoral processes to remain in power while stifling dissent and limiting opposition parties and candidates' activities. In 2020 alone, several African ruling parties and incumbent leaders deployed authoritarian tactics that manipulated democratic processes and constitutional frameworks, including in Cameroon, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Meanwhile, across multiple administrations, including the Obama administration in which you previously served, U.S. democracy and governance programs are chronically underfunded and notoriously slow to respond to emerging opportunities.

- If confirmed, how will you prioritize reinforcing democratic institutions and norms in Africa through USAID programs while balancing competing priorities in the areas of economic growth, stabilization, global health, humanitarian assistance, and human rights?

Answer. In sub-Saharan Africa, Freedom House reports that 21 nations experienced democratic declines and only seven showed positive trends in 2020—the largest gap in 15 years. If confirmed, I will seek to increase, in scale and effectiveness, USAID's investments in democracy and governance throughout the region, including through support for anti-corruption efforts and justice reforms. In many backsliding countries, concerns about corruption and accountability are central to citizens' concerns about government performance. If confirmed, I will also work to make sure that USAID is doing much more to integrate efforts to address corruption and improve democratic accountability into economic growth, stabilization, global health, humanitarian assistance, and human rights programming. By embedding strong participation, inclusion, transparency, accountability, and oversight measures in health, education, and economic programming, USAID can better safeguard its in-

vestments in sustained and resilient recovery efforts from the pandemic, and lay a foundation for shoring up democratic institutions in the long term. This is an immensely challenging area, especially given China's growing support for various governments' undemocratic tactics and its provision of rights-infringing technologies in many of these countries. Given the critical importance of reversing democratic backsliding and supporting democratic reformers, I look forward to consulting closely on the path ahead.

Question. In the last two years, Sudan and Ethiopia have embarked upon unexpected democratic transitions. While the United States was, and continues to be, eager to support these transitions, rapidly mobilizing the necessary resources (enabling policies, funding, and staff) has been a challenge. If confirmed, how would you prepare USAID to respond to rapid democratic changes and seize unexpected opportunities?

Answer. USAID's democracy, human rights, and governance efforts are intended to promote democracy and civil society participation as well as prevent and respond to closing democratic spaces. These efforts include both rapid response mechanisms through our Office of Transition Initiatives programs as well as long-term investments designed to demonstrate solidarity with pro-democratic forces, protect nascent advances, and prevent backsliding. USAID can play an important role during unexpected opportunities by helping civil society adapt to changing circumstances and providing assistance to strengthen existing checks and balances. To further support transitions and rapidly mobilize in the context of unexpected opportunities or crises, USAID seeks to promote flexibility within activity design, award language, and implementation. This can ensure that programming, implementers, and local actors are able to best respond to windows of opportunity and/or democratic backsliding. As the current crisis in Ethiopia demonstrates, democratic progress and overall stability are fragile, and if confirmed I will be focused on ensuring that USAID programming is appropriate for, and reflective of, actual circumstances on the ground. As a long-time Sudan watcher, I am grateful to Congress for stepping up in support of Sudan's nascent democratic transition and eager to assess current programming and what more might be done to help deepen the reform process.

Question. There are long-standing concerns about the fungibility of U.S. foreign assistance for African countries ruled by authoritarian regimes (e.g., Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, etc.), particularly for health and food security programs, which account for the overwhelming majority of U.S. assistance on the continent. While this aid advances U.S. humanitarian interests, it can also offset essential budget lines, displace national investment, and enable authoritarian regimes to prioritize military spending, pilfer state resources, and support corrupt patronage networks.

- Do you think it is time for the United States to undertake a comprehensive re-evaluation of the policies, forms, and methods of delivering U.S. foreign assistance in Africa?

Answer. The tendencies that you describe are certainly ones I have observed in Africa and other regions. USAID works in very complex environments and I gather that the Agency's investments in Africa, particularly in health and food security, are structured to be sensitive to local contexts, in order to save lives and improve livelihoods for those most in need. When providing assistance in the region, USAID works with both U.N. organizations and international and local non-governmental organizations to ensure that support and services go to those most in need. USAID also utilizes a variety of tools to monitor the delivery of assistance to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. If confirmed, I look forward to delving into these issues more deeply and consulting with you further to ensure that USAID's assistance does not inadvertently benefit authoritarian governments.

Question. How will USAID effectively deliver aid such that it reaches the intended beneficiaries without enabling the preservation of repressive regimes?

Answer. This is a very important issue. USAID adheres to strict guidelines for monitoring assistance provided in restrictive environments and, depending on the extent of the restrictions, has developed remote methods for program monitoring, including contracting with third party monitors who are able to access regions where USAID staff are not able to travel. One of the cornerstones of U.S. soft power is our willingness to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance wherever it is most needed. In response to famine or natural disasters in authoritarian countries, USAID works with non-governmental partners to ensure that aid reaches those most in need without providing material support to unfriendly or authoritarian regimes. When it comes to longer-term development programs in those countries,

USAID works with civil society and other non-governmental organizations to support development and democracy and governance programs. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you further to ensure that USAID's assistance does not enable the preservation of repressive regimes.

Question. Africa is experiencing a massive demographic shift. Over the next two decades, demographers project that Africa will account for nearly half of global population growth and, by mid-century, will be home to a quarter of the world's population. Sixty percent of Africa's population is currently under 25, with an overall median age of 20, and expected to continue to get younger. USAID will remain at the forefront of United States efforts to work with young Africans.

- Programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and the initiative's Mandela Washington Fellowship are important, but what can USAID do to expand its reach, more effectively engage Africa's massive youth population, and build long-term partnerships with the next generation of decision-makers, business partners, and allies?

Answer. This emphasis on youth is key. Continent-wide initiatives such as the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), Prosper Africa, Power Africa, as well as mission-based programs, contribute to USAID's global reputation as a leader in youth programming. For example, through YALI, USAID has equipped more than 20,000 young leaders from 49 sub-Saharan African countries with the skills to catalyze economic, political and social change in their home countries based on American values of transparency, civic engagement, and accountability. I gather that USAID missions also integrate youth across all key sectors and support strategic partnerships with other donors and private sector partners, a practice I will ensure continues if confirmed. If confirmed, I look forward to further consultations with you on ways to expand USAID's engagement with young people on the continent, helping support the next generation of political leaders, engaged citizens, and business owners.

Question. Launched by the Trump administration, Prosper Africa is a U.S. Government initiative supported by 17 agencies and departments, including USAID, to increase two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa. In 2019, Africa accounted for just 1.4 percent of U.S. global trade and received 0.7 percent of U.S. foreign direct investment. Such shares have declined relative to their historical highs a decade or so ago. One area of Prosper Africa that requires greater emphasis, and where USAID can play a critical role, is in improving the enabling environment for economic growth. Strengthening the rule of law, combating corruption, and promoting inclusive economic growth and human rights under a rules-based system would create better conditions for U.S. investment while also counterbalancing efforts by the Chinese Communist Party to undermine free-market competition in African markets to their advantage.

- How can the U.S. Government, and USAID in particular, most effectively incentivize reforms that will improve the enabling environment for investment and trade in Africa? Does the existing Prosper Africa provide an effective framework, or does it need to be modified? If so, how?

Answer. Improving the enabling environment for private sector investment is essential, and I agree with you that USAID staff and programs can play an important role in engaging local actors to take steps to improve the regulatory and investment climate. USAID has developed innovative new programs in support of Prosper Africa, including a new continent-wide program to be launched this year to boost trade, increase investment, and support business-friendly policy reforms. If confirmed, I look forward to working with other Departments and Agencies to advance this important goal, including through any necessary adjustments to Prosper Africa. I will support efforts that build the capacity of African businesses and catalyze U.S. private sector investment in Africa's growth, and engaging young entrepreneurs, especially women, as partners. Programs that strengthen the rule of law, protect individual rights, and tackle corruption are vital for creating the conditions for economic growth and for attracting U.S. investment and trade in Africa.

Question. How should U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives factor into the U.S. global strategy to counter China, particularly in Africa?

Answer. Competition with China is one of the defining challenges of the 21st century for the United States, and engaging with our African partners to pursue shared strategic interests in advancing security, protecting global health, fighting climate change, strengthening democracy, and spurring equitable economic growth must be a cornerstone of our global strategy to counter China. In this regard, U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives have a critical role to play in meeting this chal-

allenge head-on. In Africa, the United States is providing a meaningful alternative to China's state-led approach by advancing a model of sustainable economic growth based on transparency, responsible lending practices, strong environmental standards, and investment in relationships with local communities. Through Prosper Africa, the United States aims to mobilize billions of dollars of U.S. private sector capital and to ensure that American companies can compete on an even playing field by sharing timely information on new opportunities, providing comprehensive packages of financing and other assistance, and supporting trade and investment policies that promote transparency and competition. We must also strengthen American soft power by effectively communicating this support, engaging with youth, and promoting entrepreneurship and American business practices. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting further with you and to working with other Departments and Agencies as well as the business community to help ensure that the U.S. is pursuing trade and investment initiatives strategically and from a position of strength.

Belarus

Question. Since the August 9, 2020, presidential election, Belarusians have peacefully protested in unprecedented numbers to contest the official results, which fraudulently awarded Alexander Lukashenka another term. The Government has responded to these peaceful protests with violence, initiating a campaign of disappearances, arrests, torture, and violence against the protestors and journalists.

- Since the protests began, the United States, though USAID and the State Department, has increased its support for civil society in Belarus. Do you believe that the U.S. response to events in Belarus has been adequate? What more could, or should, the United States and its European allies do to assist those Belarusians working for democracy, free media, and a free society?

Answer. I have used my platform as a private citizen to be an outspoken supporter of the courageous Belarusians who have been peacefully protesting for over seven months. If confirmed, I will build on the U.S. Government's support for their democratic aspirations. President Biden strongly condemned the Lukashenka regime for its violent repression of the protesters and called for a peaceful transfer of power, the release of all political prisoners, and new elections. As the administration consults with allies and partners to determine appropriate next steps to support the Belarusian people and their right to choose their own leaders via free and fair elections, if confirmed, I look forward to working with my interagency counterparts—guided by the Belarus Democracy Act of 2020—in developing a whole of U.S. Government approach to end this egregious assault on Belarusian citizens and initiate a constructive dialogue with those calling for change. As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I made it a priority to call attention to the work of activists, dissidents, and reformers around the world, and to mobilize multilateral pressure on their behalf. In addition to demonstrating solidarity and raising international awareness, support from government officials can sometimes provide those on the front-lines in places like Belarus with a greater degree of protection from potential retribution. As such, if confirmed, I will continue to find ways to lift up the voices of those Belarusians working for democracy while encouraging my counterparts around the world to do the same.

Georgia

Question. Since its independence, Georgia has made generally good progress in instilling democracy and implementing market-based economic reforms, and has been a strong U.S. partner with ambitions to join the EU and NATO. USAID has been a major funder of reform and development programs in Georgia. However, over the past few years, the country has suffered democratic backsliding and oligarchic capture of the judiciary, media, and the ruling political party.

- Do you believe that the political and governance situation in Georgia has reached the point at which we should reevaluate our relationship with the country, including by conditioning certain aid to Georgia? What levers can the United States, through USAID, use to push Georgians, including and especially the ruling party Georgian Dream, to reform Georgia's judiciary and complete its electoral reforms?

Answer. I agree that for Georgia to unlock further progress in its economic and democratic development, the people of Georgia must have confidence that their elected leaders are committed to a citizen-centered democracy based on the rule of law. USAID's work with Georgia's political parties, local nonpartisan monitoring groups, and the Central Electoral Commission support this goal. USAID's current programs are also actively working to strengthen Georgia's justice system and electoral process. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to assess the

shape and scope of these programs in light of the democratic downturn, so as to ensure that they are targeted appropriately, considering as well whether resources should be channeled in different ways.

Ukraine

Question. Ukraine continues to fight two wars: first with the Kremlin and its various attempts to undermine Ukraine's freedom and independence; and second with its own demons, particularly the entrenched corruption that has so often undermined Ukraine's democratic transition and Euro-Atlantic ambitions.

- Should the United States continue to condition certain types of assistance on continued economic and anti-corruption reforms? Should existing conditions for aid be expanded? What further incentives does the United States, along with our European partners, have to encourage Ukraine to complete its land reform, decentralization, privatization of State-owned-enterprises, and creation of an independent and responsive judiciary?

Answer. When I travelled to Ukraine in 2015 as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I spoke out against the very issue you identify: deep, systemic corruption that permeated virtually every facet of Ukrainian life. I continue to share your concerns about the daunting obstacle that corruption poses for the Ukrainian people. Troubling recent rulings by Ukraine's own Constitutional Court that weaken important anti-corruption institutions, such as the National Anti-Corruption Bureau and the High Anti Corruption Court, demonstrate clearly how much work remains to be done. At the same time, some inroads have been made. When the protests against President Yanukovich began in November 2013, Ukraine ranked 144th out of 175 countries on Transparency International's corruption index. Today, it ranks 117. While there is obviously significant additional work yet to be done, these small but important advances show how critical USAID and USG assistance is to anti-corruption efforts, from work aimed at strengthening oversight and accountability mechanisms to partnerships with civil society organizations. The Biden administration has been clear about its intent to support Ukraine's self-chosen European path, including by pushing for more progress on fighting corruption and implementing reforms that will strengthen Ukraine's institutions. USAID implements numerous anti-corruption programs in Ukraine that directly address land reform, judicial reform, decentralization, and privatization. Combating corruption is a central tenet and cross-cutting pillar of USAID's development strategy in Ukraine, and if confirmed, I will seek to ensure that measurable progress continues to be achieved on this pressing concern.

Central Asia

Question. The five post-Soviet Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, or C5, have often been an afterthought in U.S. foreign policy. However, the region sits between Russia and China and has often proven eager for U.S. involvement and activity in those countries. USAID has recently expanded its presence in the region in response.

- Over the past few years, the coordination between the United States and EU on development programs in Central Asia has markedly strengthened and both partners have published Central Asia engagement strategies. Will you commit to continuing to coordinate USAID's Central Asia engagement with the EU and to ensuring that Central Asia remains a priority for engagement by USAID?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that Central Asia remains a priority for USAID. The Biden administration fully supports the C5+1 initiative and seeks to help this region be more independent and resilient. We will continue our close coordination with the EU on development programs. A crucial strategic interest for the United States is the stability of the region, which borders China, Russia and Afghanistan and is increasingly marked by conflict and authoritarianism. USAID has cultivated relationships in Central Asia, establishing two new Missions in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in June 2020. If confirmed, I will build upon this momentum in collaboration with Congress and the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships, which has established technical expert working groups focused on coordinating trade, energy, water and environmental efforts in Central Asia.

Question. The Indo-Pacific is a critical region for U.S. security and economic growth. It represents nearly half of the global population and is home to some of the most dynamic economies in the world, but is also home to security challenges that threaten to undermine U.S. national security interests, regional peace, and global stability. The Trump administration articulated a strategy to advance a "free

and open Indo-Pacific,” and has expanded partnerships with regional countries and implemented multiple initiatives in the region to support this goal. USAID played a significant role in this strategy.

- Do you agree with the core tenants of a vision for the “free and open Indo-Pacific” strategy advanced over the last several years? If so, what should USAID’s role be in this strategy? If not, why not?

Answer. Yes, I agree. The Biden administration has made it clear that a Free and Open Indo-Pacific will be a foreign policy and national security priority, consistent with the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID continues to fulfill its important role supporting democracy, human rights, inclusive economic growth, open and inclusive digital ecosystems, and the global health security agenda in the Indo-Pacific. Additionally, I believe that USAID should continue its vital leadership in efforts to support countries’ COVID–19 responses and their natural resource management.

Question. If confirmed, what are the key principles, initiatives, and other elements of the Trump administration’s Indo-Pacific strategy do you believe should be retained and continued? How would you build on these initiatives? What other policies, initiatives, and priorities would you pursue to advance U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region? What specific policy and funding priorities would USAID require to advance a successful Indo-Pacific strategy?

Answer. The Biden administration will continue to advance the principles of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize strengthening democratic systems, fostering economic growth, and improving the management of natural resources as part of USAID’s approach to the Indo-Pacific region. I look forward to building upon USAID’s successful investments in democratic governance, transparency and anti-corruption measures, the digital economy, infrastructure, and energy across the Indo-Pacific. At the same time, USAID will need to review and adapt these initiatives to address the significant impacts of COVID–19 on the region, take advantage of new opportunities to increase climate security and resilience, and build upon renewed multilateral partnerships. I appreciate the continued support and advice of Congress on how to best advance U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to identify policy and funding priorities.

Question. Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands are both critically important regions to the United States.

- If confirmed, what will be your top priorities with respect to USAID’s work in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue deepening USAID’s collaboration with like-minded partners in this critical region. I also support USAID’s increased activities and staff presence in the Pacific Islands region to support our allies and counter Chinese influence.

We are committed to working with our Pacific Islands partners to help them address the effects of climate change, which poses an existential threat, and to mitigate the impacts of frequent natural disasters.

If confirmed, I am committed to advancing shared objectives toward strengthening democratic systems, fostering economic growth, and improving the management of natural resources throughout the region.

Question. In the area of human capital development, the Trump administration emphasized preserving and expanding assistance programs that provide concrete technical assistance and capacity-building for emerging and established leaders in partner governments, the private sector, and civil society. How would you work to bolster human capital development programs in the Indo-Pacific through USAID, if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to support USAID’s investments in technical assistance and capacity-building to bolster emerging leaders from partner governments, the private sector and civil society in the Indo-Pacific region. USAID will continue to prioritize investments to increase workforce participation opportunities (with a focus on women and girls), develop skills for a digital economy among youth, and improve education outcomes by modernizing curricula in partnership with host country governments, educational institutions, and the private sector. I will also direct USAID to work toward rebuilding human capacity in critical government institutions and health systems badly strained by their efforts to combat the COVID–19 pandemic.

China

Question. My view is that China’s “One Belt, One Road” initiative (OBOR) is a means by which to increase the economic influence of state-owned Chinese firms in global markets, engender undue PRC political leverage with governments around the world, create a China-centric technology regime, secure dependence on supply chains centered on Chinese companies, export corrupt business practices, and provide greater access to strategic nodes for the People’s Liberation Army.

- Do you agree that these are the goals of OBOR? If confirmed, what actions would you take and what partnerships would you seek to execute concrete USAID projects to compete with or reduce the influence of OBOR?

Answer. China’s approach to “development” through One Belt, One Road (OBOR) raises deep concerns for me and many people in USAID’s partner countries. Projects connected to OBOR have come under significant scrutiny on issues such as corruption; unsustainable debt; environmental degradation; construction contracts and jobs being awarded to Chinese firms over local enterprises; lack of transparency and local consultations; and even worries about the potential erosion of sovereignty due to the unfavorable terms attached to certain projects. I share your conviction that USAID needs a far-reaching strategy that addresses the challenges of OBOR, and I believe that frustrations around the world with China’s development practices provide an opportunity for the U.S.

The administration’s approach is to provide an alternative vision to Beijing’s—a vision that promotes democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership in our global development work. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America’s comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC’s, by engaging directly with our partner countries and ensuring that good governance, sustainability, and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. USAID can strengthen local capacity to ensure that development investments are both beneficial and sustainable. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners, including at the DFC and in the private sector, to better leverage our collective resources and influence, and I will be an advocate for the highest human rights, governance, environmental, social, and labor standards in order to promote investments that are sustainable for the long term.

Question. In a speech you gave on China last year at Harvard, you highlighted that the Chinese Government and Chinese companies are supplying other countries with digital technologies, such as facial recognition and artificial intelligence, and those countries are in many cases using those technologies for repressive purposes. China is also supplying next generation telecommunications equipment and other technologies through its Digital Silk Road.

- In your view, what is the role of USAID in helping developing countries harness emerging technologies to advance economic prosperity and freedom?

Answer. Emerging technologies can play a significant role in advancing economic prosperity and freedom, and USAID has an important role to play in this area. I understand that USAID launched its Digital Strategy in 2020 to ensure the Agency effectively integrates digital technologies across all its work and strengthens the openness, inclusiveness, and security of country-level digital ecosystems in partner countries. The Agency is supporting the digital security of civil society and media organizations, including cyber risk assessments and providing AI tools to track disinformation flows. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to further strengthen USAID’s work in this area.

Question. What tools does USAID possess in this regard, and how would you prioritize putting them to good use, if confirmed?

Answer. I understand that the Agency is supporting e-commerce and the opportunities that digital platforms offer traditional businesses in developing countries to access new markets and to better integrate into the global trading system. Additionally, it is working with CBP to apply emerging technologies such as non-invasive inspection systems to assure the safety, security and traceability of goods moving across borders. If confirmed, I will work with the interagency to promote the adoption of policies and technologies in our partner countries to advance U.S. national security objectives while creating innovation and investment opportunities for American businesses.

Question. Last year, I published a report on how the United States and Europe can cooperate on shared challenges related to China, which included chapters encouraging U.S.-Europe cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and Africa.

- What areas relevant to USAID’s mission are ripe for greater U.S.-Europe cooperation in these two regions? What are some factors that could enable such

cooperation, and what are the limiting factors? What is your perspective on the analysis and recommendations in the report I published?

Answer. I agree that U.S.-EU cooperation is critical to combatting China's influence in the Indo-Pacific and Africa and appreciated your report's analysis and recommendations to focus on areas such as democracy promotion, private sector growth, and the environment. USAID engages frequently with EU officials to seek to align policy and to increase burden sharing on key issues such as the COVID-19 global response, democracy and governance, economic growth, energy, food security and resilience, global health, and humanitarian assistance. The EU's new seven-year budget articulates commitments to climate change, human development, gender and digital development. These areas, along with immediate and second-order impacts of the pandemic, are opportunities for greater cooperation. In Brussels, Secretary Blinken and EU leaders recently discussed challenges that China presents to the rules-based order and agreed to resume U.S.-EU dialogue to coordinate approaches.

Burma

Question. Please describe your planned approach to USAID engagement in Burma, in light of the military coup and the Biden administration's executive order that will retain support for humanitarian assistance and civil society.

- What areas of engagement and assistance will you prioritize, if confirmed?

Answer. I condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the military coup in Burma and the junta's violent actions against peaceful demonstrators. I support USAID's immediate action following the coup to redirect \$42.4 million away from work that would have benefited the Government of Burma and toward strengthening civil society and other non-governmental actors.

If confirmed, I will work with the administration and Congress to continue to put pressure on the military regime, call out human rights abuses and ensure that USAID programs do not benefit the military regime and are focused on improving health outcomes and combating COVID-19, strengthening the ability of civil society to guard democratic space, fostering food security, supporting independent media, and promoting peace and reconciliation in Burma's conflict-affected regions. I would also prioritize continuing to provide critical humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya and other vulnerable populations including in Chin, Kachin, Rakhine, and Shan states.

Supporting Middle East and North Africa Policy

Question. When looking broadly across the Middle East and North Africa, one is struck with the enormity of the humanitarian need.

- However, given the relative size of budgets, how do you recommend the United States best align USAID programs with larger diplomatic objectives that further U.S. national interests?

Answer. I agree with your assessment regarding the importance of aligning USAID's humanitarian and development work with diplomatic objectives, and ensuring that all advance U.S. national interests. USAID and State align department, regional, and country-specific strategies and in MENA, in particular, there is close collaboration to ensure mutually-reinforcing efforts. USAID's primary role in particularly volatile countries in the region is to meet the basic needs of suffering populations and support stabilization efforts that are necessary preconditions for enduring diplomatic solutions. If confirmed, I commit to working further with the Congress and closely with Secretary Blinken to ensure that USAID programs are as closely aligned as possible with our national interests across the region.

Question. Looking across the region, what do you see as the most significant drivers of instability that run counter to U.S. interests and are most deserving of USAID's limited resources?

Answer. Destabilizing factors—including Iranian aggression, malign Russian influence, terrorist networks, and authoritarian resurgence and repressive governments that don't provide outlets for dissent and pervasive corruption—run counter to U.S. interests in the region. Nations in the Middle East and North Africa are also struggling to address the impacts of the COVID pandemic. Fragile economies, medical facilities, schools and essential services that were already struggling to meet the needs of their local populations as well as people displaced by active conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Iraq, have been further strained by the pandemic. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that USAID's resources are addressing life-saving and stabilization needs and addressing the root causes of conflicts, such as polarization,

state fragility, corruption, social and economic exclusion, gender inequality, and anemic economic growth.

Iran

Question. In 2008, you advocated for a new Iran policy based on “broadening cultural contacts with the Iranian people, bypassing the regime through Voice of America and the Internet.”

- What role should USAID play in efforts to foster greater U.S. engagement with the Iranian people? What form do you envision this would take?

Answer. The Iranian Government denies Iranians their human rights, including through severe restrictions on the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression. Iranian authorities have responded to a series of popular and widespread demonstrations with brutal repression, the arrests of thousands of protesters, and the use of lethal force. According to Amnesty International, over 300 people were killed during the most recent spate of major protests in late 2019.

If confirmed, I will work within the administration to draw attention to the Iranian regime’s human rights abuses and express support for the people of Iran. I look forward to engaging with Congress to further consider this issue.

Question. Can you commit to limiting any USAID program to Iran to the development and humanitarian assistance space?

Answer. Yes.

Iraq

Question. In the past, you’ve suggested the United States should seek to mitigate, rather than eliminate, Iranian influence in Iraq. In 2008, you wrote “no aspect of the Iraq quagmire can be resolved without Iranian involvement.”

- Do you still believe this to be the case? If so, how do you plan to balance concerns about Iranian’s malign influence, including its support for militia groups, with U.S. efforts to support a stable, sovereign Iraq? What is your vision for the role U.S. assistance can play in supporting an independent Iraqi governance model?

Answer. Iran’s support for terrorism and human rights abuses threatens U.S. forces and civilians as well as U.S. partners in Iraq and the region, and can hinder our ability to implement foreign assistance programming. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID’s programs in Iraq further the goal of a stable and sovereign Iraq, while also considering the safety and security of our staff balanced with proper oversight of USAID programs. I also will review USAID’s approach to ensure that development and humanitarian assistance needs of all Iraqis continue to be met in a principled and equitable manner as USAID continues to support the recovery and rehabilitation needs of victims of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), including Yezidis.

Lebanon

Question. Despite the August 4, 2020, explosions in Beirut and unrest that followed, Lebanon’s political elites have continued to cling to power. Past policy has been to withhold broader financial assistance absent reforms targeting corruption and transparency.

- How does USAID plan to advance crucial economic reforms in Lebanon, and what conditions would Lebanon need to meet in order to qualify for U.S. financial support?

Answer. I share your concerns—the Lebanese people deserve accountability and a government that prioritizes their safety and prosperity. However, the crisis in Lebanon goes beyond the explosion at the port and other immediate concerns like COVID-19. Lebanon’s crisis is the result of decades of bad governance, economic mismanagement, and corruption. Unfortunately, the Lebanese people have paid the highest price for their leaders’ negligence. USAID’s development programs are intended to provide support directly to the Lebanese people with essential services and humanitarian assistance and to counter potential Hezbollah influence in local communities. USAID can support the Lebanese people through programs that help businesses retain staff and assets to build a foundation for economic recovery; empower municipal governments and civil society to deliver vital services; and keep students in school. These programs lessen the likelihood that Lebanese citizens will suffer the worst effects of the economic crisis.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the committee to ensure USAID's assistance is appropriately targeted to support the people in Lebanon in the face of these challenges.

Question. Can you commit to working to ensure the \$11 billion in CEDRE, IMF, and World Bank funding earmarked for Lebanon remains contingent on key reforms, including reforms to the electricity/natural gas sector, increased transparency, and an audit of the central bank?

Answer. If confirmed, I will expect my team to continue to engage with the Department of State, the World Bank, other IFIs, and our allies in support of meaningful economic and political reforms necessary to halt further deterioration and put the country back on a path toward prosperity. Lebanon's elected officials must respond to the demands of their people and move forward on reform.

Yemen

Question. The previous administration suspended U.S. humanitarian aid to Houthi controlled areas of Yemen in response to restrictions imposed on the delivery of aid.

- What is your position on the suspension? Can you commit to maintaining broad restrictions on aid flows into Houthi controlled areas until all 12 conditions are meaningfully and comprehensively addressed?

Answer. I understand that on March 11, 2021, USAID determined that international non-governmental organization (INGO) partners could resume humanitarian operations in northern Yemen, subject to special award conditions. I further understand that USAID is carefully monitoring this issue, which includes participation in the Yemen Technical Monitoring Group (TMG), consisting of USAID, U.N. agencies, NGOs, and like-minded donors, which meets monthly to review Houthi progress towards the Benchmarks for Monitoring and Decision-Making on Donor Criteria/Conditions for Funding. If confirmed, I will support these efforts and monitor conditions on the ground closely.

Question. How do you plan on working with U.S. funded NGOs to ensure the appropriate carve-outs are in place to ensure certain, life-saving operations can continue despite the broader suspension in U.S. assistance?

- I understand that on March 11, 2021, USAID determined that international non-governmental organization (INGO) partners could resume humanitarian operations in northern Yemen, subject to special award conditions. During the suspension of humanitarian operations, USAID continued to support NGOs implementing some critical life-saving assistance, such as treatment for severe malnutrition. USAID partners remained operational in southern Yemen.

Syria

Question. More than 11 million people are in need of humanitarian aid in Syria. Traditionally, the U.S. and its partners have relied heavily on four humanitarian access points along the Syrian border to transport this life-saving assistance. Of these four cross-border access points, only the Bab al-Hawa crossing remains open, thanks to Russian and Chinese vetoes at the U.N. Security Council.

- How do you plan on continuing to maintain U.S. aid flows regardless of any future action taken at the U.N. Security Council related to Bab al-Hawa?

Answer. In 2014, I helped lead the U.N. Security Council in authorizing the delivery of vital assistance across the four humanitarian access points that you reference. I share your anger at Russia and China's vetoes at the U.N. Security Council to reduce the number of available access points, which even in 2014 were not even close to sufficient in terms of meeting the actual needs of Syrian civilians. Overall, since the beginning of the conflict, Russia and China have together vetoed 16 Security Council resolutions related to Syria. In the face of these unconscionable decisions, the U.S. must continue to aid vulnerable Syrians within Syria and across the region. The United States remains the largest humanitarian donor in Syria, providing over \$12.2 billion in humanitarian assistance since the conflict began. Despite enormous challenges, humanitarian organizations are reaching vulnerable Syrians in both government- and opposition-controlled areas, utilizing both cross-border and cross-line access. That said, there are no viable alternatives that would yield the same range and magnitude of capability, or efficiency, as the U.N.'s cross-border assistance to northern Syria. I understand that the Biden administration strongly supports renewal of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing and reinstatement of other crossings into northern Syria in the U.N. Security Council, and if confirmed, I will work tirelessly in support of these efforts.

Question. What are your thoughts on cross-border humanitarian assistance in the absence of a U.N. resolution?

Answer. There is no solution at the scale needed if U.N. cross-border access is not reauthorized. Humanitarian assistance must be able to be as flexible as possible, including both cross-line and cross-border. The humanitarian needs inside Syria will only increase in the face of closing borders and shrinking operating spaces. As referenced earlier, I understand that the Biden administration strongly supports renewal of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing and reinstatement of other crossings into northern Syria in the U.N. Security Council, and if confirmed, I commit to tirelessly supporting these efforts. I also believe that we must partner with a range of countries, NGOs, and influential figures to raise awareness about the catastrophic impact on Syrian civilians that will result from losing the final crossing, highlighting the reputational costs for Russia if it uses its veto to completely cut off civilians in northern Syria from this life-saving assistance. Additionally, if confirmed, I will support the Department of State's efforts to advance a negotiated political settlement so that Syria can move beyond its continual cycle of violence and suffering towards reconciliation and rebuilding.

Central America

Question. In September 2019, then-(Acting) Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Michael Kozak described to this committee how, despite years of programmatic successes, the U.S.-Central America Strategy had failed to muster the political will necessary for aid-recipient countries to effectively combat the endemic corruption, economic protectionism, and rampant criminality that have generated wave after wave of illegal migration from the region.

- If confirmed, what actions would you take to build and maintain political will among the political leadership in the countries of Northern Central America to tackle the push factors of illegal migration?

Answer. The President has articulated a comprehensive \$4 billion, four-year plan that will provide financial and other forms of assistance and incentives to confront corruption, enhance security, and foster prosperity across the region. As Vice President, he also exerted consistent diplomatic pressure in support of anti-corruption efforts in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on the most effective ways to implement President Biden's plan, and increasing the diplomatic pressure on elected officials not doing enough to confront corruption and lawlessness. I understand that USAID is working in partnership with other U. S. Government Agencies to address the root causes of irregular migration from the Northern Triangle and foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. USAID focuses on combating crime and violence by reaching at-risk youth, addressing corruption and impunity, disrupting the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. With the appropriate time, sustained commitment, and appropriate partners, I believe USAID programs can help address the push factors that lead Central Americans to reluctantly leave their homes. To give just one example: in neighborhoods where USAID worked in El Salvador to implement security programs, homicides declined by an average of 45 percent from 2015 to 2017. If we want to duplicate, improve upon, and eventually scale initiatives of this kind, strengthening our partnerships with civil society leaders—including advocates for transparent and accountable government and human rights—will be important. Similarly, USAID will work with those private sector leaders committed to transparency and the rule of law.

Question. The 2014 Strategy for Engagement in Central America aimed to deter illegal migration from the region by promoting economic prosperity, security, and good governance in recipient countries. Pursuant to that strategy, Congress has placed multiple conditions on aid to these countries.

- To what extent have legislative conditions contributed to policy changes in the recipient nations? How do you plan to incentivize needed reforms if the recipient countries fail to meet conditions set by Congress, and those failures prompt restrictions on assistance?

Answer. Congress is a key partner in setting America's foreign policy agenda and with regard to the implementation of foreign assistance. I cannot state definitively how the aforementioned conditions specifically impacted decision-making in recipient countries, but based on my own experiences as a diplomat, I agree that it is important that the administration work with Congress to utilize all available congressional tools with flexibility to implement our policies and respond to changing contexts.

Question. President Biden has proposed a four-year \$4 billion strategy for Central America.

- Can you describe the types of investments and specific reforms you would seek from individual governments under this strategy to reduce illegal migration from the region, including the concrete and verifiable benchmarks by which you will measure success? How will this strategy help the governments of Central America become more self-sufficient so that U.S. foreign assistance is no longer needed to achieve these objectives?

Answer. I believe that the ultimate solution for sustainably reducing irregular migration from Central America is to work not only with governments to encourage critical reforms, but also broadly with civil society, the private sector, and international partners to catalyze structural changes that address corruption, security, and prosperity in the region. Creating economic opportunity, rebuilding the social fabric in communities that have been torn apart by violence, establishing inclusive, fair, and just rule of law, and ensuring there is the capacity to deliver citizen-responsive governance and services will position Central America's Northern Triangle countries to address the drivers of irregular migration for the long term.

Nicaragua

Question. Nicaragua is scheduled to hold general elections in November. In October 2020, the Organization of American States adopted a resolution [AG/RES.2962 (L-O/20)] calling for the restoration of democratic institutions and respect for human rights in Nicaragua through free and fair elections. The Ortega regime responded by approving three statutes with the apparent aim of quashing dissent in Nicaragua ahead of the November 2021 elections.

- If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing actions and programs designed to improve the capacity of the democratic forces in Nicaragua to be a credible challenge to Ortega ahead of the November 2021 general elections?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring USAID supports viable, democratic processes and institutions in Nicaragua. USAID is focused on the November 2021 national elections in Nicaragua and on restoring democratic processes and respect for human rights through expanding opportunities for coalition building and supporting electoral integrity and an active civil society.

Cuba

Question. According to the State Department, in 2019, the Government of Cuba maintained an estimated 50,000 medical personnel in more than 60 countries under conditions that represent forced labor. The United States, the United Nations, independent media outlets, and non-governmental organizations have all documented and called out the Cuban regime's exploitative and coercive practices toward its doctors participating in its overseas medical programs.

- Do you consider the Cuban regime's overseas medical missions to be exploitative human trafficking efforts? How can USAID Missions in countries that accept Cuban medical missions help communicate the realities of the forced labor practices employed by the Cuban regime?

Answer. Support for democracy and human rights is at the core of this administration's Cuba policy. We must be vocal in our support for the journalists, human rights defenders, and democracy activists seeking to challenge the repressiveness of Cuban authorities, who maintain an extraordinarily tight grip on all aspects of life on the island and are ruthless in seeking to stifle dissent. I understand that USAID has programs in place currently to support the human rights of Cuban workers, including medical personnel. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues at the Department of State to review the Cuban Government's practices with regard to its overseas medical programs and look forward to consulting with you on this issue.

Question. The State Department's 2019 Human Rights Report for Cuba painted a dismal picture of human rights abuses by the Cuban regime, to include accounts of disappearances; torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment; harsh prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrests and detentions; denial of fair public trial; and political prisoners and detainees. The regime also has cracked down on freedom of expression, limited internet freedom, and restricted freedoms of peaceful assembly and association.

- Will you commit to calling out human rights violations by the Cuban Government?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that support for human rights remains at the core of USAID's efforts in Cuba. Cuba is one of the most repressive countries

in the world, and is ruled by a dictatorship that flagrantly abuses human rights, seeks to prevent its populace from accessing even basic independent information, inhibits meaningful civil society activity—including free press—and criminalizes political dissent. As one of my first acts as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I raised the case of Oswaldo Payá directly with the Cuban Foreign Minister, pressing him to allow an independent investigation of the circumstances in which Payá had been killed, and I continued to advocate publicly in support of Payá's family. During my time at the U.N., I repeatedly called out Cuba for its abhorrent treatment of Cubans like José Daniel Ferrer, José Antonio Torres, Julio Ferrer, and Antonio Rodiles. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out against Cuba's persecution of its citizens and human rights violations.

Question. How will you work to support democratic activists and human rights defenders in Cuba?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue USAID's work to support democratic activists and human rights defenders in Cuba. The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I gather that USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners and persecuted activists. NGOs are poised to continue defending the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs.

Question. Do you commit to maintain a robust USAID democracy program focused on advancing respect for basic human rights in Cuba?

Answer. Yes, I am committed to supporting robust USAID democracy programming in Cuba.

Haiti

Question. Haiti is facing a complex and worsening constitutional crisis.

- What role can USAID play in promoting effective dialogue among the different political forces? If confirmed, what efforts would you make to support strengthening Haiti's technical capacity to hold elections?

Answer. The Haitian people deserve democracy and prosperity. Haiti has been without a functioning government for too long, and in the meantime, conditions continue to deteriorate. The political parties need to come together to end the misery, corruption and insecurity wreaking havoc for the Haitian people. While Haiti is facing a complex emergency that USAID assistance alone cannot resolve, USAID does have an important role to play in helping to promote democracy, human rights, and governance. With respect to the upcoming legislative elections, I understand that USAID's current activities aim to promote credible elections, increase political party competition, and expand civic participation in electoral processes to help end the ongoing political crisis of rule by decree. If confirmed, I will advocate for a strong whole-of-government and multi-donor approach for targeted democracy, human rights, and governance work to promote democratic political reform, peace and stability.

South America

Question. Over the last three decades, Colombia has emerged as a source of economic prosperity and stability in the region and a key strategic ally and partner of the United States. Yet, policy decisions made during the negotiations of the 2016 deal with the FARC terrorist organization created new challenges for Colombia and in our relations. Coca production in Colombia has steadily increased since 2013, reaching 212,000 hectares in 2019. In March 2020, the United States and Colombia announced a joint action plan to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by the end of 2023. The plan would make full use of all available tools, including rural development, interdiction, as well as manual and aerial eradication.

- Would you agree that achieving this goal by 2023 would deliver significant health and security benefits for Americans here at home? If confirmed, what tools and policies would you implement to ensure that our two nations meet this goal?

Answer. I share your concern about the flow of drugs from Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States. USAID plays an important role on this issue through its alternative development programs in Colombia, which are intended to offer licit alternatives—such as coffee, cacao, dairy, and others—to replace coca production. Alternative development is a necessary but insufficient tool to significantly reduce coca cultivation, which also requires robust involvement by the private sec-

tor, civil society, and international organizations, along with a commitment by Colombian leaders to equitable economic development in communities that have long been underserved by government programs. Colombia's historic 2016 peace accord with the FARC was an important first step in ending one of the longest-running armed conflicts in the world, which had led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions of Colombians. Implementing the various components of the accords is a complex undertaking, and a challenge that continues to this day. I gather that USAID's assistance focuses squarely on these efforts at implementation, which must move forward in order to enhance security, governance and development in former FARC-controlled and ungoverned territories where some 95 percent of coca is cultivated and cocaine is produced.

Venezuela

Question. Approximately 7.2 million people will require humanitarian assistance due to the Venezuela regional crisis in 2021, a 10 percent increase from the year before.

- How will you organize the resources of USAID to respond to the increased need of millions of Venezuelans?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize humanitarian funding for the Venezuela regional crisis. The situation within Venezuela is grave and deteriorating: a recent U.N. fact-finding mission has uncovered "widespread and systematic" abuses by the Maduro Government against the Venezuelan people, including extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and torture. Concurrently, more than five million Venezuelans are now refugees, putting immense pressure on neighboring countries. USAID has provided more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance since 2017 for Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and host communities in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, as well as more than \$104 million since 2018 to reach people inside Venezuela with life-saving humanitarian assistance, making the U.S. the largest donor to the crisis regionally. USAID also supports long-term development and integration activities in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru for Venezuelan migrants and refugees. Still, there is more that can be done, particularly in terms of stronger coordination and cooperation with like-minded countries.

If confirmed, I will ensure USAID's critical humanitarian and development assistance continues. Furthermore, despite the Maduro regime's efforts to stifle any activities that threaten its hold on power or accountability for its numerous crimes, if I am confirmed, USAID will continue to provide support for civil society organizations and democratically-minded actors working under incredibly dangerous conditions to bring about a democratic transition.

Self-Reliance

Question. Former USAID Administrator Mark Green spearheaded the agency's "Journey to Self-Reliance" initiative in an effort to provide strategic focus to U.S. foreign assistance, including by taking a data-based approach toward building partner country capacity to achieve and sustain development results. In contrast with China's development model, which creates dependence, Administrator Green argued that America should seek to foster self-reliance and responsibility among its friends.

- While distinct from diplomatic and humanitarian assistance, do you agree that the purpose of development assistance is to end the need for its existence? If so, how will you ensure that USAID and the implementing partners it supports effectively work themselves out of a job?

Answer. Yes, I agree with the principle of self-reliance and that USAID's programs should encourage self-reliance and sustainability. I also believe it is what the vast majority of beneficiaries of USAID programs want most for themselves and their communities. My vision for USAID's role includes traditional development priorities. It also applies a broader lens that recognizes U.S. foreign assistance within core U.S. national security priorities, including advancing democracy, human rights, increasing climate security and resilience, and global health in a collaborative manner with civil society partners and governments. If confirmed, I commit to advancing sound, evidence-based development and humanitarian programming that continues to improve aid effectiveness, self-reliance and sustainability.

Question. Do you intend to work with USAID to continue the "Journey to Self-Reliance" initiative, whether in name or in spirit? If not, why not?

Answer. I deeply respect and appreciate former Administrator Mark Green's leadership on this issue and intend to build on this initiative. I understand that the Journey to Self-Reliance emphasizes developing critical local capacities and sup-

porting meaningful country commitments, fit to the diverse contexts in which USAID works. I agree the concept is sound and builds on the work of the Agency to support sustainable development that has spanned multiple administrations.

Global Health Security

Question. The COVID-19 pandemic originated and accelerated in higher-income countries, where USAID does not maintain a regular presence and where intense, high-level diplomatic engagement proved critical to securing global health data, navigating supply chain disruptions, and facilitating the safe evacuation of American citizens.

- Do you agree with the framework outlined by President Biden in NSM-1, in which the Secretary of State, in coordination with the USAID Administrator, leads (1) the development of the U.S. Government-wide plan to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and (2) a diplomatic outreach plan for enhancing the United States' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on engaging partner nations?
- Do you agree that this framework outlined by President Biden could be used in other contexts to support global health efforts of the U.S. Government, to include efforts to advance the Global Health Security Agenda and enhance pandemic preparedness and response overseas?

Answer. Yes, I support the framework outlined by the President in NSM-1. I gather that there has been effective collaboration in the interagency on the Global Health Security Agenda and if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and seeking ways to enhance our impact.

Question. My bill, the *Global Health Diplomacy and Security Act*, creates a coordinator position at the State Department that is consistent with this type of framework outlined by President Biden. If confirmed, do you commit to work with me on this effort?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working with you and the committee on all efforts to advance global health security so as to ensure that, after such devastation, the world is far better prepared to confront global health threats.

COVID-19

Question. The *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021* (P.L. 117-2), included \$10 billion in international affairs funding for the COVID-19 pandemic response, to include: (1) \$3.75 billion to prevent backsliding in HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis programs, of which \$3.5 billion was directed toward the multilateral Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's COVID-19 Response Mechanism; and (2) nearly \$5 billion in bilateral funds, of which an unspecified portion would be directed toward the United Nations and other multilateral entities. This is on top of the \$4 billion that already had been appropriated to support U.S. contributions to COVAX/Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

- What are the comparative advantages of bilateral funding versus multilateral funding in the U.S. response to COVID-19 overseas? Are there benefits to bilateral funding that you, if confirmed, will advocate for and prioritize?

Answer. I believe that the U.S. Government (USG) is most effective when both bilateral and multilateral funding is available and flows to responsible and accountable partners. Multilateral funding allows the USG to leverage the financial commitments, technical expertise, and diplomatic engagement of many partners, often achieving economies of scale and burden-sharing with other donors. Bilateral funding enables USAID to align that work and those commitments to action on the ground through the expertise and coordination of USAID field teams and ongoing local assistance efforts, and address priorities that may not be effectively or efficiently covered through multilateral channels.

If confirmed, will you continue the policy of providing funding for multilateral entities, to include COVAX/Gavi and the Global Fund, in tranches, such that U.S. contributions are made available based upon need, performance, and other donor support?

I understand that USAID funding to Gavi/COVAX will be provided in tranches. This will allow USAID to ensure Gavi/COVAX has the funding it needs to scale global vaccine access, while closely monitoring COVAX's performance and also incentivizing other donors to provide additional resources. I understand that to date, USAID has obligated \$2 billion out of a total \$4 billion to Gavi/COVAX. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID, in consultation with Gavi, is carefully considering the timing of contributions to ensure COVAX is sufficiently resourced to meet critical public health needs, given evolving supply dynamics and resource constraints.

PEPFAR

Question. Lack of strategic direction, embittered competition, and poor communication between the two principal implementers of U.S. global health assistance—USAID and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—have long plagued U.S. global health programs. This is why, when authorizing the greatest commitment by any country to combat a single disease in history, Congress placed the responsibility for coordinating the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) within the Department of State. The PEPFAR program is now recognized as the most successful U.S. foreign assistance program since the Marshall Plan and has saved millions of lives, strengthened health systems and supply chains, and advanced key U.S. diplomatic, economic, and security goals.

Recognizing the success of the PEPFAR model—but also understanding that PEPFAR would eventually need to be transitioned—the Obama administration in 2009 sought to launch a 6-year, \$63 billion Global Health Initiative (GHI). Managed by the Coordinator of U.S. Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS and Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy at the Department of State, the GHI proposed to take an evidence-based approach toward strengthening health systems and enhancing global health security. Though the GHI never found its footing, the compelling need to close gaps in global health security while also mitigating the need for disease-specific initiatives justifies taking another look.

- Do you agree that the PEPFAR model, to include the coordinating role played by the Department of State and the implementing roles played by USAID and CDC, has been successful? As more and more countries approach epidemic control, do you believe this model could be adapted to advance broader global health security and diplomacy objectives, as the Obama administration envisioned under the GHI?

Answer. I agree that PEPFAR has been enormously successful, and should be considered one of the most significant and impactful public health initiatives ever undertaken. As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., many of my African colleagues spoke to me in strikingly personal terms about what PEPFAR meant to their countries, offering sincere and profound thanks to the American people for continuing to support this initiative. I am also aware that there are other highly successful U.S. Government public health initiatives, including the President’s Malaria Initiative, the West Africa and Eastern Congo Ebola responses, and USAID’s Neglected Tropical Disease program that should be reviewed for lessons learned. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the administration and Congress to review all of these successful programs, draw lessons learned and determine how to best posture the U.S. Government and USAID to advance global health security, global health diplomacy, and pandemic response objectives.

Question. The Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator was recently directed to suspend its Country Operating Plan (COP) process, which had already reached an advanced stage, in order to alleviate burdens on implementing partners during the COVID-19 outbreak. While sympathetic to the needs of implementing partners, the COP process, and the data-driven approach it has institutionalized, is vital to the effective planning and execution of PEPFAR programs. If confirmed, will you ensure USAID fully and faithfully engages in the COP process and adheres to such plans without unwarranted delays or deviations?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure that USAID fully and faithfully engages in the COP process and adheres to such plans without unwarranted delays or deviations.

Question. The World Health Organization (WHO): You had a front row seat to the ineptitude of the WHO during the 2014–2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. It was so bad, in fact, that you helped lead the effort on the U.N. Security Council to declare the outbreak “a threat to international peace and security” and to establish the U.N.’s first-ever “health-keeping” mission.

Much like the Ebola outbreak that preceded it, the WHO was either unwilling or unable to mount an effective emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China. Not only did it fail to press the Chinese Government for access and information in the critical first days of the outbreak, but the WHO provided political cover for China’s reckless response, publicly validated disinformation, and condemned travel controls designed to mitigate the global spread.

- Do you agree that the WHO is badly in need of reform? If so, what specific reforms are necessary to restore its credibility among the American people and the world?

Answer. Yes, the WHO needs reform and strengthening. While the WHO continues to play an important role in the global response to COVID-19, the pandemic exposed weaknesses in the readiness posture of both the WHO and member states to respond to a crisis on this scale. President Biden is firmly committed to reforming and strengthening the WHO, and some of his first executive actions have focused on strengthening global preparedness against future pandemic threats. The administration believes that the best way to do this is by remaining an actively engaged member of the organization and working with all member states to support, strengthen, and build accountability at the WHO. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Departments of State and Health and Human Services to ensure USAID informs and supports efforts that strengthen the World Health Organization.

Question. If confirmed, will you ensure that by joining COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the WHO-supported Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, the United States will not subsidize the distribution of non-transparently developed, reportedly substandard Chinese and Russian COVID-19 vaccines?

Answer. USAID funding to COVAX will only support procurement and delivery of vaccines that meet rigorous quality standards, are safe and efficacious, and have been approved or authorized by a stringent regulatory authority, such as the U.S. FDA or the World Health Organization. To date, vaccines developed by China and Russia have not met these standards.

Food Aid and Food Security

Question. The United States is the single most generous provider of humanitarian assistance in the world, both financial and in-kind, thus saving hundreds of millions of lives and promoting the growth of healthier, more stable societies. Yet today, an estimated 690 million people are food insecure, of which 270 million are facing starvation. As needs outpace the ability of donors to respond, it is imperative that the Department and USAID be enabled to stretch U.S. humanitarian resources farther, including by modernizing U.S. international food aid.

Historically, the flagship U.S. food aid program—Food for Peace—required that 100 percent of the food provided under the Act be purchased in the United States, of which 50 percent must be shipped on U.S. flagged vessels. According to the GAO, the shipping requirement, in particular, has added significant time and cost to emergency food aid, even while failing to fulfil its statutory purpose. Three consecutive administrations have thus proposed changes—ranging from setting aside 20 percent of the budget for local and regional procurement to eliminating Food for Peace entirely. The Global Food Security Act (as re-authorized through FY2023) and the 2018 Farm Bill did include modest reforms, but more needs to be done.

- Do you agree that the Department of Defense is capable of managing its own sealift capacity and that U.S. agricultural cargo preference requirements have outlived their statutory purpose, add unnecessary time and expense to life-saving U.S. food aid, and should no longer be applied to international food aid?
- If confirmed, will you carry forward the food aid reform efforts of your predecessors, including under the Obama administration?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to make USAID's programming to combat rising food insecurity and build the resilience of vulnerable communities as effectively and efficiently as possible. Each of the food assistance modalities—U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming—complements the others in addressing food insecurity efficiently and effectively. At this time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, USAID's ability to reach hungry people and improve the efficiency of our programs is of utmost importance.

Humanitarian Assistance

Question. How will USAID, in coordination with the new Office of Sanctions Coordination, work with the Treasury Department to ensure our sanctions programs are designed to shape behavior without exacerbating humanitarian crises around the world?

Answer. I understand that USAID coordinates regularly with the interagency to review sanctions programs, including how sanctions are impacting the COVID-19 response and humanitarian programs. If confirmed, I will support USAID's work with the Department of Treasury, the Department of State and the rest of the interagency to develop effective sanctions regimes with requisite flexibilities to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance can reach those in need.

Question. Should U.S. humanitarian assistance be branded? If not, why not? If confirmed, will you uphold President Trump's Executive Order on branding U.S. for-

eign assistance and the USAID Branding Modernization Act (P.L. 116–334), including by branding all U.S. foreign assistance administered by USAID?

Answer. I am committed to branding and agree that branding sends a strong public diplomacy message, conveying that our assistance is due to the generosity of the American people. It is also a critical element of a counter China strategy.

Current branding regulations and policy continue to apply to USAID awards and partners must continue to follow the branding requirements outlined in their assistance agreements.

Women, Peace, and Security

Question. Under President Trump’s Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) initiative signed into law in 2019, the United States is working to advance three objectives by 2023, such that: 1) women are more prepared and increasingly able to participate in efforts that promote stable and lasting peace; 2) women and girls are safer, better protected, and have equal access to government and private-assistance programs, including from the United States, international partners, and host nations; and 3) the United States and partner governments have improved institutionalization and capacity to ensure WPS efforts are sustainable and long-lasting.

- What actions will you, if confirmed, take to ensure these goals are met? Will you enhance lines of effort and agency actions?

Answer. I agree that women’s meaningful engagement leads to better, more durable outcomes for peace and security. Studies show that when women participate in peace processes the resulting agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years. More broadly speaking, one of the best predictors of a state’s peacefulness is the way women are treated within that state. USAID assistance supports the objectives in the WPS Act to bolster women’s ability to participate in peace and political processes, protect against gender-based violence, and hold accountable those that commit acts of gender-based violence. USAID’s activities also help break down barriers to women’s participation in conflict mitigation and peacebuilding. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to further implement our commitments under the WPS Act and ensure that these efforts continue to be a priority for the Agency.

Human Trafficking

Question. The COVID–19 pandemic has exacerbated cases of human trafficking and online sexual exploitation and abuse worldwide.

- What will you prioritize, if confirmed, to counter this growing problem during COVID–19 and to prevent a resurgence of these behaviors after the pandemic is over?

Answer. I share your concerns and believe that human trafficking is a grave human rights abuse. Sadly, the COVID–19 crisis has amplified a number of factors that increase the risk of human trafficking and online sexual exploitation and abuse. In particular, as out-of-school or quarantined children spend more time online, the potential for online harm of children also increases. If confirmed, I am committed to USAID’s work to counter human trafficking, which includes activities to raise awareness about the risk of online sexual exploitation and abuse, and provide children, families, and communities with the knowledge and tools they need to reduce exposure to harmful online content.

Question. How will you, if confirmed, enhance USAID’s role in the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking (PITF) and the Senior Policy Operating Group to Combat Trafficking in Persons (SPOG)?

Answer. If confirmed, I will bring USAID’s expertise to bear in the PITF and SPOG, specifically by strengthening the interagency approach to promote evidence-based prevention practices; identify, protect, and respond to victims’ needs; increase prosecutions and convictions; and build partnerships, including with the corporate sector. I will advocate for survivors and those who experienced trauma from human trafficking. A survivor-centered approach is essential to preserve the dignity, safety, and well-being of at-risk and vulnerable populations. I am committed to working within the interagency to increase collaboration with international organizations, civil society groups, and the corporate sector.

United Nations Funding

Question. USAID provides significant amounts of funding to the United Nations system, including through voluntary contributions to the World Food Program, UNICEF, the U.N. Development Program, and others.

- If confirmed, how do you plan to ensure that funding that goes through the U.N. system has proper oversight and is not lost to waste, fraud, abuse, or diversion to repressive governments, armed groups, terrorist organizations, or criminal enterprise?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration will continue to hold United Nations (UN) organizations accountable to their mission and U.N. member states. This means doing everything possible to ensure that U.N. organizations are using resources efficiently and effectively—eliminating waste, demanding zero tolerance for corruption and sexual exploitation, and strengthening whistleblower protections and transparency and accountability. Since most USAID funding to U.N. partners is project-based, the Agency also ensures that USAID's U.N. partners understand and comply with USAID requirements on monitoring and reporting. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Department of State and Mission to the U.N., to continue to advance these priorities.

DDI

Question. With the re-organization of USAID, there is a new Bureau of Development, Democracy and Innovation.

- Can you speak in detail about USAID's democracy promotion efforts?

Answer. China and Russia are using their resources, influence, and technology to support autocrats and undermine and interfere with democratic institutions. To meet this moment, the Biden-Harris administration will restore democracy and human rights to the center of U.S. foreign policy. USAID will pursue an affirmative strategy that counters new and emerging threats to democracy and advances human rights. This has been a top priority of mine throughout my career, and if confirmed, I will elevate democracy programming and seek to deepen current investments in anti-corruption programming, democracy, human rights, and governance, including by supporting civil society and promoting independent media and protection for journalists.

Question. How do these efforts complement the work being done by the Department of State's Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Bureau?

Answer. USAID works closely with the Department of State and the National Endowment for Democracy in democracy promotion efforts. Each entity has distinct comparative advantages—in the case of USAID, that includes USAID's ability to leverage relationships and know-how through its missions to tailor its work to local conditions—which gives the United States a multi-faceted and more effective approach in increasingly complex environments. I understand the USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation and the State Department's Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) engage in regular information-sharing and coordination efforts to avoid duplication and make the most strategic use of assistance funds. This coordination takes place both in Washington and at our missions overseas. If confirmed, I will work closely with my counterparts to ensure that coordination continues to take place and every effort is made to maximize the impact of our assistance.

Atrocity Prevention

Question. What role does USAID play in U.S. atrocity prevention efforts?

Answer. Since the 2011 Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities, USAID has played a leadership role in helping improve U.S. Government capabilities related to atrocity prevention. USAID addresses mass atrocities in four main ways: identifying and communicating risk factors and warning signs that could lead to mass atrocities; mitigating risks and bolstering resilience to shocks that could lead to mass atrocities; responding to escalating atrocity situations with humanitarian assistance and prevention programs; and supporting recovery from mass violence and gross violations of human rights through programs focused on promoting justice and accountability, rebuilding social cohesion, supporting political transition, and supporting the protection of human rights.

This work is incredibly important because preventing mass atrocities is a core national security interest of the United States. While serving on the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, I worked with President Obama to create the aforementioned Directive and the Atrocities Prevention Board, the first White House-led structure tasked with reacting to early warnings of atrocities.

Climate

Question. If confirmed, how will you and USAID interact with the office of Special Presidential Envoy Kerry, including with respect to implementation of U.S. foreign assistance connected to any climate arrangements or agreements negotiated by the office of Special Presidential Envoy Kerry?

Answer. If confirmed, I would commit to working closely with Special Presidential Climate Envoy Kerry, as USAID plays an essential role in working with our partner countries to translate bold climate ambition into action. Indeed, Secretary Kerry and I have a strong working relationship, forged during my time as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. while he was serving as Secretary of State. I understand that the administration's top priorities are to: immediately raise and implement partner countries' climate commitments, meet the U.S. climate finance pledge, accelerate efforts to increase the resilience of climate vulnerable countries. USAID will work with countries and regions with globally important forests and carbon-rich landscapes to reduce deforestation and improve conservation, as unsustainable land use accounts for one-quarter of global greenhouse emissions, as well as reduce emissions from land use change in critical tropical ecosystems that serve as global carbon sinks. USAID will also work with countries and regions with globally important forests and carbon-rich landscapes to reduce deforestation and improve conservation.

Infrastructure

Question. USAID plays an important role in the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network and the Transaction Advisory Fund, set up under the Trump administration.

- Please describe your specific views on these two programs. Will USAID under the Biden administration retain this initiative?

Answer. China's significant infrastructure investments around the world are often fiscally unsustainable, include corrupt practices and processes, do not comply with international environmental and labor standards, lack public oversight and transparency, and have limited community involvement. I believe that USAID, through initiatives like ITAN, should continue advising countries on how to ensure a fair and level playing field. Once a country commits to undertaking a competitive procurement process, USAID should continue using mechanisms such as the Transaction Advisory Fund to advise it on how to ensure projects are legally, financially, and technically viable and incorporate appropriate environmental and social safeguards.

Reproductive Health

Question. President Biden has rescinded the Mexico City policy (which conditioned U.S. assistance to foreign NGOs upon a commitment that they will not perform or promote abortion with funding from any source) and has said the United States will rejoin the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), notwithstanding concerns about its support for China's population control program. Abortion pro-choice advocates are also seeking to overturn the Helms amendment (prohibiting the use of U.S. foreign aid for the performance or promotion of abortion as a method of family planning) and the Siljander amendment (prohibiting use of U.S. foreign aid to lobby for or against the legalization of abortion).

- In your opinion, does the term "reproductive health" include abortion?

Answer. Abortion is not included in USAID's definition of reproductive health.

Question. Do you commit to uphold U.S. laws that prohibit funding for abortion overseas?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to uphold U.S. laws, including the Helms and Siljander amendments.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promoting human rights and democracy has been central to my work as a writer, advocate, and diplomat. In 2002, after years of extensive reporting and research, I published "A Problem From Hell": America and the Age of Genocide, which

documented inaction in the face of genocides over the course of the 20th century. The book was integrated into high school and university curriculums, and some of its lessons were embraced by student activists, faith groups, and others seeking to promote human rights. In addition, many readers have informed me that the book's central message encouraged them to take action in the face of genocide in Darfur.

While serving on the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, I worked with President Obama to develop new processes aimed at ensuring that atrocity warnings rapidly reached senior policy makers, and to make creative use of the policy toolbox when signs of potential atrocities arose—efforts that helped ensure that, in the face of mass atrocities, the American response did not come down to a choice between doing nothing or using U.S. military force. This work produced significant outcomes, such as the highly-effective deployment of U.S. military advisers to support African Governments combating the Lord's Resistance Army, proactive peacekeeping in the Ivory Coast to prevent spiraling mass atrocities following a stolen election, and relentless high-level diplomacy in support of Sudan's independence referendum, which paved the way for the birth of an independent South Sudan. Also, during my time as Senior Director, I worked with my NSC colleague Gayle Smith to spearhead the creation of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a multilateral initiative that secures governmental commitments to promote transparency, fight corruption, empower citizens, and strengthen governance. Since its founding in 2011, the OGP has grown to include 78 country members and a growing number of local members—representing more than two billion people—that work alongside thousands of civil society organizations.

As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., my top priorities included working to prevent and end conflicts, addressing the humanitarian needs of vulnerable communities, and advancing the human rights and dignity of all individuals. I spearheaded the effort to convene two successive summits that mobilized unprecedented commitments to U.N. Peacekeeping of over 50,000 new troops and police from more than 60 countries. In response to the global refugee crisis, I led efforts to convene a summit in which participating nations agreed to increase their total annual contributions to U.N. appeals and international humanitarian groups by approximately \$4.5 billion and to double the number of formal refugee resettlement slots made available to the U.N.'s refugee agency, while a range of private sector companies made \$650 million worth of pledges in support of refugees. Finally, I used intensive public and private diplomacy to secure the release of political prisoners and enhance the rights of LGBTQ individuals. Among various efforts to advocate on behalf of those unjustly imprisoned, in the #FreeThe20 campaign, I publicized the cases of 20 female political prisoners around the world—16 of whom were ultimately freed. As part of my work to advance LGBTQ rights, I helped create for the first time a mandate for an Independent Expert to monitor and report on the violence and discrimination faced by LGBTQ persons around the world, convened the first-ever U.N. Security Council meeting on threats to LGBTQ persons, and was able to push the Security Council to condemn (for the first time in its 70-year history) violence against individuals due to their sexual orientation.

Diversity and Inclusion

Question. In response to a request that I led, GAO reported in June 2020 that USAID still has much work to do in order to create and sustain a truly diverse workforce. What plans do you have for improving diversity and inclusion at USAID?

Answer. Diversity, equity, and inclusion must be a guiding principle—in our people, funding and programs, and policies. If confirmed, as I noted in my testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I will make diversity, equity, and inclusion foundational priorities for both our mission around the world and how we support our workforce. The report you requested, for example, presented data demonstrating that “promotion outcomes at USAID were generally lower for racial and ethnic minorities than for whites in early to mid career.” I will engage the staff to understand the challenges facing them, solicit advice on how we can create a workforce that is more diverse and inclusive, and treat these issues with the urgency they demand. Ensuring that USAID remains the world's leading development agency requires that diversity, equity, and inclusion be guiding principles when it comes to our people, our funding and programs, and our policies.

Question. Do you commit to regularly and transparently monitoring the Agency's progress towards its diversity goals?

Answer. Yes.

Basic Education

Question. If confirmed, how would you work to ensure that USAID's efforts to support remote learning and re-enrollment efforts in the context of COVID-19 will support marginalized learners, including girls, refugees, and children with disabilities?

Answer. COVID-19 interrupted the education of more than 1.6 billion learners. The risk of not returning to the classroom is especially high for those who experience multiple vulnerabilities based on economic status, gender, disability, refugee and displacement status. Since the beginning of the pandemic, USAID has adapted its education programming to respond to the shifting needs of students and educators in more than 50 countries. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to support partner countries to sustain investments in inclusive distance learning so that education systems are more resilient and equitable. I will also ensure that USAID continues to leverage its partnerships and global leadership to ensure continued learning opportunities, especially for the most marginalized. I will also ensure that USAID continues to leverage its partnerships and global leadership with groups like the Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, the LEGO Foundation, the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, the Partnership to End Violence, and UNICEF, among others, to ensure continued learning opportunities, especially for the most marginalized, including girls, refugees, and children with disabilities.

Question. What more can USAID be doing to help build back school systems around the world so that they are capable of serving all students, both during and after the pandemic, and are more resilient in the face of future challenges?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support efforts to continue to build more resilient and equitable education systems and societies, especially for the most marginalized and those in vulnerable situations, by building emergency preparedness and response capacity, institutionalizing remedial and accelerated education, and engaging youth and higher education institutions as leaders. USAID has opportunities to leverage its experience and expertise in accessible and safe distance learning, non-formal and accelerated education, inclusive education, youth workforce development, and private sector engagement to scale. Institutionalizing these approaches within education systems to meet the diverse needs of all children and youth while also building resilience within education systems will help minimize disruptions to learning in the event of future emergencies.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the attention of the committee (and the USAID Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff? I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

- Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any foreign country?

Answer. My spouse's and my investment portfolio includes mutual funds that may hold interests in companies with an international presence, or directly in U.S. companies that have an international presence, but none of these holdings represent conflicts of interest with the position for which I have been nominated. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and remaining vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations. I have already committed to divest investments the USAID Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO) has identified as possible conflicts of interest. Additionally, the separate U.S. literary agents that represent my spouse and me, have international offices that negotiate publication or republication of our writings in various foreign countries. The DAEO has reviewed these business arrangements and has determined that they do not represent conflicts of interest, but has advised me that we will need to monitor and report any overseas re-publications that occur during my tenure in Government.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to supporting the Interim President of Venezuela Juan Guaidó and prioritize working with implementing partners in support of President Guaidó's humanitarian efforts in Venezuela?

Answer. The United States recognizes Juan Guaidó as the interim president and the democratically-elected National Assembly as the only legitimate democratic institutions in Venezuela. If confirmed, I commit to working with the interim government and to support the people of Venezuela.

Question. Will you commit to working with non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to restore democracy and a pathway to free, fair, and transparent elections in Venezuela and to keep my office informed of that progress?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to restore democracy and a pathway to democratic elections in Venezuela. I look forward to consulting with you about how we might strengthen those efforts, given the devastating costs of Maduro's repression.

Question. Do you commit to supporting the Interim President of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó, and the National Assembly?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support to support Interim President Juan Guaidó, the democratically elected National Assembly, and the people of Venezuela to determine their own future through free and fair elections.

Question. If confirmed, what would your priorities be for Central America?

Answer. If confirmed, my priorities in Central America will include expeditiously strengthening programs that seek to improve conditions in the region and tackle the major drivers of migration. While the specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across countries or even communities, they are generally tied to insecurity, lack of economic opportunity, and the effects of poor governance and corruption, and I will work with other U.S. Government agencies to build the political will of partner nations to address these drivers. COVID-19 has exacerbated these conditions, as have major natural disasters (including hurricanes) recently hitting the region.

As you know, in recent years, USAID programs have been designed to combat crime and violence by reaching at-risk youth; addressed corruption and impunity; disrupted the activities of transnational criminal organizations; civil society; and provided vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. As USAID restarts and ramps up those programs and as USAID missions in the region seek new or expanded partnerships, the agency will draw on evidence of what works in order to help foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. If confirmed, I will continue USAID's current approach of tailoring and adapting programs to the unique needs of each country and community. I will also continue the Agency's practice of using migration data to focus resources geographically in response to specific, local drivers of migration. USAID will work with a wide range of stakeholders from civil society and the private sector to increase the impact of our efforts. And I look forward to further consultations with Congress on how to further improve the effectiveness of these programs.

Question. Regional coordination is essential to the effectiveness of the U.S. Strategy for Central America. Will you commit to working closely with our partners in this region?

Answer. Yes, I will commit to working closely with our partners in the region. I understand that USAID works closely with multiple stakeholders in the region both in the public and private sectors as well as with civil society organizations and international non-governmental organizations.

Question. How will USAID, under your leadership, work to address the drivers of violence, corruption, and migration in the Northern Triangle?

Answer. The specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across communities or even countries. Accordingly, USAID tailors and adapts programs that address the root causes of irregular migration to the unique needs of each country and community; the extensive use of data is critical and is an integral part of these efforts. By tracking migration trends, the Agency is able to concentrate resources geographically in response to local drivers of migration.

I understand that USAID is addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of irregular migration to the United States from Central America in partner-

ship with other U.S. Government agencies, including the development of a forthcoming strategy on addressing the root causes of irregular migration as mandated in Executive Order 14010. Critical to the success of our efforts is generating political will on the part of governments in the region to address the reasons people choose to migrate. USAID combats crime and violence through its programming by reaching at-risk youth, addressing corruption and impunity, disrupting the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. Through this work, USAID seeks to foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. If confirmed, I will work to build and expand on this foundation. I look forward to deepening consultations with Congress on how to further improve the effectiveness of these programs.

Question. Last year, in the FY 21 SFOPS conference report, \$25 million was allocated for programs in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to implement the national sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention strategies in fiscal year 2021. The bill required, within 120 days, and in consultation with the USAID Administrator, a report on the implementation of the national SGBV prevention strategies in such countries. Also included in the FY21 appropriations bill, were recommendations for the State Department to create programs in the Northern Triangle for programming and enhancing the capacity of police, judicial systems, and child protection systems to identify, investigate and prosecute cases of sexual violence. If confirmed, will you commit to briefing my staff on how USAID intends to implement this funding?

Answer. I share your desire to prevent sexual and gender-based violence in Central America, which has some of the highest rates of GBV in the world. If confirmed, I commit to briefing you on how USAID intends to implement the funding appropriated in FY21 and how the Agency currently works across the region supporting initiatives to reduce impunity for gender-based violence (GBV) cases. GBV was prioritized by President Biden in Executive Order 14010 which mandated a new strategy on the root causes of irregular migration from the Northern Triangle.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to supporting Cuba democracy programs as well as civil society and human rights defenders in Cuba?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, support for human rights will remain at the core of USAID's efforts in Cuba. Cuba is one of the most repressive countries in the world, and is ruled by a dictatorship that flagrantly abuses human rights, seeks to prevent its people from accessing even basic independent information, inhibits meaningful civil society activity—including free press—and criminalizes political dissent. As one of my first acts as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I raised the case of Oswaldo Payu directly with the Cuban Foreign Minister pressing him to allow an independent investigation of the circumstances in which Payu had been killed, and I continued to advocate publicly in support of Payu's family. During my time at the U.N., I repeatedly called out Cuba for its abhorrent treatment of civil society and human rights defenders like José Daniel Ferrer, José Antonio Torres, Julio Ferrer, and Antonio Rodiles. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out against Cuba's persecution of its citizens and human rights violations.

The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I understand USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners and persecuted activists. NGOs are poised to continue defending the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs.

Question. Colombia has been directly impacted by the man-made crisis created by Nicolás Maduro and his brutal regime in Venezuela. Currently, Colombia hosts about 1.7 million Venezuelans, according to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees. How should we support Colombia in responding to the impacts it faces due to the Venezuelan crisis?

Answer. USAID is addressing immediate humanitarian needs and supporting the long-term development challenges in Colombia resulting from the Venezuelan crisis. I understand that the USAID Mission in Colombia is providing more than \$77 million for Venezuelans in health, education, governance, citizen security, human rights, and economic integration. Since 2018, USAID has also provided more than \$298 million in humanitarian assistance supporting Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and host communities with food assistance, direct cash assistance, and health support. Colombia recently granted ten years of legal status to all Venezuelan refugees who have fled to the country, making it possible for Venezuelans to live and work

openly. This is an important step for Colombia to harness the economic potential of the many Venezuelans it hosts and, if confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on how USAID can support this effort.

Question. In 2017, Colombia signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NATO and became the first NATO partner country in Latin America. Today, Colombia and the U.S. are a success story that have forged a bond through shared commitments in support of stability, the defense of human rights, respect for democracy and the rule of law, and the protection of citizens' safety and security throughout the Western Hemisphere. Do you view our partnership with Colombia as one of the strongest in the Western Hemisphere?

Answer. The United States and Colombia enjoy a decades' long strategic partnership that is among the strongest in the region. If confirmed, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and democratic freedoms will be at the center of our relationship with Colombia.

Question. Do you believe that Colombia's shared goals with the United States should be an example for younger democracies in the Western Hemisphere? How do we take that model and focus our efforts on other nations in the region?

Answer. I agree that the U.S.-Colombia partnership has proven successful, and USAID's work with Colombia over the past decades on peace and stability has achieved a number of successes. The peace accords signed with the FARC in 2016 present a tremendous opportunity for Colombia to end a conflict that had raged for more than 50 years, and to end a continuous cycle of violence by transforming the long-neglected parts of the country prioritized in the accords.

If confirmed, I will work with Colombia, and with Congress, to collectively find ways to make USAID's assistance even more supportive of Colombia's own efforts toward an enduring and inclusive peace. While taking into account the context of each country's unique set of circumstances, I agree that Colombia's advances provide important lessons that may be applicable elsewhere within the region. At the same time, as with other countries in the region, I will also speak up in support of human rights: since 2016, more than 400 Colombian human rights defenders have been killed, underscoring the importance of USAID's continued assistance in helping the country achieve the commitments and overall transformation envisioned by the peace accords.

Question. USAID foreign assistance programs must continue to strengthen democratic institutions and bolster transparency and accountability to underpin democratic resilience, but they also need to provide targeted support to local stakeholders to understand CCP influence and counter those malign efforts. Such funding should be integrated into existing democracy programs at the country level, with support from international actors who understand these issues, to incorporate them into existing programs at the country level. If confirmed, how will you ensure USAID supports these efforts?

Answer. U.S. competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC) is a defining challenge of the 21st century. The administration's approach is to provide an alternative vision to Beijing's—a vision that promotes democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership in our global development work. USAID will draw on America's comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC's, by ensuring that good governance, sustainability and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. USAID will strengthen local capacity to ensure that development investments are both beneficial and sustainable. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to better leverage our collective resources and influence, and I will be an advocate for human rights, governance, environmental, social, and labor standards in order to promote investments that are sustainable for the long term.

Question. How can USAID support administering some of the Countering Chinese Influence Fund?

Answer. I would like to thank you and your colleagues for the Countering Chinese Influence Fund (CCIF) resources that were made available in the FY21 appropriations act. I understand that USAID is working with the Department of State on programming these funds, as well as others, to counter China's foreign policy strategy and influence in critical countries and regions. The approach is to offer alternatives to China's predatory development model and instead improve inclusive, democratic governance; advance rules-based economic competition and fair trade practices; strengthen our security partnerships to counter transnational crime and terrorism; combat digital authoritarianism and malicious cyber activities; and promote energy

security and independence. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on this and to further assessing how USAID can best support these efforts.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to pushing for greater humanitarian assistance and access for the Syrian people, while making sure that such aid does not fall into the hands of a corrupt and bloodthirsty Assad regime?

Answer. Yes. USAID remains committed to ensuring that all assistance reaches those in need and does not benefit the Assad regime. Across Syria, USAID takes all possible steps to minimize the risk of diversion, whether to the Assad regime or to terrorist groups, by working through experienced and trusted U.N. partners, other international organizations, and non-governmental partners in Syria, including through the use of third-party monitoring. USAID has zero tolerance for fraud, waste, or abuse of American taxpayer resources and requires partners to have robust safeguards and risk mitigation systems in place to ensure that humanitarian assistance is reaching only those for whom it is intended.

Question. Do you agree that long-term stabilization in Syria will not be achieved as long as Bashar al-Assad remains in power?

Answer. Bashar al-Assad has perpetrated the most chilling, barbaric crimes imaginable against the Syrian people for the past decade. Despite political isolation, economic pressure, and weak control over much of Syrian territory, Assad clings to power with no indication that he is willing to bring an end to the war and the suffering of the Syrian people, and indeed with Assad's increasingly ruinous economic mismanagement exacerbating the horrific costs of conflict, repression, and mass atrocities for the Syrian people. Members of Congress spoke out clearly on this issue when they voted for the Caesar Civilian Protection Act in the last Congress imposing military, political, and accountability benchmarks for the Assad regime before it can receive sanctions relief. Countless brave Syrians have risked their lives to preserve evidence of Assad's war crimes, and Assad and his collaborators must be held accountable for their atrocities.

Question. As an expert on genocide, do you agree that the Chinese Communist Party is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs and other its Muslim minorities in Xinjiang?

Answer. Yes. I agree with President Biden and experts who have studied the facts that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang.

I welcome Congress's bipartisan action on this issue, including the passage of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act that holds perpetrators accountable for human rights violations and abuses against Uyghurs and other minorities in China. If confirmed, I will use my platform to draw attention to the horrors in Xinjiang and ensure that USAID actively engages with you, the committee and the interagency to determine any further steps that can be taken.

Question. You have written extensively about the failure of past administrations to prevent and respond to genocide. You are now in a unique position to put your aspirations into action. We have seen what has happened to Iraq's Yazidi and Christian community at the hands of ISIS. We know about the atrocities and likely genocide committed against the Rohingya by Burmese military forces. Now, we are reading weekly reports about the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities by the Chinese Communist Party.

- Can you assure this committee that you will not only support, but also strengthen, USAID's commitment to victims of religious persecution?

Answer. Yes. As you note, I have a longstanding commitment to human rights, and a profound awareness of the risks of atrocities, especially for religious minorities. As Ambassador to the U.N., I used my platform to elevate the voices of religious minorities. I called for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for refusing to denounce her Christian faith, and for Sudan to repeal the laws that put her in jail in the first place. I was the first person to bring a young Yazidi woman named Nadia Murad to the U.N. Security Council, after her family had been almost completely wiped out by ISIS and she had been forced into sexual slavery. USAID has a history of helping the world's most vulnerable people, and it will continue to play a critical role in supporting communities persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring with you, the Agency's regional bureaus and Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships office, and diverse faith communities, to mobilize resources and, as appropriate, to tailor our programs to support individuals being subjected to religious persecution.

Question. If so, how do you plan to use your position to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to stand up for victims of religious persecution, and I will review USAID's approach to ensure that our programs are most effectively supporting them, making adjustments as appropriate.

Question. The past several months have been historic for Israel's relationships with regional Arab neighbors. The UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan joined Egypt and Jordan in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel—paving the path to peace through recognition and engagement rather than isolation and boycotts of Israel. What role do you see for USAID in supporting these new relationships? Do you see opportunities for increased trilateral cooperation in the region?

Answer. USAID has the opportunity to support these relationships through identifying opportunities for increased trilateral and multilateral cooperation, such as by leveraging the inherently collaborative power of science, technology and innovation in order to address common challenges. USAID supports cooperation between Israel and countries in the Middle East region through the Middle East Regional Cooperation (MERC) program, which has long supported programs between partners throughout the region. If confirmed, I look forward to building upon such efforts to further peace and normalization across the Middle East.

Question. During your tenure as U.N. Ambassador, the United States abstained at the United Nations Security Council on a one-sided resolution that sought to impose solutions to final status issues on the parties. Seventy-nine senators subsequently backed a resolution objecting to the abstention. In hindsight, do you believe that vote advanced American interests or moved the peace process forward?

Answer. During my time as Ambassador to the U.N., I worked tirelessly to combat bias against Israel and end Israel's unfair isolation at the United Nations. The U.S. Mission to the United Nations helped secure several notable firsts for Israel under my leadership, including bringing about recognition of Yom Kippur as a U.N. holiday; convening an unprecedented session on antisemitism in the U.N. General Assembly; spearheading Israel's full and equal participation across numerous U.N. bodies; and lobbying to ensure Israel's historic selection as chair of a powerful U.N. committee (the Sixth Committee, the main U.N. forum for addressing questions of international law).

This context is important in addressing the Obama administration's vote on UNSCR 2334. President Obama instructed me to abstain on UNSCR 2334 in order to try to preserve prospects for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He saw the vote as consistent with bipartisan policy, dating back almost 50 years at the time, of supporting two states and opposing unilateral measures by either side that could impede prospects for two states. The resolution included a condemnation of all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terrorism and incitement, and it expressed concern about Israeli settlement activities, reaffirming the long-standing U.S. position on settlements.

During my explanation of the U.S. vote, I denounced persistent anti-Israel bias at the U.N. and described our numerous efforts (including those mentioned above) "to fight for Israel's right simply to be treated just like any other country." I also explained President Obama's posture on the resolution: "It is because this forum too often continues to be biased against Israel; because there are important issues that are not sufficiently addressed in this resolution; and because the United States does not agree with every word in this text, that the United States did not vote in favor of the resolution. But it is because this resolution reflects the facts on the ground—and is consistent with U.S. policy across Republican and Democratic administration throughout the history of the State of Israel—that the United States did not veto it."

(The full explanation of vote, from December 23, 2016, is available here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20161231232014/https://usun.state.gov/remarks/7621>)

If confirmed, I will work to advance President Biden's strong support for the U.S.-Israel relationship, as well as to enhance prospects for two states by working to responsibly restart humanitarian and development assistance in the West Bank and Gaza in accordance with all legal requirements, including the Taylor Force Act.

Question. The Helms amendment states, "No foreign assistance funds may be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions." If confirmed, can you guarantee there will be a strict adherence to the Helms amendment in the administration of U.S. foreign assistance?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID fully abides by all U.S. laws, including the Helms Amendment.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. After enduring a decade of conflict, humanitarian needs in Syria are projected to only increase. President Biden pledged to recommit the U.S. to lead on humanitarian issues including to pursue political solutions, protect vulnerable Syrians and facilitate the work of NGOs.

- What specific actions will USAID take under your direction to reassert U.S. humanitarian leadership and efforts in Syria? What tools are available to the U.S. to ensure continued humanitarian access into and within Syria?

Answer. As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I worked tirelessly to hold the Assad regime and its backers accountable for their war crimes, and to provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people. Among these efforts, in 2014 I helped lead the U.N. Security Council to authorize U.N. agencies to deliver relief into Syria without explicit approval from the Syrian Government, allowing millions of people to receive assistance that the Assad regime had been blocking. Today, USAID's humanitarian assistance is reaching an estimated 4.8 million people per month inside Syria and 1.1 million Syrian refugees in the region. The United States is the largest donor of humanitarian assistance inside Syria and across the region, contributing close to \$13 billion since the start of the conflict. If confirmed, I will continue to be a forceful advocate for delivering critically-needed humanitarian aid to the Syrian people, and ensure that the United States continues to play a leading role in protecting vulnerable civilians by advocating for unhindered humanitarian access, coordinating with other donors, and encouraging other donors to increase their support to the response. I will also work with Secretary of State Blinken and Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield to ensure that the U.S. Government continues to advocate in the U.N. Security Council and on the international stage to improve the lives of the Syrian people, including through the reauthorization of the aforementioned U.N. cross-border assistance and to advance a long-overdue negotiated political settlement to end the Syrian conflict.

Question. How can USAID play a role in bringing about a political solution in Syria? What tools are available to the U.S. through USAID to better support our allies in Northeastern Syria?

Answer. While assistance will not solve the conflict in Syria, it is a vital component of the effort to create conditions for peace by saving lives, providing some measure of stability to vulnerable populations, and uniting partners and allies in support of the Syrian people. If confirmed, in addition to ensuring that as many Syrians as possible are able to receive critically-needed assistance, I will support administration-wide efforts to advance a negotiated political settlement, which is the only way to end this conflict. I will also explore USAID support for civil society actors who are documenting war crimes and pursuing accountability, a critical complement to pursuit of a stable peace. The Biden administration redoubled the U.S. commitment to our allies in northeast Syria by lifting the previous administration's freeze on stabilization funds. If confirmed, I will ensure not only that these critical programs continue, but that they complement the larger administration-wide efforts to advance a negotiated political settlement.

Question. It is imperative for U.S. foreign assistance to aim to break down gender-related barriers to educational attainment in countries where there is persistent gender disparity. This is particularly important in secondary school when girls are the most likely to drop out. In many contexts, poverty and entrenched social and cultural norms can limit girls' access to quality learning opportunities.

- How can USAID better provide holistic support to ensure adolescents stay enrolled in and complete secondary school?

Answer. USAID promotes a "whole-of-girl" approach, reducing gender-based violence and increasing the capability of all learners, of all gender identities, to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and make independent decisions. If confirmed, I commit that USAID will continue to break down gender-related barriers to education so that all learners, especially girls and the most marginalized, have access to safe, quality education from early childhood through adulthood, especially during adolescence, a crucial time in girls' lives. Part of this approach is recognizing that menstrual health and hygiene is an integral part of dignity and empowerment for adolescent girls, including their ability to attend and stay in school. USAID will also continue to prioritize the needs of the most marginalized and those in vulnerable situations, and address inequalities that have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Ensuring that we continue to make progress in this area is critically important not just for empowering young women, but for achieving lasting advances on behalf of

society as a whole and creating conditions for a more equitable response to the fall-out from the pandemic. For example, addressing gender inequality in education contributes to closing gender gaps in employment and wages, which have in turn been shown to reduce income inequality and lead to overall increases in GDP.

Question. USAID's global health programs are critical to providing sexual and reproductive health care for women and girls. However, research has shown that a 10 percent decline in the use of contraceptives—such as due to the COVID-19 pandemic—could result in more than 48 million women with an unmet need for modern contraception and more than 15 million additional unintended pregnancies. If confirmed, I hope you will not only support international family planning as a priority for USAID, but also the partners on the ground who implement these programs.

- How will you work to expand and improve USAID's family planning and reproductive health programs?

Answer. I believe that reproductive health care is essential to women's health and well-being and also positively impacts infant and child health. Now more than ever, as countries battle COVID-19 and the secondary effects from the pandemic, we must strengthen our efforts to reach those most vulnerable, including women who benefit from voluntary family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) programs. The administration is committed to ensuring that foreign assistance programs prioritize women's health needs globally, including robust support for voluntary family planning and maternal health programs, and for preventing gender-based violence.

Question. What needs to be done to increase access to sexual and reproductive health care amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?

Answer. The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected all global health efforts, including routine vaccination programs for children, voluntary family planning and reproductive health programs, women and children's access to basic health care, and the distribution of treatments to control neglected tropical diseases, as well as tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. If confirmed, I will work with USAID global health experts to ensure funding is prioritized to activities, including voluntary family planning and reproductive health activities, that will support regaining the progress lost during the pandemic.

Question. Is there a way for the U.S. to better engage with partners and allies on the provision of family planning services? What would that look like?

Answer. USAID is the largest bilateral donor for voluntary family planning and reproductive health assistance globally. Other donors, partner governments, and civil society actors have historically looked to USAID for leadership because of its strong reputation for technical excellence. The administration is committed to restoring U.S. global health leadership, including as it relates to voluntary family planning and reproductive health, which will require effective partnerships to improve coordination and investments and strengthen linkages across diverse global health programs. If confirmed, I will look for ways that USAID can advance voluntary family planning and reproductive health programming with our partners and allies around the globe.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

Extremism and the Global Fragility Act

Question. Despite the best efforts of both parties and their respective administrations, the threat from Salafi-Jihadi extremism persists to this day. The Global Fragility Act passed by Congress last year changed our approach to conflict-prone states that can be vectors of violent extremism, uncontrolled migration, and extreme poverty by dedicating \$1.5 billion toward this space and establishing a new Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation at USAID.

- How will you effectively use this legislation to direct our approaches toward countering fragile states?

Answer. This is a key priority. We need a comprehensive approach and more tools to prevent conflict and increase stability. If confirmed, I will consult with Congress on the implementation of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (the "GFA strategy"). It is my understanding that the list of priority countries is currently being considered by the interagency, with USAID participation. After country selection, we will need to bring a range of U.S. policy tools to bear in imple-

menting the GFA strategy and associated country and regional plans. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with you and Congress frequently to support the implementation of the Act with State and DOD.

Latin America

Question. I would like to talk about the importance of Latin America and the role of the United States in the economic and democratic development of this region.

Last week I led a bipartisan CODEL to El Paso to see firsthand the crisis on the border. We are seeing people fleeing extreme poverty from the Northern Triangle countries— Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. I am very supportive of building a robust border protection system to physically protect our border, but I also understand the necessity to help these fragile countries address the root causes of illegal immigration such as extreme poverty and breakdown in security.

The latest numbers are deeply concerning. 550 kids per day are coming into the United States, mostly from the Northern Triangle countries, which is five or six times more than in January, when there were less than 100 in terms of families. In terms of families, 1,500 per day last week, as compared to 1,000 in February— on average, less than 100 in January. This is a 15 times increase when compared to previous data.

- Do you believe that that is an appropriate condition to us spending what President Biden has now suggested, which is another \$4 billion on top of the \$3.6 billion that has been sent in the last five years?

Answer. As you note, President Biden proposed a multi-year, \$4 billion comprehensive regional strategy to address the root causes of irregular migration. I agree that any funding needs to be accountable and channeled to evidence-based programming. Since the specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across communities or even countries, USAID tailors and adapts programs that address the root causes of irregular migration to the unique needs of each country and community; the extensive use of data is critical and is an integral part of these efforts. By tracking migration trends, the Agency is able to focus resources geographically in response to local drivers of migration.

I gather that USAID is addressing the distinct and overlapping security, governance, and economic drivers of irregular migration to the United States from Central America in partnership with other U.S. Government agencies, including, as mandated in Executive Order 14010, by working with the State Department to develop a forthcoming strategy on addressing the root causes of irregular migration from the region. USAID seeks to combat crime and violence by reaching at-risk youth, addressing corruption and impunity, disrupting the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. Through this work, USAID helps to foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. If confirmed, I will work to build and expand on this foundation and look forward to consulting with you about how best to ensure these programs are tailored to optimize results.

Question. Do you commit to work with Congress on asylum seekers to have them apply from their home country or a safe third country?

Answer. Under President Obama, in my capacity as White House Coordinator for Iraqi Refugees while serving at the NSC, I saw the importance of the in-country processing efforts in Iraq that had initially been established in 2008, and as U.N. Ambassador, I supported President Obama's establishment of the Central American Minors (CAM) Refugee program, which President Biden has announced will continue under his administration. As you know, USAID is not involved in asylum policy or enforcement of border security, so if confirmed, I would defer to the Departments of Homeland Security and the State Department.

Question. Do you commit to placing an emphasis on combating corruption, especially through the Millennium Challenge Corporation through programming in the northern triangle countries?

Answer. Yes. Corruption can itself be a driver of migration and of course makes it more difficult to address a wide range of development challenges—from global health and food security, to economic development and fair trade, to maintaining strong alliances. If confirmed, I plan to renew USAID's focus on governance and anti-corruption programs in the Northern Triangle and, in my role on the Board of Directors at the MCC, I commit to placing an emphasis on combating corruption.

Question. Do you commit to emphasizing an adherence to transparency and rule of law in Latin America and beyond?

Answer. Yes, I commit to the importance of transparency and the rule of law in Latin America and beyond.

Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA)

Question. The Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA), which is a program I created during my time serving in the House, remains a top priority for me. This is a “debt-for-nature” swap program that offers eligible developing countries options to relieve or restructure concessional debt owed to the U.S. in exchange for supporting conservation activities for tropical forests and coral reefs. Through the TFCA program, approximately \$233 million in appropriated funds from the U.S. Government have generated nearly \$340 million through interest and leveraging from NGOs and private entities.

To date, 20 agreements have been carried out with 14 different countries to save more than 67 million acres of tropical forest. Tropical forests are valuable tools for carbon storage. These TFCA agreements have led to the sequestration of more than 56 million metric tons of carbon dioxide—that’s the equivalent of taking 11.8 million cars off the road—and without losing a single American job. In fact, this program has helped developing countries by improving their balance sheet through debt-for-nature swaps.

TFCA was provided \$15 million in appropriations for both fiscal years 2020 and 2021. USAID, in coordination with the Treasury Department and the State Department, is one of the key agencies responsible for carrying out TFCA agreements.

- If you are confirmed to be Administrator of USAID, will you commit to prioritizing additional TFCA deals using the funding that Congress has provided?

Answer. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue, which I was grateful to have the chance to discuss with you. I certainly agree that this is win-win programming. I gather that USAID works closely with the State Department and Treasury in an effort to program TFCA agreements, including those addressing coral reef conservation. I understand that TFCA programs have generated substantial additional resources through capital gains from fund investments, cost-sharing by grant recipients, and co-financing with other donors. If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing additional deals with TFCA funding.

Africa and Great Power Competition

Question. China has focused heavily on Africa as a part of their Belt and Road Initiative. While China has provided much needed infrastructure spending and benefits to some countries on the continent, I am concerned about shifts in Chinese investment away from development initiatives toward projects that are more aligned with military purposes. At the same time, many countries have traded infrastructure and development for natural resource rights and burdensome debt obligations.

- How will you effectively lead USAID to counter China’s influence in Africa? How can we do a better job of highlighting the benefits of working with America rather than the CCP?

Answer. Competition with China is one of the defining challenges of the 21st century for the United States, and engaging with our African partners to pursue shared strategic interests in advancing security, protecting global health, fighting climate change, strengthening democracy, and spurring equitable economic growth must be a cornerstone of our global strategy to counter China. In this regard, U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives have a critical role to play in meeting this challenge head-on. In Africa, the United States offers a meaningful alternative to China’s predatory economic approach, and we must continue to work to ensure that American companies can compete on an even playing field at the same time we promote local entrepreneurship and fair practices. Despite the massive amounts of money that Beijing has invested in Africa, people in many African nations are voicing growing concerns over China’s lack of transparency, lending practices, poor environmental record, and failure to invest in relationships with local communities. In these and other areas, the United States has multiple comparative advantages that we must work across agencies to demonstrate. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting further with you and to working with other Departments and Agencies as well as the business community to help ensure that the U.S. is pursuing trade and investment initiatives from a position of strength. I also look forward to digging into the communications dimension of this challenge, because we need to be strategic about how we amplify the tenets of the U.S. approach and how we highlight for our local partners the ways in which U.S. investments are responsive to local needs and priorities.

Question. China has also exported a number facial recognition and security software programs for law enforcement, the same systems that are being used to enable the genocide in Xingjian against the Uyghurs, to effectively “coup-proof” authoritarian regimes on the African continent.

- Do you see this as a threat for democracy promotion in Africa, and how can we help you to be successful in pushing back against this threat?

Answer. Yes. China’s use of facial recognition and security software programs for law enforcement are a threat to democracy and freedom of expression in Africa. Freedom has been declining globally for 15 consecutive years, and China and Russia are using their resources, influence, and technology to buttress autocrats and undermine and interfere with democratic institutions. In Africa, USAID supports efforts to uphold civil society efforts to advocate for fundamental rights, such as freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, and to hold credible, free, and fair elections. I appreciate your offer of support. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize this critical work and look forward to working with you and your colleagues to devise new strategies for countering this growing threat.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

Virginia Tech Innovation Lab

Question. The Feed the Future Integrated Pest Management Innovation Lab (IPMIL), funded by USAID and managed by Virginia Tech, has been in operation since 1993. In that time, the program has generated nearly \$2 billion in economic benefits for developing countries, funded 500+ graduate students, and collaborated with more than 100 institutions. Unfortunately, in a deviation from its historic review process for innovation labs, USAID has not renewed IPMIL for a full five-year contract since 2014; rather, it is now operating on its second one-year no-cost extension that is set to expire in November 2021. USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security has also established a new Future Innovation Lab for Current and Emerging Threats to Crops (CETC), for which the agency is now soliciting proposals.

Given the potential overlap between IPMIL and the CETC, I recently led a letter with Senate and House colleagues to Acting Administrator Steele in support of IPMIL, including seeking clarity on the status of the program at Virginia Tech moving forward. Should you be confirmed, I look forward to USAID’s attention to the matter

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to looking into this matter and getting back to you.

USAID Collaboration with Research Universities

Question. USAID has a strong tradition of working with universities to utilize their expertise to help address some of the most challenging global development challenges. Feed the Future Innovation Labs are one part of that partnership and are critical in advancing the solutions needed to help reduce global hunger, poverty, and undernutrition. If confirmed, are there new programs and collaborations you envision with strong research universities like those in Virginia? Will you consider expanding innovation labs to help reach more countries?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I would explore opportunities to deepen USAID’s collaboration with research universities. USAID greatly values its partnership with the U.S. university community and the unparalleled research capacity that these institutions bring to the U.S. Government’s global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future. The U.S. university-led Feed the Future Innovation Labs are central to leveraging American science and innovation to solve problems facing food-insecure regions, and they are doing so in ways that build local and national capacity in partner countries. I gather that the cutting-edge portfolio of Innovation Labs evolves as new challenges emerge and new research pathways open up for making progress in food security, strengthening climate resilience and accelerating improved nutrition, and if confirmed, I look forward to engaging in that process and discussing any new opportunities with you.

New Partnership Initiative (NPI)

Question. The New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) was established to diversify USAID’s partner base by creating avenues for new and underutilized partners to

work with USAID. Through NPI, the Agency promotes local leadership, seeks bold and innovative approaches to fostering self-reliance, and identifies new sources of funding to sustain partnership and scale impact. It is one of the only tools the agency has to effectively work with new partners.

- How will you work to ensure that mechanisms like the New Partnerships Initiative are maintained as effective tools in partnering with new, innovative, and locally established organizations?

Answer. I recognize the longstanding challenge of enlisting new and non-traditional partners. It is my understanding that approximately 80 percent of USAID funding went to just 75 organizations in 2017, and by 2019 only 69 organizations were receiving the same share. The number of new partners has declined every year since 2011. Reducing the barriers to engaging with and accessing resources from USAID is important, and I strongly believe in diversifying the Agency's partnership base. Doing so will help to broaden the USAID's perspectives and approaches in order to address development and humanitarian challenges. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to build on and expand efforts to be more inclusive in partnering with a broader set of organizations to achieve our objectives, while ensuring that the Agency meets relevant requirements.

Community Health Workers

Question. Community health workers, the vast majority of whom are women, have been a critical part of the response to COVID-19 and other endemic diseases around the world. According to a recent report commissioned by Malaria No More and the United Nations Foundation, investments in community-based health programs help prevent 75 million malaria cases annually, reducing the burden on the health systems of low-income countries. Unfortunately, in many countries community health workers are not well supported or compensated.

- How can USAID support community health workers so that they have the resources they need?

Answer. Community health workers (CHWs) have long been central to responding to basic health needs, confronting global health threats (including Ebola, Zika, malaria, and now of course COVID-19), and providing life-saving assistance in humanitarian emergencies. CHWs are an essential part of the global health workforce and often the only source of care for their communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the need for CHWs, placing additional demands on these critical frontline workers and requiring communities to redirect resources to support COVID-19 response, when other health threats remain. USAID recommends that host country governments include CHWs in health systems as a professional cadre that are a critical part of a sustainable health workforce. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to advance programs that support and equip CHWs with the resources they need.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

Question. The coronavirus worsened the existing global food crisis. An estimated 130 million more people were on the brink of starvation last year due to factors caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Many of these individuals are in countries already experiencing instability from locust infestations, military conflict, and extreme poverty.

- In what ways would you alter the previous planning and strategies for U.S. food security efforts in light of the coronavirus impacts?

Answer. The pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition worldwide, with the most vulnerable bearing the brunt of its impact. The World Bank estimates that in 2020 as many as 124 million people fell into poverty and hunger as a result, and expects this number to increase significantly this year to as much as 163 million people. The nutrition impacts are equally devastating, putting millions more children at risk. In the face of COVID-19, the U.S. Government's Feed the Future initiative to end global hunger, is adapting its vital programming to mitigate and deal with the impacts on food systems and nutrition. Specifically, I understand that Feed the Future is leveraging its existing global portfolio to respond to the crisis in the following ways: (1) engaging governments on trade and inclusive economic growth policies; (2) bolstering small and medium sized enterprises throughout the food system and unlocking private sector funds to accelerate eco-

conomic recovery, growth and employment; (3) transitioning households and communities off of assistance through economic inclusion models; and (4) supporting governments to create and strengthen their existing social protection systems, including shock-responsive safety nets and risk financing. It will be critical to further leverage Feed the Future as countries rebuild economically in the long wake of the pandemic, and I understand that USAID is currently looking at ways to do this.

Question. For more than 50 years, USAID's global health programs have focused on saving lives and protecting vulnerable populations from disease. The United States works extensively with countries across the globe to strengthen public health systems. There are a finite amount of resources available to address the current global pandemic. Yet, the needs continue to expand.

- What is your strategy to ensure USAID is assisting those countries most in need due to the coronavirus pandemic?

Question. What indicators or criteria will you rely upon to make decisions on how to best utilize U.S. resources to combat the coronavirus?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that USAID's COVID-19 work is needs-based and evidence-driven. If confirmed, I will work with the team at USAID to ensure that we prioritize resources based on rigorous needs-analysis and clear performance metrics. It is my understanding that USAID is developing a COVID-19 response plan, in coordination with interagency partners, to meet critical and immediate health and humanitarian needs such as vaccine readiness and acute food insecurity, but also to address the wide range of second-order impacts of the pandemic. If confirmed, I will support the development of this response plan and ensure USAID invests new COVID-19 resources in a way that best responds to the pandemic. I will also work with experts within USAID and across the inter-agency to apply epidemiologic indicators and other criteria to guide resource allocations, recognizing the complex and dynamic nature of the first- and second-order impacts of the pandemic. And across the board, I will prioritize transparency and accountability in decision-making, and use data and analysis to guide the use of funds.

Question. In 1985, USAID created the Famine Early Warning Systems Network to provide objective, evidence based analysis to plan for and respond to acute food insecurity.

- Is this something that USAID can use as a model to work on an early warning system for global health pandemics?

Answer. Yes, I believe that the Famine Early Warning Systems Network is a useful model to inform our efforts to improve early warning systems for infectious disease epidemics and pandemics, in terms of establishing a data-driven approach to predict outbreaks. The challenge will be to establish objective, evidence-based epidemiologic criteria for tiered risk classification systems, and to link relevant data to recognize threats early and take actions to prevent new outbreaks from becoming epidemics or pandemics. If confirmed, I pledge to work with other U.S. government departments and agencies, and the international community, to improve early warning systems for infectious disease epidemics and pandemics.

Question. What role should USAID play in the U.S.'s global health security strategy to make us better prepared to combat any future global health pandemic?

Answer. Ensuring global health security for the United States will require that all countries be capable of preventing, detecting, and responding effectively to health security risks and public health emergencies. USAID will work in partnership with other international organizations and public and private stakeholders to help implement the U.S.'s global health security strategy. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to work in close collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of State, and other interagency partners, to strengthen global health security across the globe to ensure we are positioned to prevent or respond to future pandemics.

Question. In July 2019, USAID's Inspector General testified before Congress on the management challenges impacting USAID. One major management challenge identified was assessing and responding to the risk in providing humanitarian and stabilization assistance.

Inspector General Ann Barr's testimony stated, "Insufficient risk assessments not only leave USAID programs and services vulnerable to exploitation, but they also put USAID in the position of attempting to mitigate threats it does not understand. The adverse effects of poor planning, monitoring and evaluation were demonstrated in the fraud schemes that our agents uncovered in Iraq and Syria and across Africa, some of which involved diversions of USAID-funded commodities to terrorists."

- How will you address the issues of insufficient risk assessments, monitoring and evaluations at USAID?

Answer. It is important for USAID to act in the interest of the American people, and to provide foreign assistance and build partnerships where there is the greatest need, which is often in difficult situations. Risks that are inherent to operating in conflict settings and challenging environments can be mitigated, but never eliminated. Monitoring risk, and measuring and analyzing results-and adapting when programs fall short-is part of the day-to-day management of USAID's operations. Of course, there is always room for improvement and innovation. If confirmed, I look forward to pushing USAID even further on finding innovative ways to quickly gather information to adapt programs and better achieve results, while also ensuring proper vetting and accountability to U.S. taxpayers.

Question. What steps will you take to strengthen current procedures aimed at preventing diversions of U.S. taxpayer resources going to terrorists?

Answer. USAID conducts extensive screening to mitigate risk and safeguard U.S. foreign assistance from diversion to organizations or individuals posing a threat to national security. USAID has a robust system for partner vetting to mitigate the risk of funds supporting terrorist groups. I understand that since it began tracking these figures in 2015, USAID estimates that it has prevented more than \$800 million from supporting or benefitting people and entities that do not meet USAID vetting requirements. Further, USAID applicants are required to sign certifications and assurances stating that they have not knowingly provided material support or resources to terrorist groups or individuals/entities affiliated with terrorist groups. This risk mitigation has allowed USAID to continue to work in the highest-risk environments, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee on this important priority.

Question. Will you commit to doing a full audit of USAID funds and programs to ensure U.S. resources are not going to support terrorist groups and entities on the Specially Designated Nationals and Block Persons list?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that USAID funding does not fall into the wrong hands, whether it be terrorism, fraud, or waste. I understand that USAID has numerous safeguards, financial accountability mechanisms and an independent Office of Inspector General, whose work I am committed to supporting if I am confirmed.

Question. During a Senate investigation into the World Vision's interactions with the Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA), redacted emails were uncovered implying that when you were the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations you were involved in efforts to delist the ISRA from the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (SDN) list. Specifically, your office appears to have requested OFAC review the designation without a formal request from ISRA. The U.S. Treasury sanctioned ISRA for its support of terrorism including direct financial support to Usama bin Laden, Al Qaida, the Taliban, and Hamas.

- Why were you and your office involved with seeking a review of the ISRA's placement on the SDN list?
- What efforts did you and your office take to discourage the delisting of ISRA from the SDN list?
- Please describe all the efforts you and your office took while serving as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations to advocate for or provide assistance in the delisting process for entities on the Specially Designated Nationals and Block Persons list.
- As Administrator of USAID, when would you consider it appropriate to assist entities in requesting a review of their placement on the SDN list outside the general Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) parameters?
- Will you commit to providing this committee and the rest of Congress timely and substantive responses to oversight inquiries?

Answer. As U.N. Ambassador, I was not involved in any effort to delist ISRA; nor did I do anything to "assist" this or any other entity on the SDN list. Indeed, the opposite is true. Under my leadership, as is documented in public records, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (U.S.-U.N.) worked tirelessly to rebut ISRA's false claims that it had been wrongly designated on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list by the U.S. Government. During my tenure, U.S.-U.N. repeatedly raised questions about ISRA's status and funding in order to force the United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to postpone the consideration of ISRA for accreditation.

In support of these efforts to prevent the accreditation of ISRA by the United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, U.S.–U.N. maintained the standard practice of regularly coordinating with the U.S. State and Treasury Departments to ensure U.S. diplomats at the U.N. had the most up-to-date information available.

Please find records of some of U.S.–U.N.’s actions at the January 2014, January 2015, and May 2015 sessions of the United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations:

- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ecosoc6593.doc.htm>;
- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6662.doc.htm>;
- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6694.doc.htm>;

As Ambassador, in addition to repudiating ISRA’s efforts to rehabilitate itself, I often used my platform to draw attention to the crimes and dangerous activities of organizations on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list. If confirmed, I can assure you that I share the goal of ensuring that the U.S. Agency for International Development takes all appropriate measures to prevent misuse of its funding—whether for terrorism, corruption, or any other types of abuse. I further confirm my commitment to cooperate and provide Congress with timely and substantive responses to inquiries, if confirmed.

Question. With a national debt over \$28 trillion, it is more important than ever for the government to be good steward of taxpayer funds. USAID must design and implement programs in the most effective and efficient manner. Every agency needs to be carefully evaluated and streamlined to eliminate duplicative and wasteful spending.

- What reforms will you take to improve the effectiveness of U.S. international development assistance?

Answer. I agree with the principle of aid effectiveness and that USAID’s programs should encourage self-reliance and sustainability. My vision for USAID’s role includes traditional development priorities. It also applies a broader lens that recognizes U.S. foreign assistance within core U.S. national security priorities, including advancing democracy and human rights, mitigating the effects of conflict, and promoting global health in a collaborative manner with civil society partners and governments. If confirmed, I commit to advancing sound, evidence-based development and humanitarian programming that continues to improve aid effectiveness, self-reliance, and sustainability.

Question. What actions will you take, if any, to prevent fraud, waste and abuse at USAID?

Answer. All USAID employees have a statutory duty and responsibility to promote accountability in the Agency’s programs and activities. Every USAID employee is responsible for assisting the Office of Inspector General, by promptly reporting instances of waste, fraud, or abuse. Furthermore, I understand that USAID has a number of policies and requirements in place to prevent fraud throughout the solicitation, award, and management of our grants and contracts. I understand that when instances of fraud, waste, and abuse do occur, the Agency considers a variety of award remedies, such as disallowed costs, special award conditions, and/or award suspension or termination. In addition, implementing partners and individuals who have committed fraud, waste, abuse, or other serious misconduct are subject to a number of accountability actions, including exclusion from receiving future U.S. Government funds through USAID’s suspension and debarment program.

Question. What opportunities exist for streamlining, efficiencies and savings at USAID?

Answer. I agree that streamlining, efficiencies, and savings of taxpayer dollars is a priority. If confirmed, I look forward to looking for opportunities and continuing this conversation with you.

Question. A January Wall Street Journal article reported that you requested the “unmasking” of nearly 300 people in the last year of working for the Obama Administration as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. When U.S. intelligence agencies intercept the communications of private U.S. citizens, those individuals are “masked” to ensure their privacy is protected.

- How many U.S. citizens did you unmask during the time you worked as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations?
- What criteria did you use in determining whether it was appropriate to request the unmasking of a U.S. citizen?

- Given the large number of reported requests for unmasking made in your name, do you plan to refine your criteria going forward to ensure Americans privacy is appropriately protected?
- How will you protect the privacy of U.S. citizens as USAID Administrator?

Answer. Safeguarding classified information and protecting the privacy of US persons are serious responsibilities for anyone serving in a national security role within the US government. I have protected classified information and guarded the privacy of US persons throughout my career as a public servant, and I will continue to do so if I am confirmed as USAID Administrator.

While serving as U.N. Ambassador and as a cabinet member advising the President on the full range of national security threats, I was a recipient of information prepared by intelligence professionals, which I used to do my job of protecting and defending the United States and advancing US national security interests. I did not discuss the contents of classified material with unauthorized personnel. On occasion, in order to understand the intelligence briefed to me, I asked questions about the individuals or entities referenced in intelligence. Any requests I made for identifying information were made solely for the purpose of understanding the intelligence in order to do my job. While I do not recall the specific number of such requests I made as U.N. Ambassador, the number attributed to me in press reports, including in the Wall Street Journal Editorial board opinion piece referenced here, is false. It is my understanding that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence is responsible for matters related to how intelligence professionals manage and record matters related to intelligence.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWELL BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. In the waning days of the Trump administration, USAID unveiled its 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. Unfortunately, the policy was drafted behind closed doors and erased key LGTBQI+ rights, and denied comprehensive sexual and reproductive rights to all people. Will you commit to reviewing the 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, and updating it to make sure it is rights-affirming and inclusive of all marginalized identities, including LGTBQI+ individuals?

Answer. I understand that a review of the USAID Gender policy commenced March 2021. If confirmed, I will consult with you and other Members of the committee on the review. President Biden has been clear that he supports protections for LGTBQI+ people, as do I. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID programs and policies contribute to these efforts, by advocating for LGTBQI+ rights and programs around the world.

Question. What is your vision for elevating USAID's leadership within the executive branch to tackle the existential threat of climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I would commit to working closely with Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry and the National Security Council's climate and energy directorate. The Biden administration's top priorities are developing an ambitious U.S. target and working with countries around the world to raise their ambition alongside the United States. President Biden is inviting leaders from major economies to a Leaders' Summit on Climate to discuss climate impacts and more importantly-what more can be done on a number of fronts moving forward climate action to keep a 1.5 degree Celsius warming trajectory in sight. Given that unsustainable land use accounts for one-quarter of global greenhouse emissions, USAID will work with countries and regions with globally important forests and carbon-rich landscapes to reduce deforestation and improve conservation, as well as reduce emissions from land use change in critical tropical ecosystems that serve as global carbon sinks.

Question. We must support the developing world in the transition towards renewable energy, while also better forecasting climate-driven disasters to minimize human impacts before they occur. Will you commit to increasing climate change mitigation and adaptation programming as a part of a proactive and robust USAID climate strategy?

Answer. Yes, I commit to increasing USAID's efforts to support reduced carbon emissions combating climate change, including climate change mitigation and adaptation programming. Addressing climate change will be a top priority for me, as it is for President Biden. If confirmed, I will expand the scale and urgency of USAID's

programming, building on USAID's strong foundation of local partnerships to address climate change. I will ensure that USAID continues to be a leader in supporting countries to reduce carbon emissions and that USAID provides further support for early warning systems which help communities prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climatic events.

Question. The coup in Burma has temporarily severed the democratic hopes for the Burmese people. The situation continues to devolve as the threat of civil war rises. As USAID Administrator, will you work to quickly increase and pivot U.S. assistance to strengthen civil society, protect the fundamental civil and political rights of the Burmese people, and lead the humanitarian community in contingency planning for increased humanitarian assistance levels?

Answer. I condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the military coup in Burma and the junta's ongoing violent crackdown against peaceful demonstrators. If confirmed, I look forward to working with and empowering the brave local and civil society actors who are advocating for civil and political rights under extraordinarily difficult and dangerous circumstances. I support the action taken by USAID immediately after the coup to redirect \$42.4 million from work that would have benefitted the Government to civil society and programs that directly benefit the people of Burma. Those programs focus on a range of objectives, such as improving health outcomes, strengthening the ability of civil society to guard democratic space, fostering food security, supporting independent media, and promoting peace and reconciliation in Burma's conflict-affected regions. If confirmed, USAID will also continue to provide critical life-saving humanitarian assistance to Rohingya and other vulnerable populations including in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, and Shan states.

Question. Recent reports and statements from Secretary Blinken indicate an ethnic cleansing likely occurred in western Tigray. Humanitarian and media access continues to be constrained in rural areas. Concerns are mounting regarding the instability in the run up to the June elections. How will you work with the interagency to increase access and transparency, pursue accountability for victims, and provide oversight and capacity building assistance in a surge to promote a free and fair election?

Answer. The loss of life and mass displacement resulting from the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region is profoundly disturbing. The violence against civilians must end, and unimpeded humanitarian access to the region must be granted without further delay. Ultimately, what is required is a constructive political dialogue between the parties and accountability for the atrocities committed by all sides. Ethiopia's successful transition to a more democratic, inclusive, and prosperous society is critical to U.S. interests. The administration, with support from members of Congress and U.N. representatives, has undertaken numerous diplomatic efforts to end the violence and provide humanitarian access. As a result of these efforts, Prime Minister Abiy recommitted to unhindered humanitarian access to Tigray. I understand that USAID staff in Addis and in Washington continue to push for real progress on these important issues. To your question on accountability for victims, while Prime Minister Abiy has recently acknowledged human rights abuses and violations and committed to ensuring that those responsible are held accountable, it will be essential to hold him to these commitments. If confirmed, I will both ensure that USAID continues to work with the interagency on these critical issues and work with the Secretary to ensure we can find a way to provide humanitarian assistance to the Ethiopian people and support, as appropriate, the pursuit of accountability.

Question. During the campaign, then-candidate Biden indicated that his top foreign policy priority would be "rallying the free world to push back against rising authoritarianism" and that "human rights will be at the core of U.S. foreign policy." Will you commit to re-vamping the role of human rights programming as a central pillar of USAID's development mandate?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will seek to deepen Agency investments in democracy, human rights and governance. With freedom in its fifteenth straight year of decline, there is more that the United States and USAID need to do on all fronts to counter authoritarian trends, support civil society, promote independent media, and protect human rights defenders.

Question. The U.N. has called gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls a "shadow pandemic" during the COVID-19 crisis. Will you commit to utilizing newly appropriated COVID-19 funds in working to curb GBV and other secondary impacts of the pandemic?

Answer. Yes. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is a critical component in the global response to COVID-19 and it is a priority for USAID. If confirmed, I will prioritize USAID's support for the prevention of and response to GBV that has emerged as a result of COVID-19. Various types of GBV become particularly pervasive during emergencies. As such, addressing GBV in emergencies is central to USAID's efforts, including our COVID-19 response. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID programming continues to address GBV and that our programming prioritizes women and girls' health, psychological well-being, and safety. I understand that USAID is currently developing a COVID-19 Response Plan, a strategy that will seek to address second-order impacts of the pandemic, including increased rates of GBV, and improve protection and target the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized families and individuals.

Question. For the past 15 years USAID has promoted a "One Health" approach, bringing together disciplines such as medicine, veterinary medicine, public health, and ecosystem health to more effectively address emerging pandemic challenges. Tufts University is leading a new effort consistent with the "One Health" approach to analyze, communicate, and mitigate risks of zoonotic viral spillover in priority countries. Will you commit to strengthening this type of USAID programming that ensures lasting reduction of the risk of viral zoonotic spillover and disease so we can avoid repeating the experience of COVID-19?

Answer. COVID-19 is a grave reminder that biological threats- whether naturally emerging, accidental, or deliberate- pose a significant and potentially existential threat to humanity. USAID's partnership with countries throughout the world makes the Agency well-placed to prevent avoidable outbreaks, detect threats early, and respond rapidly when outbreaks occur. Preventing the next pandemic requires an approach that recognizes that the future well-being of humans, animals, and the environment are inextricably linked. History has shown us that we need to significantly increase resources for both risk reduction and the discovery of unknown viruses. To do this, we should focus on the discovery of new viruses and address current zoonotic diseases (e.g., Ebola viruses, coronaviruses) that pose the greatest risk of spilling from wildlife to humans. If confirmed, I commit to continuing this critical programming.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

U.S. Foreign Assistance

Question. On December 10, 2020, President Trump issued Executive Order (EO) 13964, "Rebranding United States Foreign Assistance To Advance American Influence" which required U.S. Government Departments and Agencies to use a single logo for all U.S. foreign assistance.

- Please assess the degree to which such moves to ensure consistency and clarity in our aid contribute to the development of American soft power in general?

Answer. I am committed to branding and believe that branding sends a strong public diplomacy message, contributing to American soft power by conveying that our assistance is due to the generosity of the American people. Branding is also a critical element of a counter China strategy. Current branding regulations and policy continue to apply to USAID awards, and partners must continue to follow the branding requirements outlined in their assistance agreements.

China

Question. Please assess the degree to which such moves to ensure consistency and clarity in our aid contribute to the development of American soft power opposite Chinese development efforts?

Answer. China's approach to "development" through One Belt, One Road (OBOR) raises deep concerns for me and many people in USAID's partner countries. Projects connected to OBOR have come under significant scrutiny on issues such as corruption; unsustainable debt; environmental degradation; construction contracts and jobs being awarded to Chinese firms over local enterprises; lack of transparency and local consultations; and even worries about the potential erosion of sovereignty due to the unfavorable terms attached to certain projects. USAID needs a far-reaching strategy that addresses the challenges of OBOR, and I believe that frustrations around the world with China's development practices provide an opportunity for the U.S.

In addition to branding, the U.S. has a range of tools we can bring to bear including development aid, finance, and our innovative corporate sector. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America's comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC's, by engaging directly with our partner countries and ensuring that good governance, sustainability, and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with my colleagues across many agencies to help ensure the U.S. is responding to Chinese development efforts from a position of strength.

Question. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is committing genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that is ongoing. The Biden administration had sent differing signals about the degree to which administration officials assessed that genocide is indeed ongoing, but on March 22, 2021, Secretary Blinken correctly emphasized "the P.R.C. continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity." USAID had and has a significant role to play in countering the CCP's genocide, and the agency had initiated a number of programs and outreach in that space. Those programs included efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of the Uyghurs, which is being directly targeted by the CCP.

- Do you agree with the assessment that the Chinese Government is engaged in a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the XUAR that is ongoing?

Answer. Yes. I agree with President Biden and experts who have studied the evidence that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang.

Question. What role do you see for USAID in countering that ongoing genocide, and more broadly the human rights atrocities being committed by the Chinese Communist Party?

Answer. I welcome Congress's bipartisan action on this issue, including the passage of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act that holds perpetrators accountable for human rights violations and abuses against Uyghurs and other minorities in China. If confirmed, I will use my platform to draw attention to the horrors in Xinjiang and ensure that USAID actively engages with you, the committee, and the interagency to determine any further steps that can be taken.

Question. What is the status of programs aimed at preserving the cultural heritage of the Uyghurs within USAID?

Answer. I gather that USAID is developing programs to preserve the cultural heritage and promote the human rights of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Asia region. If confirmed, I will be eager to discuss these programs with you.

International Religious Freedom

Question. The Obama administration repeatedly failed to speak out on critical issues of religious liberty, including the plight of imprisoned Christians in Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, and Mexico. The result was a vacuum of American leadership. USAID has a critical role to play in highlighting and countering such persecution, as well as the plight of dissidents more broadly. Advancing international religious freedom (IRF) is a major foreign policy priority of the United States with bipartisan support, and I strongly believe that the agency must maintain and deepen decisions and commitments made by the Trump administration in that context.

- The Trump administration allocated resources to IRF-related projects in Iraq, Nigeria, and elsewhere. If confirmed, do you intend to maintain these projects?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support international religious freedom programs at USAID. I have a longstanding commitment to human rights, and a profound awareness of the risks of persecution faced by religious minorities. While serving at the NSC in the Obama administration, I advocated on behalf of Coptic Christians in Egypt who were experiencing violent attacks, and I met with Iraqi Christians while visiting Iraq to show support for their community. As Ambassador to the U.N., I used my platform to elevate the voices of religious minorities. I called for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for refusing to denounce her Christian faith, and called on Sudan to repeal the laws that put her in jail in the first place. I gave a young Yazidi woman named Nadia Murad her first major public platform, inviting her to speak before the U.N. Security Council, after her family had been almost completely wiped out by ISIS and she had been forced into sexual slavery. In addition, I worked with the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and others in the administration to seek

recognition of ISIS's violence against the Yazidi people, Iraqi Christians, and Shiite Muslims as a genocide, which Secretary of State Kerry recognized in March of 2016. USAID has a history of helping the world's most vulnerable people, and it will continue to play a critical role in supporting communities persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith. If confirmed, I will review USAID's approach to ensure that our programs are most effectively supporting victims of religious persecution. Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to exploring with you, the Agency's regional bureaus and Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships office, and diverse faith communities, how to mobilize resources and, as appropriate, tailor our programs to support individuals being subjected to religious persecution.

Question. Until recently the agency held monthly sessions for USAID's cross-Agency Sector Council on Strategic Religious Engagement and International Religious Freedom. Have such sessions of the Strategic Religious Engagement and International Religious Freedom been frozen, and if so why?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to looking into USAID's cross-Agency Sector Council on Strategic and Religious Engagement and International Religious Freedom and whether it is still holding sessions. I look forward to discussing with you.

Question. The Trump administration invested significantly in programs promoting IRF through USAID's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) Center. What is the status of those programs?

Answer. USAID continues to implement programming, including through the DRG Center, that supports religious minorities. USAID is deeply committed to supporting the world's most vulnerable people, including members of religious minorities. USAID will continue to play a critical role in supporting communities around the world that are persecuted and/or discriminated against because of their faith.

Question. The Trump administration was considering support for a Yazidi Genocide Museum in Kocho. What is the status of that program? If it has been suspended or canceled, why?

Answer. I am not familiar with these deliberations or this program. If confirmed, I commit to learning more about it and consulting with you on this issue.

Question. The persecution of Christians in Nigeria has over the last decade emerged as a systematic problem that the U.S. and the global community have struggled to counter. Policy responses have been broadly inadequate, and have been hampered by disputes over the factors explaining the violence, including the degree to which the crisis is a function of farmer-herder clashes or religious extremism. In December 2020, the Department of State designated Nigeria as a country of particular concern (CPC) in response to pervasive and egregious violations of religious freedom, and USAID in particular engaged Nigerian bishops as part of countering the persecution of Christians by Boko Haram.

- What is your assessment of the degree to which the persecution of Christians in Nigeria is a function of farmer-herder clashes vs. explanations that the persecution is driven by religious violence?

Answer. Nigeria's deep structural problems have manifested in various violent conflicts which have escalated across the country. As I witnessed in my trip in 2016 to the Boko Haram-affected regions of Cameroon, Nigeria, and Chad, while these conflicts may have been originally rooted in resource competition, which includes farmer-herder clashes, they have evolved over time to include targeted attacks based on religion or ethnic identity. The violence is exacerbated by the proliferation of illicit weapons and a weak state security architecture.

Question. Have USAID officials, including and especially those tasked with advancing IRF, engaged Nigeria's community of bishops since February 1, 2021?

Answer. I gather that USAID works closely with the State Department at U.S. Embassy Abuja to advance religious freedom. For example, in March 2021, USAID supported the U.S. Ambassador's participation in a major gathering of Nigerian Christian leaders hosted by Cardinal John Onaiyekan. This meeting followed a July 2020 roundtable hosted by USAID with senior Christian clerics, including bishops. USAID regularly engages with religious leaders and faith-based organizations across multiple sectors of programming to respond to the impacts of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria. In mid-March 2021, USAID met with leaders from the Christian Association of Nigeria, the Heads of Church Denominations, and the Dialogue, Reconciliation, and Peace Center.

Question. The Trump administration made a particular point of engaging churches and other faith organizations globally, and of increasing the amount of direct aid

that is disbursed through local churches rather than international aid agencies. The move was driven by several considerations, including concerns about corruption that is endemic to many such agencies, e.g. on March 19, 2021, the Department of Justice announced that the International Rescue Committee had agreed to pay \$6.9 million to settle allegations that it performed procurement fraud by engaging in collusive behavior and misconduct on programs funded by USAID. Critics of the policy have suggested that it entangles USAID in faith-based organizations in violation of USAID principles related to unbiased partnering and humanitarian principles.

- If confirmed, will you continue the Trump administration's policy of increasing the amount of direct aid disbursed through local churches? If not, why not?

Answer. Faith-based organizations are often the most trusted and deeply embedded groups in local communities. These organizations often serve remote, difficult to access communities and provide important social services, strengthen civic space, and ensure inclusive development. As I understand it, USAID has a robust history of engaging faith organizations to advance Agency goals and priorities. The Code of Federal Regulations (22 CFR 205.1) clarifies that faith organizations may compete for federal assistance funding on the same basis as other organizations, and that all funding decisions are made on the basis of merit, not religious or secular affiliation. If confirmed, I will support USAID's strong engagement with faith-based organizations, whenever and wherever appropriate, by ensuring field staff are equipped with the requisite skills and resources to advance development and humanitarian assistance goals.

Question. Do you believe that channeling aid through faith based organizations is in tension with USAID principles related to unbiased partnering or humanitarian principles? If so, please explain why.

Answer. Faith-based organizations are often the most trusted and deeply embedded groups in local communities. These organizations often serve remote, difficult to access communities and provide important social services, strengthen civic space, and ensure inclusive development and principled humanitarian assistance.

Question. Do you believe that channeling aid specifically through Nigerian Christian groups is in tension with USAID principles related to unbiased partnering and humanitarian principles? If so, please explain why.

Answer. Faith-based and community organizations are eligible to participate in USAID programs on the same basis as any other organization without regard to their religious character or affiliation. USAID humanitarian assistance is delivered solely on the basis of need regardless of political, religious, or other affiliation, in accordance with U.S. law and policy, and does not discriminate against nor favor one group over another. Delivering humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people, including ethnic and religious minorities, is central to our work in Nigeria and a core value of USAID's humanitarian efforts worldwide. USAID takes significant steps to ensure our assistance reaches those who need it most and does not jeopardize their safety.

Israel

Question. In recent years Congress has passed a range of legislation limiting assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and for activities that benefit the PA, e.g. the Taylor Force Act (TFA) (Title X of P.L. 115-141), which limits funding for activities that "directly benefit" the PA. TFA included certification language regarding a range of concerns related to PA policies and governance, including "payments for acts of terrorism against Israeli citizens and United States citizens." Part of the policy rationale for TFA's restrictions is that money is fungible: any aid that directly benefits the PA indirectly supports the PA's payments for acts of terrorism. Officials in the Biden administration have recently suggested that regardless of restrictions imposed by Congress the administration intends to pursue projects and increase assistance that "benefit[] ordinary Palestinians," implicitly in contrast to programs that would directly benefit the PA and therefore be noncompliant with TFA. Please describe your understanding of restrictions imposed by Congress on aid to the PA, especially your understanding of the distinction between aid that "directly benefits" the PA and other forms of aid.

- Can you commit that, if confirmed, you will ensure that USAID will not engage in projects or provide assistance for projects that directly benefit the PA?
- Can you commit that, if confirmed, you will ensure that USAID will not engage in projects or provide assistance for projects that are the same as, materially similar to, or successor projects to USAID projects and assistance that were suspended pursuant to TFA?

Answer. President Biden publicly supported passage of the Taylor Force Act, and he has never hesitated to condemn terrorism or incitement by Palestinian actors. He has made clear that this will continue during his administration. I appreciate Congressional concerns regarding U.S. aid that may benefit the PA and I can assure you that, if confirmed, USAID will continue to ensure that any provision of aid strictly adheres to relevant U.S. laws governing the provision of assistance in the West Bank and Gaza, including the Taylor Force Act. To comply with various legislative restrictions, including the Prisoner Payment Restriction (Section 7041(k)(3) of the FY 2020 SFOAA) and Taylor Force Act (P.L. 115-141), USAID conducts case specific analysis to ensure that USAID assistance is neither “for” nor “directly benefiting” the PA, consistent with the requirements and exceptions set forth in relevant statutes.”

Question. The Obama-Biden administration’s approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict was justified on the basis of a theory of regional relations in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prevented broader Israeli-Arab rapprochement. Among other decisions, that administration implemented discriminatory policies that distinguished between Jewish communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967. That approach culminated in December 2016, when the Obama administration maneuvered the United Nations Security Council into passing UNSCR 2334, which among other things denied Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights and part of its capital Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter.

The Trump administration systematically worked to hollow out and render UNSCR 2334 null and void. They did so, including by recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, by moving our embassy to Jerusalem, by seeking to end discriminatory approaches that distinguished legally and for the purposes of aid and trade between different Israeli communities, and by taking several other steps.

- Can you commit to ensuring that USAID’s approach to Israel, including cooperative projects, will not distinguish or discriminate between Israeli communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967? If not, why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to advance the administration’s strong support for the U.S.-Israel relationship, as well as to enhance prospects for two states by working to responsibly restart humanitarian and development assistance in the West Bank and Gaza in compliance with all legal requirements, including the Taylor Force Act.

Question. Do you believe that a) Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?; b) Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem? c) Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem?; d) Israel is in illegal occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem?

Answer. The administration’s position is that our embassy will remain in Jerusalem, which we recognize as Israel’s capital. The administration has made clear that the ultimate status of Jerusalem is a final status issue which will need to be resolved by the parties in the context of direct negotiations. I agree that the current Syrian regime and its Iranian allies poses a significant security risk to Israel and that the Golan Heights is critically important to Israel’s security.

Yemen

Question. On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On February 5 the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. The issue of aid was central to the public explanation of the decision: officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the “broad” designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen’s population live under areas controlled by the group. Since then the Houthis have escalated their violence across the region, bombarding civilians in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Yemen was already one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the world, in large part because the Houthis and their Iranian backers block aid, steal aid, and attack civilians.

- Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

Answer. Iran’s support for the Houthis-and the Houthis use of food as a weapon of war-during the long-running conflict in Yemen has contributed to the gravest humanitarian crisis in the world. Moreover, I agree that Iran’s malign influence in the region, including in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, has clear destabilizing effects.

Iran's support for terrorism and human rights abuses threatens U.S. forces and partners in the region in places like Iraq and Lebanon and hinders our ability to provide humanitarian assistance in places like Yemen and Syria. The U.S. Government continues to call on all parties to implement a comprehensive, nationwide ceasefire in Yemen. The crisis in Yemen will only be resolved when all parties to the conflict agree to a durable and peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Question. Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to deliver aid to Yemeni civilians in general.

Answer. The Houthis are far from benign actors, and their actions contribute to prolonging the suffering of the Yemeni people. However, the administration takes seriously the warnings from the U.N. and international humanitarian organizations that these designations could lead to a wide-scale famine. At the same time, the administration has been clear that it will not hesitate to apply pressure to push the Houthis to curb their abuses against the Yemeni people and to negotiate an end to the war. With the lifting of the terrorist sanctions, the U.S. can continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Yemen, and critical commercial trade, such as food and fuel, can flow freely. USAID has announced \$336 million in FY 2021 humanitarian funding that implementing partners can now use to provide lifesaving assistance to more than 13 million Yemenis. As this assistance moves forward, USAID will continuously monitor the Houthis' interference and our partners' access to populations in need to determine if our assistance is able to reach those for whom it is intended.

Question. Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to deliver aid to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

Answer. As referenced in the prior question, Houthi operations in Yemen exacerbate the already-catastrophic humanitarian situation in Yemen, and the Houthi leadership should be held accountable for their actions. However, while seeking to counter Houthi conduct, we must also consider the highly credible voices urging the United States not to make the country's humanitarian crisis worse or make it even harder to end Yemen's civil war. The Biden administration's action has enabled the U.S. to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Yemenis, including to those affected by the recent escalation of conflict in Marib, and critical commercial trade, such as food and fuel, can resume.

Classified Information

Question. The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF.

- Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress by USAID is in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, USAID's classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

U.S. Foreign Policy

Question. U.S. foreign policy is a responsibility which cannot be delegated to foreign powers or international institutions. On the contrary, the weight of U.S. foreign policy comes in three parts from Congress: treaty ratification or rejection, domestic law that forms the basis for enforcing foreign policy positions, and the power over the purse.

- Do you agree that U.S. foreign policy is non-delegable to foreign powers, including international institutions, and that any enforcement of commitments made by the United States bilaterally or multilaterally must be authorized by Congress in the form of treaty ratification or domestic law?

Answer. I agree that the U.S. Government is solely responsible for conducting foreign policy on behalf of the American people, and that this responsibility cannot be

delegated outside the Government. Collaboration with other nations and private actors, including using platforms like international institutions, can be used to effectively implement U.S. foreign policy.

Question. In a 2003 piece for the New Republic you wrote, “And the American approach must cease its reliance on gratuitous unilateralism. We make rules and create international institutions precisely in order to bind states when their short-term interests would otherwise lead them toward defection. The United States is willing to bind itself to the World Trade Organization, because it knows it benefits more than any other country from free trade, but not to the ICC, because there is no good selfish reason to expose American citizens to external scrutiny. But the truth is that only U.S. resources and leadership can turn such institutions into forces for the international stability that is indispensable to U.S. security. Besides, giving up a pinch of sovereignty will not deprive the United States of the tremendous military and economic leverage it has at its disposal as a last resort.”

- Is it your view that the United States federal Government, through the resources of its taxpayers spent at international institutions, is responsible morally and legally for “international stability?”

Answer. The United States is not the world’s policeman. It is a critically important global leader and catalyst, and it has often used its resources and foreign policy tools to promote stability, development, democracy, and human rights, as well as to alleviate suffering in humanitarian contexts. As the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates, the welfare of Americans is often connected to the fate of people living elsewhere. As a result, to take but one example, investments in global health security are investments in the security, prosperity, and overall well-being of the American people. In addition, when the United States works with partners and allies and succeeds in exerting its influence at the United Nations and other global forums, we can be more effective in countering malign actors such as China, Russia and Iran—who would like nothing more than to undermine the democratic values, human rights norms, and rules of the international system that benefit the American people and contribute to global stability.

Question. Additionally, is it your view that in joining multilateral institutions and international agreements outside the treaty ratification process and changes in domestic law by Congress, the United States only “gives up a pinch of sovereignty?” If yes, do you believe it is appropriate for the president to unilaterally cede sovereignty to a foreign power or international governing body?

Answer. The President should always act to advance what is best for the American people. I believe that foreign policy should be conducted in accordance with U.S. law. I also believe that Congress has an important voice and should be consulted in foreign policy deliberations including with respect to international agreements and engagement with multilateral institutions.

Question. You note in the same piece that the United States constitutes, “the very runaway state international law needs to contain.” Please elaborate on this view, and please specifically address how this view reconciles with the oath you will take if confirmed to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.”

Answer. This quote from eighteen years ago does not represent my view of the United States. I should not have used that language, especially because the article itself is an extended and passionate call for America’s moral leadership in the world.

In 2009, before I became NSC Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, I took the oath to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” It was one of the greatest honors of my life. I did so again in 2013 when I became U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. As a public servant, I have been a tireless advocate for American values around the world and a relentless defender of the United States at the U.N. and elsewhere, standing up to malign actors such as China, Russia, Venezuela, Iran, Syria, North Korea, and others who seek to undermine U.S. interests. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to determine how to be maximally effective in promoting and protecting the interests of the American people, drawing on the important tools that USAID can bring to bear to promote freedom and prosperity.

Question. Religious liberty is a foundational American value enshrined in our First Amendment. USAID policy should respect and affirm life and religious liberty at all stages of the program cycle. This includes adherence to, at minimum, the Siljander and Helms amendments.

- If confirmed, do you commit to following these provisions of law in crafting and implementing USAID policies, procedures, and programs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will follow the law and ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Helms and Siljander amendments.

Food for Peace

Question. Food aid delivered to people in need abroad under the Food for Peace program currently falls subject to a requirement that 50 percent of the commodities are transported on U.S. built, flagged, and crewed vessels. Unfortunately, this requirement results in higher shipping costs, limited availability of vessels or vessels not appropriately outfitted for carrying food aid, and less food arriving to people in need due to food spoilage. A 2018 GAO report estimates that “for each \$40-million increase in shipping costs, food aid reaches one-million fewer recipients each year.”

- Is it your view that cargo preference requirements prevent vital aid from reaching intended recipients in a timely manner?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to make USAID’s programming to combat rising food insecurity as effective and efficient as possible, and to build the resilience of vulnerable communities. Each of the food assistance modalities—U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming—complements the others in addressing food insecurity efficiently and effectively. At this time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, USAID’s ability to reach hungry people and improve the efficiency of our programs is of the utmost importance.

Question. Is it your view that USAID should be spending more of their resources allotted for Food for Peace on the aid products and commodities as opposed to transportation costs?

Answer. As USAID responds to an increasing number of complex and protracted humanitarian crises, the costs of providing emergency food assistance have unfortunately grown to reflect increased security and logistical needs. In FY 2020, USAID shipped more than 1.4 million metric tons of U.S.-grown agricultural commodities using Food for Peace Title II resources. Volatility in shipping costs is just one complex element USAID faces in the management of the Food for Peace Title II account as it responds to increasing food insecurity worldwide.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. If you are confirmed, how will USAID contribute to efforts by the United States and our partner nations to counter the People’s Republic of China’s predatory and malign Belt and Road Initiative, including by bringing together governments, the private sector, and civil society to promote global infrastructure development. China’s Belt and Road Initiative uses predatory financing, debt-trap diplomacy, bribery, corruption, and other means to promote infrastructure projects in developing nations, with the goals of creating new markets for China’s “national champion” companies, capturing the loyalty of foreign government and business elites, and drawing developing nations—especially those in strategic locations or with strategically important resources—into Beijing’s geopolitical orbit.

Answer. Competition with China is one of the defining challenges of the 21st century for the United States. By advancing security, protecting global health, fighting climate change, strengthening democracy, and spurring equitable economic growth, USAID can play an integral role in helping the U.S. meet the challenges you have identified that are posed by the Belt and Road Initiative. The administration’s approach is to provide an alternative vision to Beijing’s—a vision that promotes democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership in our global development work. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America’s comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC’s, by engaging directly with our partner countries and ensuring that good governance, sustainability, and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. USAID can strengthen local capacity to ensure that development investments are both beneficial and sustainable. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners, including at the DFC and in the private sector, to better leverage our collective resources and influence, and I will be an advocate for the highest human rights, governance, environmental, social, and labor standards in order to promote investments that are sustainable for the long term.

Question. If you are confirmed, how will USAID not only promote effective U.S. development assistance and humanitarian assistance, but also advance America’s

long-term competition with the Chinese Communist Party's broader malign influence and predatory efforts around the world?

Answer. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) approach to development through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) raises deep concerns for me and many of USAID's partners. Projects connected to BRI have come under significant scrutiny on issues such as corruption; unsustainable debt; environmental degradation; preferencing of Chinese firms over local enterprises for construction contracts and jobs; lack of transparency and local consultations; and even worries about the potential erosion of sovereignty due to the unfavorable terms attached to certain projects. I share your conviction that USAID needs a far-reaching strategy that addresses the challenges posed by the BRI. There is no question that the frustrations many around the world have voiced with China's development practices provide an opportunity for the U.S. U.S. support for transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance gives us another advantage, especially in communities that have experienced repression and corruption. If confirmed, I will continue to promote human rights, democracy and transparency and I will ensure that USAID works with partners to better leverage our collective resources and influence for sustainable and beneficial development pursued in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

Question. If you are confirmed, how will you support and strengthen USAID's commitment to combat religious persecution, which is all the more important after the State Department's recent determination of the Chinese Communist Party's genocide and crimes against humanity with respect to Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang? You have written extensively about the failure of past U.S. presidential administration to prevent and respond to genocide.

Answer. As you note, I have a longstanding commitment to human rights, and have seen firsthand how religious minorities are at risk of being targeted with atrocities. I also agree with you, President Biden, and experts who have studied the facts that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang.

While serving in the Obama administration, I advocated on behalf of Coptic Christians in Egypt who were experiencing violent attacks and met with Iraqi Christians while visiting Iraq to show support for their community. As Ambassador to the U.N., I used my platform to elevate the voices of religious minorities, such as by pushing for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for refusing to denounce her Christian faith. I also called for Sudan to repeal the laws that put her in jail in the first place. In addition, I worked with the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and others in the administration to seek recognition for ISIS's violence against the Yazidi people, Iraqi Christians, and Shiite Muslims as a genocide, which Secretary of State Kerry recognized in March of 2016. I gave a young Yazidi woman named Nadia Murad her first major public forum, inviting her to speak before the U.N. Security Council, after her family had been almost completely wiped out by ISIS and she had been forced into sexual slavery. USAID has a history of helping the world's most vulnerable people, and, if confirmed, I will invest in efforts to support communities persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith, and I will make it a priority to prevent and address ongoing violence and atrocities perpetrated against religious and ethnic minorities including Rohingya; Yazidis and Christians in Iraq, Syria and other parts of the Middle East; and Tigrayans.

Question. Do you believe that the People's Republic of China should be classified as a "developing country" at the World Trade Organization? China-as the world's second largest economy-is still classified as a "developing country" at the World Trade Organization.

Answer. No, I do not believe China should be classified as a "developing country." Indeed, by any number of measures, China today is a global economic powerhouse. China is already the world's largest trading nation, having surpassed the United States in 2013, and its investments in research and development are second only to those of the United States-having increased by more than 15 percent a year on average over the past two decades. And in 2020, half of the top ten largest public companies in the world were Chinese companies. If confirmed, I will work with Congress and the administration to counter China's tactics whether in global forums or at the country and regional level, including in Africa, Asia and the Western Hemisphere.

Question. What is your assessment of USAID's "Clear Choice" strategy under the last presidential administration? If you are confirmed, do you commit to continuing and improving USAID's "Clear Choice" strategy? As DevEx-a media platform that tracks the international development efforts-reported in December 2020, your predecessor, USAID Administrator Mark Green "spearheaded a broad agency strategy

called ‘Clear Choice,’ intended to denote that countries have a ‘clear choice’ between the U.S. and China when they consider investment partnerships for infrastructure and other development initiatives.” The “Clear Choice” strategy sought to better organize USAID’s regional and functional efforts on development and humanitarian assistance while also meeting the China Challenge and countering China’s malign influence, and better informing and coordinating with interagency partners in the U.S. Government.

Answer. I applaud former Administrator Mark Green’s efforts to proactively counter malign Chinese influence in international development. If confirmed, I will review and build on these efforts, and I will work with allies and partners to better leverage our collective resources and influence.

Question. If you are confirmed, do you commit to modernize the concept of foreign assistance to include also the development and adoption of next-generation telecommunications and mobile technology in partner nations that receive U.S. foreign assistance?

Answer. Digital tools hold immense potential to help people live freer and more prosperous lives. They also present significant risks to citizen privacy and data, freedom of the press, and individual expression. I gather that USAID’s work in this area builds upon the Agency’s twenty-five year legacy of bringing internet access points, strengthening national broadband strategies and universal service funds, and advancing multi-stakeholder models of internet governance to USAID partner countries around the world. Today, such efforts are more important than ever as the foundations of next-generation telecommunications technologies like 5G are developed and adopted by our partner countries to enable their citizens to participate in the digital economy and ultimately become more self-reliant. If confirmed, I will continue USAID’s commitment to open, inclusive, secure and competitive communications infrastructure and mobile technology, as outlined in USAID’s Digital Strategy.

Question. If you are confirmed, how will USAID use foreign assistance to help ensure that partner nations-especially those that receive U.S. foreign assistance-reject or move away from next-generation telecommunications and mobile technology from Huawei or other untrusted China-based vendors?

Answer. USAID is already addressing the challenges presented by untrusted vendors of mobile and next-generation telecommunications equipment. I understand that USAID provides developing countries with technical assistance to encourage reforms to related regulations and policies, including those that support secure networks, vendor diversity, and cybersecurity best practices. USAID programs also include work with civil society to bolster messaging for autonomy, security, and privacy in their telecoms sectors, and with the private sector to increase investment in and deployment of secure communications technologies. If confirmed, I will continue this commitment to next-generation telecommunications and mobile technology built upon trustworthy vendors.

Question. If you are confirmed, do you commit to supporting the Abraham Funds or similar development initiatives with other countries in the Middle East in order to advance U.S. national security interests, support the Abraham Accords, and promote further peace and regional economic cooperation between Israel and Arab nations?

Answer. President Biden rightly welcomed the Abraham Accords as an important contribution to peace in a divided region. If confirmed, I will join others in the Biden-Harris administration in efforts to build on these agreements to further strengthen cooperation between Israel and its neighbors and to encourage other Arab and Muslim countries to normalize relations with Israel. If confirmed, I will seek to take steps that advance the cause of peace, as well as Israel’s integration in the region and the world-something that I was able to make great headway on at the United Nations, securing Israel’s integration into important U.N. bodies from which it had been excluded, recognition of Yom Kippur as an official U.N. holiday, and the convening of the first-ever U.N. General Assembly session on antisemitism.