

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2022

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:00 p.m., in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Benjamin J. Cardin presiding.

Present: Senators Cardin [presiding], Menendez, Coons, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Young, and Hagerty.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND

Senator CARDIN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

I know that we are still missing Dr. Muyangwa. But since she is a Marylander we will excuse her whenever she gets here so that will be fine.

Let me, first, thank our nominees and thank the committee. We adjusted the time because of the schedule changes here. There are bill signings taking place. We have, of course, the issues in regards to Ukraine. We will have President Zelensky before a virtual joint meeting of the members of Congress tomorrow. So it is a crowded agenda.

First, let me thank our nominees for their willingness to be flexible on time and the members of the committee. I, particularly, want to thank Senator Hagerty—he will be here shortly—for his cooperation in adjusting the calendar.

The Republicans did have a lunch today so he may be a few minutes late getting here. But he said it was perfectly okay for us to start the hearing in order to give maximum time for our witnesses—our nominees—and the questioning by members of the committee.

I want to thank all four of our nominees for these positions. These are extremely well-qualified individuals who have devoted themselves to diplomacy, a career in public service, and have served our Nation and are willing now to take on responsibilities in critically important positions at any time but, particularly, now the challenges that we have in our country.

I also want to extend my thanks to your families because we know that public service is a family sacrifice, and we thank them very much for their willingness to allow your service for our country.

I am going to give short introductions to our four nominees and then we will hear from you and we will have questions by members of the committee.

First on our list is Bernadette Meehan, who is nominated to be the Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Chile. She currently serves as Executive Vice President of Global Programs at the Obama Foundation, where she served previously as Chief International Officer and Executive Director of International Programs.

Prior to that, she was a career Foreign Service Officer and worked in multiple positions at the National Security Council including as a senior advisor, as a special assistant to the President and National Security Council spokesperson, and earlier as Director for Strategic Communications.

She also served as a special assistant to the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and served overseas in UAE, Iraq, and Colombia, and has served with bravery in some of our most dangerous situations.

Dr. John Nkengasong is currently the—has been nominated to be the Ambassador at Large of the United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally. He is currently the director of African Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Ethiopia.

Prior to that, he was the Acting Deputy Director of the Center for Global Health at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, before that the chief of International Laboratory branch division of Global HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis at CDC.

He also served as the Associate Director for laboratory science in the division for Global AIDS, HIV, and Tuberculosis at the Center for Global Health and co-chair of PEPFAR's laboratory Technical Working Group.

Dr. Monde Muyangwa has been nominated to be the Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and she is from Maryland, as I have indicated before. We will give her a little bit of a preference as a result of that, and then we know that she will be with us shortly. She is in the building and on her way up to the hearing.

She is the director of African Programs at the Woodrow Wilson Center. Prior to joining the Wilson Center, she served as the academic dean of the African Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, where she also served as professor of civil-military relations. She also worked as Director of Research and then Vice President for Research and Policy at the National Summit on Africa.

Prior to that, she worked as Director of International Education Programs at New Mexico Highlands University.

Then, lastly, we have Rebecca Gonzales, who has been nominated to be the Senior Foreign Service Class of Minister-Counselor to be Director of the Office of Foreign Missions.

She is currently serving as the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. Previously, she served as the chief of staff in the Bureau of Administration at the Department of State.

She has also served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, as Deputy Manager Counselor at the U.S. Embassies in Pretoria, South Africa, Management Officer at

the U.S. Embassy in Botswana, a special assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary of Management of the Department of State.

Other assignments for Ambassador Gonzales include service in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the U.S. Embassies in Saudi Arabia, India, Colombia, and Greece.

Wow. Let me just tell you something. We have four very impressive individuals who have served our country with great distinction. We are really honored to have you before us and your willingness to continue to serve our . We thank you for that.

As I have indicated earlier, when Senator Hagerty gets here we will allow him to give his opening comments, but we will start with Ms. Meehan.

You may—your full testimony will be made part of our record and you may proceed as you wish. Please try to keep your comments to no more than five minutes.

**STATEMENT OF BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN OF NEW YORK,
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO
THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE**

Ms. MEEHAN. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Chile.

I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence that they have placed in me. I want to thank my husband, Evan, here with me today, my parents, Terry and Joe, and my sister, Liz, for their love and support, and note how much we love and miss my younger brother, Chris, who passed away last summer.

I would also like to express my love for my daughter, Milly, who, at three years old, is the light of my life and reminds me every day how rewarding and challenging it is to be a working mom.

Over 25 years I have been fortunate to hold diverse positions in the Government, nonprofit, and private sectors. But the highest privilege was representing my country for 13 years as a career Foreign Service Officer. It would be the honor of my life to return to the service of the American people as a U.S. diplomat.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Congress to advance the interests of the United States in Chile. While serving in Colombia on my first tour as a Foreign Service Officer, I was abducted and assaulted by armed assailants. During my year in Iraq, I witnessed every day the dangers facing Americans—diplomats, military, NGO staff, journalists, and civilians.

I am proud to volunteer with a nonprofit organization that supports families of Americans taken hostage or wrongfully detained abroad and the former hostages and detainees when they return home.

These experiences ingrained in me the solemn responsibility the U.S. Government has and, if confirmed, the safety of American citizens will be my highest priority.

I first visited Chile in 1992 when I was a 16-year-old high school exchange student in Argentina. On school break, I joined my host

family on a bus trip across Patagonia and Magallanes to Punta Arenas, Chile.

In the 30 years since, Chile has undergone enormous changes. The United States' relationship with Chile is one of the strongest, most diverse, and most beneficial in the Western Hemisphere, from trade and investment to cooperation in science, technology, and defense to promoting good governance and human rights throughout the region.

For over 30 years, Chile has been a champion of democracy and free and fair trade, and a like-minded partner with robust economic, academic, and cultural ties. Chile is also a leader in calling out human rights abuses and undemocratic practices in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua.

If confirmed, I will build on our shared values to continue this important and productive partnership with a focus on three areas.

First, supporting Chile's vibrant democracy at a pivotal moment in Chile's history with free and fair elections last year that set a powerful example for the region and the world, and a constitutional assembly that is channeling grievances into a peaceful and democratic reform process.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with President Boric and his administration and offering U.S. support to the Chilean Government and civil society organizations as they seek to deliver greater economic opportunity and social equality to the Chilean people.

Second, promoting economic opportunity and trade that will benefit all Americans and Chileans. Our free trade agreement has nearly quadrupled bilateral trades in goods, propelling job creation and economic growth in both countries.

The United States is Chile's number-one source of foreign direct investment with \$23 billion in FDI, and the Department of Commerce reports that U.S. exports to Chile support an estimated 87,000 American jobs.

I believe Chile's commendable tradition of openness, combined with a responsible investment screening mechanism that considers national security interests, would maintain the security of Chile's critical infrastructure and sensitive technologies as well as Chile's attractiveness to foreign investors.

To protect and expand U.S. business opportunities, if confirmed, I will advocate for a continued business climate in Chile that is based on respect for free trade, democracy, and democratic good governance.

Third, bolstering our already strong collaboration in science, technology, and innovation, including on priorities such as investing in renewable energy and combating the climate crisis, as well as space, health, and emerging technologies.

U.S. investment in scientific infrastructure in Chile exceeds \$1 billion. Chile is a leader on oceans and climate issues and in deploying clean energy such as solar, wind, and hydrogen.

Chile is also a world leader in vaccinating its people against COVID-19. The United States values our partnerships with Chile in these areas and, if confirmed, I will work to expand them.

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

[The prepared statement of Ms. Meehan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Chile. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I want to thank my husband, Evan, my parents Terry and Joe, and my sister Liz for their love and support, and note how much we love and miss my brother Chris, who passed away last summer. I'd also like to express my love for my daughter Milly, who at three years old is the light of my life and reminds me every day how rewarding and challenging it is to be a working mom.

Over 25 years, I have been fortunate to hold diverse positions in the Government, non-profit, and private sectors, but the highest privilege was representing my country for 13 years as a Foreign Service Officer. It would be the honor of my life to return to the service of the American people as a U.S. diplomat. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Congress to advance the interests of the United States in Chile.

While serving in Colombia on my first tour as a Foreign Service Officer, I was abducted and assaulted by armed assailants. During my year serving in Iraq, I witnessed every day the dangers facing Americans—diplomats, military, NGO staff, journalists, and civilians. I am proud to volunteer with a non-profit organization that supports families of Americans taken hostage or wrongfully detained abroad, and the former hostages and detainees when they return home. These experiences ingrained in me the solemn responsibility that the U.S. Government has, and if confirmed, the safety of American citizens will be my highest priority.

I first visited Chile in 1992, when I was a 16-year-old high school exchange student in Argentina. On school break, I joined my host family on a bus trip across Patagonia and Magallanes to Punta Arenas, Chile. In the 30 years since, Chile has undergone enormous changes.

The United States' relationship with Chile is one of the strongest, most diverse, and mutually beneficial in the Western Hemisphere, from trade and investment to cooperation in science, technology, and defense, to promoting good governance and human rights throughout the region. For over 30 years, Chile has been a champion of democracy and free and fair trade and a like-minded partner with robust economic, academic, and cultural ties. Chile is also a leader in calling out human rights abuses and undemocratic practices in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua.

If confirmed, I will build on our shared values to continue this important and productive partnership, with a focus on three areas:

First, supporting Chile's vibrant democracy at a pivotal moment in Chile's history, with free and fair elections last year that set a powerful example for the world and a constitutional assembly that is channeling grievances into a peaceful and democratic reform process. If confirmed, I look forward to working with President Boric and his administration and offering U.S. support to the Chilean Government and civil society organizations as they seek to deliver greater economic opportunity and social equality to the Chilean people.

Second, promoting economic opportunity and trade that will benefit all Americans and Chileans. Our Free Trade Agreement has nearly quadrupled bilateral trade in goods, propelling job creation and economic growth in both countries. The United States is Chile's number one source of foreign direct investment, with \$23 billion in FDI, and the Department of Commerce reports that U.S. exports to Chile support an estimated 87,000 American jobs. I believe Chile's commendable tradition of openness, combined with a responsible investment screening mechanism that considers national security interests, would maintain the security of Chile's critical infrastructure and sensitive technologies, as well as Chile's attractiveness to foreign investors. To protect and expand U.S. business opportunities, if confirmed, I will advocate for a continued business climate in Chile that is based on respect for free trade, transparency, and democratic good governance.

Third, bolstering our already strong collaborations in science, technology, and innovation, including on priorities such as investing in renewable energy and combating the climate crisis, as well as space, health, and emerging technologies. U.S. investment in scientific infrastructure in Chile exceeds \$1 billion. Chile is a leader on oceans and climate issues and in deploying clean energy, such as solar, wind, and hydrogen. Chile is also a world leader in vaccinating its people against COVID-19. The United States values our partnerships with Chile in these areas, and if confirmed, I will work to expand them.

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

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your testimony.
We will now hear from Dr. Nkengasong.

**STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN N. NKENGASONG OF GEORGIA,
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE, COORDINATOR
OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO COM-
BAT HIV/AIDS GLOBALLY**

Mr. NKENGASONG. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator to lead and coordinate PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

I am immensely grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for entrusting me at a critical time as we face the fight against a dual pandemic, HIV/AIDS and COVID-19.

I want to thank my lovely wife, Susan, and our three wonderful children—Pete, Gladys, and Paul—for their patience and support all the years as I have pursued a career in global health.

If confirmed, I would assume leadership of an unprecedented initiative with a long history of strong bipartisan congressional leadership and a proven track record of lifesaving work.

Since 2003 when Congress and President Bush created PEPFAR, it has saved more than 21 million lives and prevented millions of HIV infections, including in children. PEPFAR has been strengthened over the last 19 years through continued American generosity and a conviction to finish the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Despite COVID-19, PEPFAR has proven remarkably resilient in protecting and advancing HIV gains as well as creating the backbone to fight other health threats, including COVID-19.

I know this to be true, as I believe it and seen firsthand the positive impact it has had on people around the world.

If confirmed, I will draw upon my three decades of program and research experience in public health and HIV to advance PEPFAR's mission, assure that it continues its success, collaborate with partner countries and communities, and sustain the strong partnership it enjoys with Congress, including all of you.

If confirmed, I will be stepping into this role at a critical moment when the world is confronted with a dual pandemic. We have seen how COVID-19 has affected some HIV programs with devastating results. But we have also witnessed how the health systems and institutions built and strengthened by PEPFAR investment have been central to COVID-19 response.

If confirmed, I will work and focus on continuing our fight against HIV/AIDS in close collaboration with countries and communities while also acknowledging and appreciating the broader context that will determine the success of our actions.

As the director of the Africa CDC, I have seen how PEPFAR's investment in health systems have strengthened and, in some cases, established the fundamental health infrastructures—laboratory systems, surveillance, and human resources in the countries where we have served.

In the past, efforts around HIV were premised upon building health systems around the world. The goal now must shift and I believe our efforts must now ensure that these services and systems are sustainable, resilient to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS, including pediatric HIV/AIDS, in the future, as well as other diseases.

For this to happen, it is my belief that we need to capitalize on the capacity and experience of those in the countries where we work with a deep respect for their perspectives or needs and taking into account their knowledge and local expertise.

As we continue our fight towards sustaining epidemic control of HIV/AIDS, the key task ahead of us will involve doubling down on evidence-based interventions to address local contexts. We must work in partnership with communities and countries to ensure that we have enabling environments that leave nobody behind.

For health systems to be sustainable and keep infectious diseases in check, we must act collectively to support the capabilities of local leaders and regional institutions, and work in respectful partnership and accountability with them.

I am humbled and privileged to appear before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nkengasong follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN N. NKENGASONG

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as the Ambassador-at-Large, Coordinator of the United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally to lead and coordinate PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. I am immensely grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for entrusting me at this critical time as we face and fight the dual global pandemics of HIV/AIDS and COVID-19.

I want to thank my lovely wife Susan, and our three lovely children (Pete, Gladys, and Paul) for their patience and support all the years as they have followed me in multiple countries across the world as I pursue global health.

If confirmed, I would assume leadership of an unprecedented initiative with a long history of strong, unwavering bipartisan Congressional leadership and support and a proven track record of global life-saving work. Since 2003, when Congress and President George W. Bush created the initiative, PEPFAR has saved more than 21 million lives and prevented millions of HIV infections. PEPFAR has been strengthened over the last 19 years through continued American generosity and a conviction to finish the fight against AIDS.

Despite COVID-19, PEPFAR has proven remarkably resilient in protecting and advancing hard-fought HIV gains as well as creating the backbone to fight other health threats, including COVID-19. I know all this to be true, as I have lived it and seen it firsthand—the positive impact it has had on people around the globe.

PEPFAR is one of the most successful initiatives implemented through a whole-of-U.S. Government approach, bringing the best of the United States to bear. If confirmed, I will draw upon my three decades of experience with programs and research in public health and HIV, specifically from the United States CDC, as well as my recent experiences as the first Director of the Africa CDC and other leadership roles in public health institutions, to humbly advance PEPFAR's mission, assure its continued success, collaborate with partner governments and communities, and sustain the strong partnership it enjoys with Congress.

If confirmed, I would be stepping into this role at a critical moment when the world is confronted with dual global pandemics. We have seen how COVID-19 has affected some progress in our HIV efforts with devastating results, but we have also witnessed how the health systems and institutions built and strengthened by PEPFAR's investments have been central to the COVID-19 response.

I have dedicated my service to improving public health by fighting diseases. My experience specific to HIV goes back more than 30 years. I served as Chief of Virology and the WHO Collaborating Center on HIV diagnostics at the Institute of Trop-

ical Medicine Antwerp. I then served as the U.S. CDC's Acting Deputy Principal Director of the Center for Global Health, as well as an Associate Director within CDC's Division of Global HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis.

If confirmed, I will draw upon these experiences and focus on continuing our fight against HIV/AIDS in close collaboration with governments and communities, while also acknowledging and appreciating the broader context that will determine the success of our actions and the future of the PEPFAR program. As Director of the Africa CDC, I have seen how PEPFAR's investments in health systems over the past 19 years have strengthened—and in some cases, established—the fundamental health infrastructure, laboratories, surveillance systems, and human resources for health in the countries where it helps serve.

In the past, efforts around HIV were premised upon building these systems from the ground up. With these now in place, the goal has now shifted, and I believe our efforts must now ensure that these services and systems are sustainable and resilient to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS in the future, as well as other diseases. For this to happen, it is my belief that we need to capitalize on the capacity and experience of those in the countries where we work, coming to the table with a deep respect for their perspectives and needs, taking account of their insights, their knowledge of local contexts, and their reservoirs of expertise. For such systems to be sustainable and keep infectious disease in check, we must act collectively to support the capabilities of local leaders and regional institutions and work in respectful partnership and accountability with them.

As we continue our fight toward sustaining epidemic control of HIV/AIDS in so many places, the key tasks ahead will involve diplomatic engagement and doubling down on evidence-based interventions to address local contexts.

I am humbled and privileged to appear before you today and to be considered to lead, if confirmed, truly one of the most remarkable, life-saving efforts ever. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your comments.

We will now go to Senator Hagerty for his opening comments. Of course, Senator Hagerty is a former ambassador to Japan so he knows how you all feel on that side of the room.

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

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Senator Cardin, and I must say it was a real privilege to be on that side when you were sitting here. You were very kind to me through that process and I appreciate it.

And I would also say to all of you I hope you will reach out to us here on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, should you be confirmed, and view us as your allies and supporters.

And, really, I would like to thank all of you and your families. I know what it takes from a family perspective to do the jobs that you are taking on. A big thanks goes out to them as well.

I would like to start with the nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Chile. The United States and Chile share a long history of friendship and cooperation, and I look forward to hearing from the nominee about how we can strengthen the U.S. partnership with Chile while also countering China's malign influence in the country and, frankly, throughout Latin America.

I would like to turn to the nominee to be the coordinator of United States Government activities to combat HIV/AIDS globally. This position will spearhead the effort to curb HIV/AIDS and the United States needs a strong ambassador who will work tirelessly to maintain this commitment in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic. I look forward to hearing from the nominee on this subject.

Next, I would like to turn to the nomination for USAID's Assistant Administrator for Africa. This position serves an important role

in continuing progress made under the Trump administration's Prosper Africa Initiative to provide an alternative to China's increased investment in debt diplomacy on the African continent through its One Belt, One Road strategy.

At a time when our strategic adversaries are attempting to rewrite international rules and norms, it will be critical for USAID to advance investments and values that represent the free world.

And last but, certainly, not least, I would like to focus on the nomination to the Director of the Office of Foreign Missions.

This position has the important task of establishing the foundation of diplomacy by facilitating the secure and efficient operations of U.S. missions abroad and of foreign missions and international organizations here in the United States.

To all four nominees, again, I want to thank you and your families for serving our and for answering the questions before the committee today. I look forward to your testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty.

We will now go to Dr. Muyangwa. Glad to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF DR. MONDE MUYANGWA OF MARYLAND, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. MUYANGWA. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Administrator for Africa at the United States Agency for International Development. I am grateful for President Biden and Administrator Power's trust in me to serve in this position.

I would not be sitting before you today without the love, support, and sacrifice of my family in the United States and Zambia. I owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

I would especially like to thank my husband, our family anchor and my biggest supporter, David Kaloustian; our daughter, Inonge, who is here with me today; my mother, bo Nmukulo Muyangwa; and my siblings, extended family, and network of friends and colleagues.

I would also like to acknowledge two role models for their unwavering support and belief in me—my late father, bo Mubaale Muyangwa, and my late uncle, Simasiku Chimuka.

As a girl growing up in Zambia, I experienced USAID's work firsthand. To deter Zambia's support for the region's liberation and independence movement, the apartheid and minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia blockaded or destroyed landlocked Zambia's transport infrastructure, disrupting the economy and causing severe food shortages.

Still, USAID found a way of getting critical food supplies to the population. I vividly remember the day trucks pulled into my boarding school to deliver bags of maize meal emblazoned with the USAID logo.

In addition, being from a region hit hard by HIV/AIDS, I have lost family members to the disease. Over the years, I have wit-

nessed PEPFAR save millions of lives. USAID's mission resonates deeply with me on a personal level.

Professionally, I have spent the last 24 years working to advance U.S.-Africa relations, focusing on the issues that are at the heart of USAID's mission—security, development, and governance.

I spent three years at the National Summit on Africa engaging Americans across the country about why Africa matters to the United States and developing policy recommendations for stronger U.S.-Africa relations.

I then spent 13 years at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at the Department of Defense building African capacities and partnerships to prevent and address conflict, violent extremism, and fragility, and enhance good governance and the rule of law.

For the last eight years at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars I have led the organization's work analyzing and developing policy options for addressing key issues in U.S.-Africa relations in the economic, governance, and security realms.

If confirmed, I vow to bring this substantive leadership experience and long-term commitment to working in a bipartisan manner to bear on the USAID mission on the Africa Bureau's work.

Today, USAID's mission is more important than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmed fragile health systems, caused tremendous loss of life, erased several years of development gains, and thrown millions of Africans into poverty.

Insecurity, violent extremism, and conflict in several countries have killed thousands and displaced millions more, resulting in humanitarian crises that are compounded by climate change.

Furthermore, the continent is witnessing a rapidly evolving democracy landscape and the increased role of international actors, especially China and Russia.

While the narrative about Africa is too often dominated by its challenges, the Africa that I know is also characterized by resilience, transformation, and promise, as partially evidenced by African innovations to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, expanding tech hubs, and people fighting to safeguard democracy.

These and other developments have reinforced my belief that Africa's people, particularly its youth, are the continent's greatest resource.

Therefore, if confirmed, I commit to working with you to engage with Africa's challenges and opportunities, and balance the agency's lifesaving work with investments in development.

Specifically, I would focus on four priorities.

First, solidify and expand our economic engagement and recover the gains lost to the COVID pandemic and humanitarian crises, and foster investments to help put the continent back on an upward development trajectory.

Second, address the key factors that hinder development including climate change, democratic backsliding, and fragility.

Third, consolidate, develop, and expand strategic partnerships with Africans in other countries with the private sector and civil society in order to amplify the pace and impact of desired development outcomes.

Fourth, and the overarching goal, lead and manage the Africa Bureau's people, programs, and financial resources in a way that

both supports the well being and security of staff and ensures that the resources entrusted to us by the American people are managed effectively, efficiently, and with accountability.

I have long appreciated the bipartisan support for Africa in Congress and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and others in Congress to continue to strengthen U.S.-Africa relations.

Thank you for your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Muyangwa follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MONDE MUYANGWA, PH.D.

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Administrator for Africa at the United States Agency for International Development. I am grateful for President Biden and Administrator Power's trust in me to serve in this position.

I would not be sitting before you today without the love, support, and sacrifice of my family in the United States and Zambia. I owe them a huge debt of gratitude. I would especially like to thank my husband, our family anchor and my biggest supporter, David Kaloustian; our daughter, Inonge; my mother, bo Namukulo Muyangwa; and my siblings, extended family, and network of friends and colleagues in both countries. I would also like to acknowledge two role models for their unwavering support and belief in me—my late father, bo Mbaale Muyangwa and late uncle, bo Simasiku Chimuka.

As a girl growing up in Zambia, I experienced USAID's work firsthand. To deter Zambia's support for the region's liberation and independence movements, the apartheid and minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia blockaded or destroyed landlocked Zambia's transport infrastructure, disrupting the economy and causing severe food shortages. Still, USAID found a way of getting critical food supplies to the population. I vividly remember the day trucks pulled into my boarding school to deliver bags of maize meal, emblazoned with the USAID logo. In addition, being from a region hit hard by HIV/AIDS, I have lost family members to the disease. Over the years, I have observed PEPFAR save millions of lives. USAID's mission resonates deeply with me on a personal level.

Professionally, I have spent the last 24 years working to advance U.S.-Africa relations, focusing on the issues at the heart of USAID's mission: security, development, and governance. I spent three years at the National Summit on Africa, engaging Americans across the country about why Africa matters to the United States and developing policy recommendations for stronger U.S.-Africa relations. I then spent 13 years at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies at the Department of Defense, building African capacities and partnerships to prevent and address conflict, violent extremism, and fragility and enhance good governance and the rule of law. For the last eight years at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, I have led the organization's work analyzing and developing policy options for addressing key issues in U.S.-Africa relations in the economic, governance, and security realms. If confirmed, I vow to bring this substantive leadership experience and longstanding commitment to working in a bipartisan manner to bear on the USAID mission and the Africa Bureau's work.

Today, USAID's mission is more important than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmed fragile health systems, caused tremendous loss of life, erased several years of development gains, and thrown millions of Africans into poverty. Insecurity, violent extremism, and conflict in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Central Africa, and northern Mozambique have killed thousands and displaced millions more, resulting in humanitarian crises compounded by climate change. Furthermore, the continent is witnessing a rapidly evolving democracy landscape and the increased role of international actors, especially China and Russia.

While the narrative about Africa is too often dominated by its challenges, the Africa that I know is also characterized by resilience, transformation, and promise, as partially evidenced by African innovations to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, expanding tech hubs, and the people fighting to safeguard democracy. These and other developments have reinforced my belief that Africa's people, particularly its youth, are the continent's greatest resource.

Therefore, if confirmed, I commit to working with you to engage with Africa's challenges and opportunities and balance the agency's life-saving work with investments in development. Specifically, I would focus on four priorities: First, solidify and expand our economic engagement to recover the gains lost to the COVID pan-

demographic and humanitarian crises, and foster investments to help put the continent back on an upward development trajectory. Second, address the key factors that hinder development, including climate change, democratic backsliding, and fragility. Third, consolidate, develop, and expand strategic partnerships with African and other countries, the private sector, and civil society in order to amplify the pace and impact of desired development outcomes. Fourth—and the overarching goal—lead and manage the Africa Bureau's people, programs, and financial resources in a way that both supports the well-being and security of staff and ensures that the resources entrusted to us by the American people are managed effectively, efficiently, and with accountability.

I have long appreciated the bipartisan support for Africa in Congress. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and others in Congress to continue to strengthen U.S.-Africa relations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your comments.

We will now go to Ambassador Gonzales.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. REBECCA ELIZA GONZALES OF TEXAS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

Ms. GONZALES. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, over four years ago, I was honored to sit before you as a nominee for United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. I thank you for putting your trust and confidence in me back then.

I am tremendously proud of the countless women and men across the globe with whom I have had the honor to work with as we have made important strides in combating HIV/AIDS, championing democracy and human rights, and promoting trade. I am truly honored to come again before this committee as a nominee, this time as the Director of the Office of Foreign Missions. I am grateful for the confidence President Biden and Secretary Blinken have shown in me through this nomination.

If confirmed as Director of Foreign Missions, I look forward to working with this committee and the Congress in advancing U.S. national security interests, protecting the American public, and advocating for United States missions, our dedicated staff members, and their families overseas.

I would like to take a moment just to recognize and thank my late father, Jose Rene, and my mother, Estella B. Gonzales.

My father, Colonel Jose Rene Gonzales, served in the United States Air Force for 26 years and was buried in 2013 with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

My mother, Estella, who is still a D.C. public school teacher and is here with me today, has been teaching for over 30 years, and I thank you, Mom, for being here.

I would also like to recognize my son, Imagine Alexander, who recently completed his studies at the University of California, who is also here with me.

Raised in a military family, I lived abroad and this gave me a great appreciation for other cultures and a desire to serve my country by joining the Foreign Service. It has been a profound honor and great privilege serving my country for nearly 30 years as a Foreign Service Officer.

My experience in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America and a recognition that there is always much to learn, have prepared me, if confirmed, for the important task of leading the Office of Foreign Missions, an organization whose primary goals are using reciprocity to ensure equitable treatment for U.S. diplomatic and consular missions abroad, regulating the activities of foreign missions in the United States to protect U.S. foreign policy and national security interests, protecting the United States public from abuses of privileges and immunities by members of foreign missions, and providing assistance to ensure the U.S.-based foreign mission community has appropriate privileges, benefits, and services on a reciprocal basis.

As you are aware, OFM was established in 1982 pursuant to the Foreign Missions Act. For more than 30 years this Act has guided the department's management and regulation of foreign missions in the United States and the extension of privileges and benefits, which are crucial to ensuring the smooth and efficient conduct of U.S. foreign policy.

It is through vigilant management and attention to these activities that OFM also protects the public from the abuses—from the abuse of privilege and immunities by members of foreign missions.

A key element of the Foreign Missions Act is reciprocity. This fundamental tenet allows OFM to positively influence and condition the environment in which U.S. diplomatic and consular missions abroad operate.

Reciprocity plays an integral role in advancing our national interests, the efficient conduct of diplomacy, and the safety and well being of our staff and their family members abroad.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I am honored to have the opportunity to address you and the esteemed members of this committee. If confirmed, my priority will be to further the important objectives Congress set out in the Foreign Missions Act.

I look forward to continuing OFM's outstanding work in helping to resolve a myriad of existing challenges and those that inevitably rise in the conduct of U.S. diplomacy.

I thank you, again, for the opportunity to appear before you today and welcome any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Gonzales follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. REBECCA ELIZA GONZALES

Mr. Chairman, ranking member, and members of the committee, over four years ago I was honored to sit before you as the nominee for United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. I thank you for putting your trust and confidence in me back then. I'm tremendously proud of the countless women and men across the globe with whom I have had the honor to work with as we made important strides in combating HIV/AIDS, championing democracy and human rights, and promoting trade. I am truly honored to come again before this committee as a nominee—this time as the Director of the Office of Foreign Missions. I am grateful for the confidence President Biden and Secretary Blinken have shown in me through this nomination.

If confirmed as Director of Foreign Missions, I look forward to working with this Committee and the Congress in advancing U.S. national security interests, protecting the American public, and advocating for United States missions, our dedicated staff members and their families overseas.

I would like to take just a moment to recognize and thank my late father, Jose Rene, and my mother Estella B Gonzales. My father, Colonel Jose Rene Gonzales, served in the United States Air Force for 26 years and was buried in 2013 with full

military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. My mother, Estella, has been a D.C. public school teacher for more than 30 years, and, indeed, I am fortunate to have her with me today. I would also like to recognize my son, Imagine Alexander, who completed his studies at the University of California who is also here with me today.

Raised in a military family, I lived abroad and this gave me a great appreciation for other cultures and a desire to serve my country by joining the Foreign Service. It has been a profound honor and great privilege serving my country for nearly 30 years as a Foreign Service Officer.

My experiences in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America and a recognition that there is always much to learn have prepared me, if confirmed, for the important task of leading the Office of Foreign Missions, an organization whose primary goals are:

- Using reciprocity to ensure equitable treatment for U.S. diplomatic and consular missions abroad;
- Regulating the activities of foreign missions in the United States to protect U.S. foreign policy and national security interests;
- Protecting the U.S. public from abuses of privileges and immunities by members of foreign missions; and
- Providing assistance to ensure the U.S.-based foreign mission community has appropriate privileges, benefits, and services on a reciprocal basis.

As you are aware, OFM was established in 1982 pursuant to the Foreign Missions Act. For more than 30 years, this Act has guided the Department's management and regulation of foreign missions in the United States and the extension of privileges and benefits ranging from property acquisition to domestic travel courtesies and restrictions. Each of these functions is crucial to ensuring the smooth and efficient conduct of U.S. foreign policy. It is through vigilant management and attention to these activities that OFM also protects the public from the abuse of privileges and immunities by members of foreign missions.

A key element of the Foreign Missions Act is reciprocity. This fundamental tenant allows OFM to positively influence and condition the environment in which U.S. diplomatic and consular missions abroad operate. Reciprocity plays an integral role in advancing our national interests, the efficient conduct of diplomacy, and the safety and wellbeing of our staff and their family members abroad. Accordingly, OFM plays a critical role in assisting with the resolution of matters with foreign governments thus contributing to the overall success of the Department's commitment to the safe and efficient operations of our diplomatic and consular missions abroad as well as the safety and prosperity of the American people.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I am honored to have the opportunity to address you and the esteemed members of the committee. If confirmed, my priority will be to further the important objectives Congress set out in the Foreign Missions Act, to include the protection our national security interests and the American public. I look forward to continuing OFM's work in helping to resolve a myriad of existing challenges and those that inevitably arise in the conduct of U.S. diplomacy.

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

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for your comments.

All four of you, thank you for your service as you have taken life experiences and have turned that into a way to use the position of public service to strengthen our . I thank all four of you for your commitment to strengthening America through service and in diplomacy.

I have some obligatory questions that I will ask on behalf of the committee. I would ask that each one of you respond either yes or no to the questions. Then I will yield to my colleagues for the first round of questioning.

The first question—this has to do with cooperation with our committee, et cetera—do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Just go down the row.

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

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

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. You have all passed this part of the hearing. Congratulations to all of you.

[Laughter.]

Senator CARDIN. With that, let me yield to Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Mr. Chair, Senator Hagerty, thank you so much, and what a great panel of witnesses.

Ms. Meehan, I want to talk to you about your service to the country because your opening comments were humble, and I do not want to delve into things that are uncomfortable but I also want this committee to know of your bravery.

You served in Colombia at a very difficult time—2004 to 2006—and you passed over it briefly in your comments. During the time you were serving over there you were kidnapped. You were assaulted.

There was a subsequent trial of at least some of the perpetrators. We always have nominees for ambassador who come before us and say they will take, as a serious priority, keeping their people safe and they always mean it.

I know that that means a particular amount to you, and I also know that you must really rejoice, as many of us do, in the progress that has happened in Colombia since the years that you were there.

To see Colombia announced as a major non-NATO ally by President Biden last week, those kinds of signs of progress make you feel—must make you feel pretty proud.

You then came back to United States later that year, 2006, and during the Bush administration. It was during the Iraq war, a particularly dangerous phase of that war, and the State Department was looking for volunteers to go to Iraq into the war zone there.

Having had a traumatic experience in Colombia, I doubt any of your colleagues would have looked askance at Bernadette Meehan not volunteering to go to Iraq. But you volunteered to go to Iraq within months after the difficult experience in Colombia.

And when I found this out, I was kind of stunned by that. I asked you, when we talked by phone, why did you volunteer to go to Iraq within months after this challenging, challenging situation in Colombia.

Ms. MEEHAN. Senator, thank you for your comments and for the question.

When I joined the Foreign Service, the area that I loved most in the world was the Western Hemisphere so I knew that I wanted to serve there on my first tour.

When it came time to bid on my second tour, the foreign policy priority of President Bush was the war in Iraq and I felt that as a Foreign Service Officer, a career civil servant, I had a duty to answer the call.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was looking for volunteers to serve alongside the men and women of the armed forces and so, for me, this was part of the mission that I had signed up to as a career Foreign Service Officer.

I also joined the Foreign Service with the hope that someday I would be a leader in the Department of State, and I faced the question if at some point in the future, 10, 20 years, I was in a leadership position and was asked to send junior Foreign Service Officers off to a war zone or other difficult post I would have to be able to answer the question where was I during my formative years as a Foreign Service Officer when the war of Iraq and the war in Afghanistan was taking place.

And so in addition to a duty to serve the President and his foreign policy priorities, I also felt a responsibility to the institution of the State Department, which made it an easy decision.

It was by far the most difficult year of my life. That was a particularly vicious time in that war. But there is not a day that goes by that I regret the decision to serve.

Senator KAINE. And, Ms. Meehan, it was not just a difficult time in the war. It was a difficult time for you personally. Tell the committee.

Again, I do not want to probe unnecessarily but please tell the committee about your experience during the year you were in Iraq.

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. It was a beautiful spring day and I was outside on my cell phone talking with someone on the other side of the Green Zone and I could hear the C-RAM go off—the alert system—in a far part of the Green Zone.

But there was a rocket barrage and one of the rockets landed close to where I was and I suffered a concussion, hearing damage that lingers to this day, as a result of that injury, which, to be clear, in the scale of the conflict and the ultimate sacrifices that people made fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is minimal and inconsequential.

But this is part of the risk that we assume when we sign up to work in the Foreign Service. It is something that we acknowledge is a part of the commitment to serving the interests of the United States and part of our commitment to be worldwide available wherever the Secretary and the President need us to serve.

Senator KAINE. I would like to think that if I were in a similar circumstance and had had a very difficult experience, for example, in Colombia, and then I came back and then there was an opportunity to volunteer to go into a war zone, I would like to think—I would like to think that I would have accepted that responsibility and volunteered.

But I really cannot honestly say that I am sure I would have, and that was a very patriotic and ennobling decision. You continued to then serve patriotically for many more years in the Foreign Service, for which we thank you.

But, again, I did not want to get into things that were uncomfortable but I think this is really important for the committee to know. Thank you for sharing that.

I yield back.

Senator CARDIN. I think Senator Kaine speaks for every member of this committee. Thank you for your response to that.

Senator HAGERTY?

Senator HAGERTY. I will speak for Senator Kaine as well to say I feel certain that you would have volunteered if that situation arose.

Ms. Meehan, I would like to just stay with you for the moment, if I might, first, to thank you. For a first tour FSO to have the experience you did in Colombia, I very much appreciate and respect how that has, I am sure, informed your decision-making process as you have continued to serve our and I am sure it will continue to do so, going forward, if you are confirmed.

I also want to acknowledge the fact—I understand you have a three-year-old.

Ms. MEEHAN. Yes, Senator. Milly.

Senator HAGERTY. If you are confirmed, I feel certain Milly will have a most wonderful life-changing experience as she grows into age—an age now that she will remember the experience being with you and serving in a very important role. I commend you and your family for that.

I would like, though, to turn to the influence of China in Chile. In 2018, Chile agreed to join China's Belt and Road Initiative. In 2019, Chile expanded its bilateral free trade agreement with China.

In 2021, Chile joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank that China uses to mount its influence, and just a few days ago Gabriel Boric was inaugurated as Chile's new president, and a new president, a young president, a president that, I think, would probably benefit greatly from the advice of a United States ambassador.

I would like to get a sense for your understanding of the strategic implications of China's role and how that will inform your advice to that president as well as our policy there.

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

In addition to all of the statistics and context that you provided, it is important to note that China is also Chile's number-one trading partner, having overtaken the United States in 2009, and on the soft power side China has announced plans to open Sinovac manufacturing and distribution centers in Chile and also runs a network of 21 Confucius Institutes in the country and, in comparison, the U.S. runs 14 American spaces in Chile.

I think about approaching this issue with vigilance in a number of ways. The first is, as you note, there is a new administration. I think it is important to emphasize the importance of Chile maintaining a business climate that is based on respect for free trade, transparency, and democratic good governance.

I think we need to use our position to emphasize the advantages of engaging and doing business with U.S. companies and I think part of that is contrasting it with the impact that you get between PRC firms and U.S. firms in areas that are shared values for the

U.S. and Chile: environmental impact, labor rights impact, debt, sovereignty, telecom, and data privacy and security.

I would also underscore that investments that may seem convenient and inexpensive at the outset can be extremely costly—

Senator HAGERTY. Yes.

Ms. MEEHAN.—if they compromise national security, and this would be engaging with untrusted vendors as an example.

Senator HAGERTY. I think China's role in their telecommunications infrastructure is a concern that you and I both share. I would just encourage you that if you are confirmed that you would undertake a very direct and engaged position with the business community, with the Chamber of Commerce—the American Chamber of Commerce there—do everything you can to convene American enterprises. We are their largest foreign direct investor—

Ms. MEEHAN. That is correct.

Senator HAGERTY.—regardless of the fact that we have lost our—we have allowed China to take the pole position in terms of trade.

There is opportunity there and I think an ambassador with the right mindset can make a real difference, and the deeper our economic ties the stronger our security ties will be.

I would encourage you to do that and would be happy to work with you in that regard if I could be helpful in any way.

Next, I would like to turn to Dr. Nkengasong, and I understand that you worked on public health issues for many years, particularly in Africa.

And as a result of China's irresponsible and dangerous mismanagement of COVID-19 the entire world is still suffering from the consequences of this global pandemic. As the director of the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, I imagine you have had a view on China's role with respect to COVID-19 and I would like to get your sense of what China's role was with respect to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Mr. NKENGASONG. Thank you, Senator.

I have served as the director of the Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention, which is a specialized technical agency of the African Union, for five years, and I was there as the second man from the U.S. Government to the African Union, which they deeply appreciate that.

I think—let me start, first of all, with the recognition that the leadership role that the U.S. has played in supporting Africa in this COVID fight has been extraordinary, especially with the support—the direct support provided to the Africa CDC.

The data that has been analyzed throughout the continent has been data analyzed with the support of the partnership with the U.S. Government. Large case studies have been conducted thanks to the efforts and direct technical assistance from the U.S. Government.

The U.S. Government is the largest provider of vaccines across Africa as we speak now, and thanks to that leadership, the continent—and I can speak—reflect on the mood within the African Union—is thanks to the support from the United States.

Now, we have to continue to work with WHO (World Health Organization) and all our allies to make sure that we understand the origins of COVID-19, the virus that caused this pandemic, and we

can only do that through cooperation and support for a strengthened WHO so that it can enable us to get into the depth of this.

If we do not know that, it will be very difficult for us to prepare for the next pandemic and even so to get rid of this current pandemic.

Senator HAGERTY. I am surprised that you would look to the WHO, given their role and their influence—the malign influence that China has had at the WHO. But with reform perhaps that is the correct answer. But thank you very much for your service.

Mr. Chairman, I am beyond my time here.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member. Thank you to all of the nominees for your continued public service.

First question for Dr. Muyangwa. How do you think about climate adaptation, climate impacts? I am not asking you about policy questions as it relates to energy generation, fuel, anything like that.

But to the extent that USAID has a role in dealing with extreme weather events, drought, and all the suffering that goes along with that, is USAID downstream from all that and just sort of servicing those problems or does it have a role in sort of thinking through some strategies a little bit upstream and a little bit more looking where the ball is going to be as opposed to just responding to circumstances?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you, Senator.

I mean, that is a key question. I understand that the agency is playing a key role in this area. Climate change is one of the priorities for the administration and, therefore, for the agency as well.

To that regard, it is my understanding that the agency just recently released a draft climate change strategy that is looking at those different strategies and approaches of how we engage—internationally on this issue of climate change.

I do not have visibility on the strategy but I do know that the agency is working and figuring out how that strategy is then embedded into the various programming and approaches that it has on the continent.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Ms. Meehan, thank you for being willing to serve again. Can you just talk to me about rare earth minerals and the relationship that the United States has as it relates to the materials that we need specifically for some of our high-tech manufacturing and also the balance that we may have to strike in terms of we, clearly, need these rare earth elements but they are not inconsequential environmentally in terms of the extraction?

Ms. MEEHAN. Yeah. Thank you very much for the question, Senator.

The extractive industry is one that is extremely important to Chile's economy. They are the number-one producer of copper in the world and the number-two producer of lithium.

As you point out, lithium is sort of the conundrum in that it is necessary to develop batteries and some of the other things we need for clean energy but it is an extractive.

I think one of the ways that the United States can continue to partner with Chile in this area is on promoting sustainable development of critical minerals. We have deep U.S. mining interests and business interests.

But I think our commitment to environmental safeguards, in particular, referring back to Senator Hagerty's question, is a competitive advantage for us when competing with PRC firms that are looking to invest in this area.

Senator SCHATZ. Okay. That is a smart answer. Let me just ask you another broader question. Where are the additional opportunities for climate partnership?

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. Chile has been a leader and is to be commended, I think, on clean energy, environment, and climate action. They use their—

Senator SCHATZ. And fisheries.

Ms. MEEHAN. And fisheries, yes. Marine protection, ocean protection, fisheries down around Antarctica as well.

We have a strong foundation for collaboration already and I think there is always opportunities to do more. They have an ambitious hydrogen program to use hydrogen as a way to reduce emissions from industry.

They are a leader in clean energy, solar, wind, which all, obviously, have positive impacts for the environment and are ripe for continued collaboration with the United States.

Senator SCHATZ. Final question. Reporters Without Borders assesses that there is, quote, "little pluralism" in Chile and that journalists are vulnerable. Do you share that assessment and, if so, what should we do about it?

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. Thank you for the question.

Chile has a commendable tradition of an open and free press. President Boric, who just took office on Friday, has made respect for human rights, democracy, and transparency fundamental to his platform and so I would expect that this would be an area where I would continue to make the U.S. position on these issues known and would find an open audience in the new administration.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Ms. MEEHAN. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Young had joined us by WebEx. Is Senator Young—I understand that he is not available right now.

Senator Van Hollen, are you ready?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for your testimony and service. Congratulations on your nominations.

Dr. MUYANGWA, it is good to see a fellow Marylander here, and I chair the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee so I am especially interested in your vision of what role AID can play in Prosper Africa and other initiatives.

Could you just take a moment and talk about how you envision USAID's new trade and investment program and how that fits into Prosper Africa and any sort of changes in direction or vision from the previous administration, if you were confirmed?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you, Senator.

One of the things that I have witnessed over the years of working in this space is how the United States Government has expanded our economic engagement infrastructure with the continent from one administration to the next.

Starting with AGOA, going on to President Obama's Doing Business in Africa and the Trump administration's Prosper Africa Initiative, I believe that that expansion gives us a lot of opportunities to strengthen our economic engagement with the continent to provide a rules-based alternative to—oh, the mic was not on. Sorry. Sorry. To provide a rules-based economic model that would counter what the PRC has to offer to the continent.

I think there are plenty of opportunities there for the agency to deepen that economic engagement and so that is a key piece of that.

I also see the work that Power Africa is doing on the African continent because I see Prosper Africa and Power Africa working together to push and expand and deepen that economic engagement.

The fact that Power Africa has now brought first time electricity users to 127 million since its inception, I think, that has implications for development. That has implications for our engagement with the African continent and so those are things that I would look to expand and build on, if confirmed.

The fact that Prosper Africa has now done, I think—I believe it is 800 deals worth \$50 billion in about 45 African countries, and so if we continue to grow on that we really have the opportunity to strengthen U.S.-Africa economic engagement and counter the People's Republic of China at the same time.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that, and we had a hearing—our first hearing in the Subcommittee on Africa really focused on these issues of economic opportunity for Africa with its young population but also opportunities, of course, for American businesses working with African businesses.

And one of the suggestions that came out of that hearing—and I am just interested in your opinion. I do not have a particular view on this. But is that we really need to focus more on a sectoral strategy in order to be effective.

In other words, instead of simply saying we want to engage across the board on all commercial relations, should we be more strategic about it in terms of focusing on certain sectors with respect to our trade and investment strategy?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Sure, and I thank you very much for that question. I believe the agency is looking at some of those sectors already.

I understand, for instance, that the agency, together with the DFC, have a project that they are working on to enhance American investors' participation in West Africa's rapidly growing housing sector.

And so I think there are different things that they are looking at in that regard and I think that is work that should, obviously, continue.

I do not have enough information on it to know whether there are specific sectors beyond housing and the power sector. But that is, definitely, something that I would want to look into and see if that is a much more impactful strategy that we could pursue.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. My time is very brief but I did have a quick question for Dr. Nkengasong. Congratulations on your nomination.

PEPFAR—my question is, obviously, we have an ongoing challenge of fighting COVID-19. How does that impact, if at all, your efforts with PEPFAR—the things we have learned from that or the things that make it especially complicated now with respect to PEPFAR, given what is happening in COVID?

Mr. NKENGASONG. Thank you, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And I am afraid, for the good of my colleagues, if you could keep it at 30 seconds because I know others have questions.

Mr. NKENGASONG. Absolutely. I think PEPFAR, Senator, has created a tremendous public health infrastructure that has been used effectively, thanks to your leadership, to fighting HIV/AIDS in the world but also provides a unique opportunity to fight other diseases, including COVID-19.

We have seen how—during this pandemic how COVID has impacted our ability, some of our efforts, to fight HIV/AIDS. But we have also seen how we have used HIV platforms to scale up vaccination in countries like Zambia and others settings there.

I believe this is really an opportune moment to harness that investment that we have put in place for the last 20 years to make it a more robust and efficient system in fighting the HIV pandemic as well as other emerging diseases.

We all know in the field that there will be probably other pandemics, but if we use the platforms efficiently we can actually make an impact and get ourselves ready.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. I now recognize the chairman of our committee, Senator Menendez.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations. They are all very important positions. Let me turn to Ms. Meehan.

President Boric has spoken out clearly on challenges to human rights and democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, frankly stating that the repressive authoritarian regimes in Venezuela and Nicaragua have failed—his words—and there are permanent restrictions on freedoms in Cuba.

These are important and welcome statements by President Boric and provide an opportunity for U.S. diplomacy on democracy and human rights in our hemisphere.

If you are confirmed, how will you engage with President Boric on democracy and human rights in Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, other countries in the hemisphere?

Ms. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question and for the opportunity to appear before the committee today.

This is an area where we have a shared interest with President Boric. As you noted, he has been strong in his defense of human rights in the region and around the world including the Russian invasion—condemning the Russian invasion in Ukraine.

I think we have a unique opportunity with him. He has made defense of human rights such a central piece of how he intends to

govern Chile and be active in the region that, I think, it gives us an opportunity to approach him to be a new kind of leader on the left in the region.

I am, particularly, heartened by the fact that he has pushed back against members of his own coalition who have disagreed with his statements condemning autocratic regimes in the region and he has made a point of saying, I think in response to their criticisms, that he will continue to condemn human rights no matter the creed of those inflicting them upon their people.

This is an area where I would plan to be actively engaged, centering this concern and our engagement around a shared value that the United States and Chile have and using it as an opportunity for him to make a firm statement.

The CHAIRMAN. I am glad to hear that.

Now, in that regard, you were on a podcast in 2018 in which you spoke about your role in shaping U.S. policy towards Cuba during the Obama administration and you offered your personal views.

Talking about Cuba, you said, quote, “In the broad sense, there is the sexiness of the history. There are assassination attempts, the swarthy guerrilla commander who overthrows Batista and takes over. Then there is the sultry mystery—the forbidden fruit, if you will. You get to know this place on a more intimate level and it is a charming, wonderful, enchanting place.”

In referring to your talks with the Cuban regime, you also say, “If it takes sitting down at a table and really trying to understand the other perspective even if you completely disagree with it and being respectful and eating some pig and drinking some rum, and that allows you to say there should be space for internet and [speaks foreign language] or at least a space to discuss it, then I would say that is progress.”

As you know, the Cuban regime has a decades-long record of repressing, jailing, torturing, and killing its political opponents. What aspect of the Cuban regime’s human rights record fits into the, quote, “sexiness of history” that you mentioned?

Ms. MEEHAN. Senator, thank you—Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question.

In my work as a career Foreign Service Officer, my role was to carry out the policy of the President. I will never have the knowledge of Cuba that you have. I will never have the personal connection that you and thousands of other Cuban Americans have. I acknowledge that.

I care deeply about the plight of the Cuban people, and if anything I said in that interview led you to believe otherwise I regret that, and I would like to state clearly for the record today where I stand on this issue.

I believe that the Cuban people are entitled to choose their own government, that they are entitled to the universal human rights that everyone in the world is entitled to.

I believe that the regime needs to be held accountable for systemic ongoing abuses against the Cuban people. Cuba is a national security threat to the United States and a malign influence in the region, and if confirmed as Ambassador to Chile I will do everything in my power to advance U.S. policy to help the people of Cuba by partnering with the Government of Chile, and I would

welcome, if confirmed, the opportunity to consult with you on how we might encourage President Boric to take a more active role.

The CHAIRMAN. So then since the historic protests of July of last year where the Diaz-Canel regime jailed and sentenced hundreds of Cubans, including minors, to lengthy prison terms just for protesting peacefully, I assume that that was not part of your assessment of what makes Cuba a, quote, “charming, wonderful, enchanting place?”

Ms. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, in my limited role working on Cuba, the most meaningful aspect was getting to engage with some of the Cuban people directly, organizing President Obama’s roundtable where I had the immense honor to meet courageous people like Jose Daniel Ferrer, Berta Soler, Yoani Sanchez, others who have fought and given way more than I can ever understand in defense of their own rights.

That is what was most meaningful to me about my engagement and, again, if any statements I have made took away from the focus that should be on the suffering of the Cuban people and the atrocities of the regime then I regret that, and I commit to you that if I am confirmed for this position I will do everything I can to fight to advance U.S. policy for the people of Cuba.

The CHAIRMAN. I raise these questions—this morning the full committee had a hearing on authoritarianism throughout the world and democratic backsliding and what do we do about that.

Here is the epitome of authoritarianism, dictatorship, and the consequences to people. And so I understand when one is a Foreign Service Officer that they speak, but in some of these comments it was not as a Foreign Service Officer. It goes to who you are in terms of what you are thinking about, and that is why I raise the question because if you are going to be in a country in Latin America where, in fact, the president has shown some willingness to engage in that direction and being an advocate for human rights and democracy in the hemisphere, then we need an ambassador who is going to echo that.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I have one final question.

In December of 2013, I introduced the Nuclear Weapon-Free Iran Act, a bill that was co-sponsored by 59 members of the Senate, including Senators Schumer, Cardin, Coons, Booker, Warner, Casey, Gillibrand, Manchin, Bennet, just to mention a few.

As the NSC spokesperson, you responded to our initiative by saying, “If certain members of Congress want the United States to take military action they should be up front with the American public and say so.

“Otherwise, it is not clear why any member of Congress would support a bill that possibly closes the door on diplomacy and makes it more likely that the United States will have to choose between military options or allowing Iran’s nuclear program to proceed.”

I want to understand. I want to get clarification here. Do you, personally, believe that I, Majority Leader Schumer, Senator Cardin, Coons, Booker, and our colleagues, by introducing the bill, were pushing the United States to take military action against Iran?

Ms. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question.

I was a career Foreign Service Officer, and in my capacity as NSC spokesperson part of my responsibility was to issue comments and statements that reflect the President's policies.

Those comments and statements are often the product of interagency drafting and clearances way above my level. My personal opinion, since you asked for it, to be clear, is, first and foremost, that Iran can never be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon.

With regards to your second question, no, I do not believe that. I served in Iraq, Senator, and I am very cognizant and admired the tough vote that you took to oppose the war in Iraq when it was a very unpopular decision.

I do not believe that you are someone who would advocate for unnecessary military action.

The CHAIRMAN. You made that statement as a—as the essence of an interagency process where, basically, you were told this is the position we have and so, therefore, you were espousing that position. Is that what you are telling me?

Ms. MEEHAN. Yes, Senator, that would be accurate.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a very insightful thing. And so I would also believe you do not personally believe that we were trying to close the door on diplomacy?

Ms. MEEHAN. Senator, I would hope that that no member of the U.S. Congress would close the door on diplomacy.

The CHAIRMAN. I really appreciate your answers or insights. That will go into my book for sure, and I thank you all. I have questions for—I know there are other colleagues here—I have questions. I will wait for Dr. Muyangwa as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Booker was with us by WebEx. Is Senator Booker there?

[No response.]

Senator CARDIN. If not, we will go to Senator Markey.

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

And, Ms. Meehan, as a Boston College alumnus, congratulations to you and your incredible career in the Foreign Service and on the National Security Council.

We are very proud of you. We are very proud of Ambassador Burns now in China—

Ms. MEEHAN. Yes.

Senator MARKEY.—doing a great job. Ambassador Hartley in Great Britain. You are making the Eagles very proud—your great work—and in Chile, it is getting more complicated and, obviously, we need someone with great experience in order to be able to navigate that pathway.

With Boric now inaugurated and this relationship that the Chileans have with the Chinese, especially with regard to their precious metals and not only the United States' but other countries' need for them to make a clean energy revolution, could you talk a little bit about that copper, lithium, China, and the strings that they attach and what the United States should be doing in order to rectify that fact?

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. Thank you very much for the question, Senator, and go Eagles, for the record.

Clean energy is an area where Chile has been a leader in the region and they are to be commended for that. They have made impressive commitments on becoming carbon neutral, phasing out coal power plants, focusing on solar and renewable, clean energy.

But extractives are also extremely important to the Chilean economy and there are also significant U.S. business interests in the mining sector in Chile, the number-one producer of copper, the number-two producer of lithium in the world.

But I think that this is an area where the U.S. can work with Chile to promote sustainable development of critical minerals, which allows the Chilean economy to continue to grow, which protects U.S. business interests in the mining sector but also allows us to use our competitive advantage over the PRC, which is our commitment to environmental safeguards and labor rights.

I think it is an issue where there are multiple threads of interest and priorities for the U.S. Government that we have a very collaborative partnership to build on with the Chilean Government.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you. And when President Kennedy gave his speech at Rice University when the Soviets threatened to take control of space that we needed a mission to invent new metals and technologies, and to bring that mission back from the moon in heat twice the intensity of the sun and get it all done in eight years, and we did it.

The Russians are challenging us again with the Russian oil and gas that too much of the West has become dependent upon and we need a similar response.

But we are going to need to find a way of using our relationship with countries like this as China seeks to exploit those relationships.

Would you like to comment upon China's plan right now in country after country, including Chile, to take disproportionate control over those natural resources?

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure, Senator.

Chile—China—the PRC is Chile's number-one trading partner. Chile is a member of the Belt and Road Initiative. We see Chinese increasing PRC investment in critical sectors like lithium production, telecom, ports, data security, renewable energy, energy distribution, and space within Chile.

It is an area where we need to remain vigilant. I think highlighting the advantages of doing business with the United States, our commitment to environmental safeguards, labor rights, the protection that is needed when dealing with data privacy and sovereignty issues shows a clear advantage for the United States over the PRC.

I also think it would be worthwhile and, if confirmed, I would like to share the experience of the United States that we have had with CFIUS.

This is a mechanism that has allowed us to identify critical sectors, identify threats to those sectors, and consider national security when making investment decisions, and I think that could be an experience that would be worth sharing with the Chilean Government.

Senator MARKEY. I thank you. And, again, your wisdom, your experience, they are going to be critical. This is a turning point in

world history that we are living through right now and we have to learn the lessons and implement a plan.

And, Dr. Nkengasong, how will you work with countries where same-sex relations are criminalized to ensure that LGBTQI persons are not shut out of receiving lifesaving health care through PEPFAR?

Mr. NKENGASONG. Thank you, Senator, for that. A very important question.

Our goal in PEPFAR, if confirmed, Senator, should continue to be focusing on the pandemic or epidemic by the year 2030.

That means using science and data-driven approaches to follow where the virus is. I will say that—I mean, our mantra should be follow the virus regardless of where it is because a threat—the virus presence in any community or subcommunity or individuals is a threat for all our efforts there.

I think, if confirmed, I would continue to advocate for the use of effective data-driven approaches, regardless of people's beliefs and practices, to fight the pandemic, and work with countries that have policies in place that are adverse to this and shed light on where the issues are, where they should focus on fighting the virus, knowing that it is a threat for all of us and it can undermine the 20 years of investment that we have all put in place there.

I think, Senator, if confirmed, that is what I will do with effective partnership with countries as much as possible to advocate for the rights of people.

Senator MARKEY. And I thank you, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to say that, without taking up any additional time, that conversion therapy is now increasingly a practice in countries around the world and I just want to make sure that you are going to work to ensure that no PEPFAR implementer discriminates against LGBTQI persons through such conversion theory.

Mr. NKENGASONG. Absolutely. That is what I am referring to, Senator that we should focus what—the enemy is the virus, not people. I think that is—that should be very, very evident and I will—if confirmed, I will carry that as a mantra.

Senator MARKEY. I appreciate that, and I appreciate the service of all of you here. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Kaine [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Markey. We will have a second round of questions now. I will begin with Senator Menendez and then Senator Hagerty.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the last 18 months, coups have occurred in Mali, Chad, Sudan, Guinea, and Burkina Faso, and attempted coups in Niger, prompting alarm among policymakers about democratic backsliding in Africa.

Dr. MUYANGWA, what is your—in your view, what accounts for the backsliding and how would you assess the effectiveness of USAID's democracy and governance programs in Africa?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you, Senator.

Like you, I, and many other people who work in this space, are very concerned about the trend for democratic backsliding that we have seen across the globe, including Africa.

At the same time, even as the democratic backsliding is occurring on the continent, what you are also seeing is a very high demand from ordinary Africans for democracy.

The protests that have brought millions of Africans across the continent into the streets demanding democracy, demanding accountability for their government, that shows all of us that that demand for democracy is alive and well and in all corners of the continent.

I believe that the agency, USAID, is doing some good work in terms of trying to support and make sure that we can arrest this democratic backsliding. The investment that the agency is putting in terms of strengthening democratic institutions, strengthening or opening up the space for political participation, trying to work with some countries on electoral reforms, trying to ensure that we have a media that can play its role addressing electoral violence, so that they have—the agency has these programs in many countries that are experiencing this democratic backsliding.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me—

Ms. MUYANGWA. Having said that—

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah, I was just going to say, I am glad to hear you say having said that because my time is limited.

Ms. MUYANGWA. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN. Maybe this is where you are going to go next when you say having said that.

Part of it is I want to understand, from your view as someone who is nominated for this position, what is the—and it does not have to be nice if it is not nice, okay—the effectiveness of USAID's democracy and governance efforts in African countries, what adjustments would you make if you were confirmed?

Ms. MUYANGWA. If I were confirmed, I think one of the things we would want to look at is, really, looking at the new ways that authoritarians and others are using to undermine democracy, make sure we understand what those ways are, and then looking at our toolbox to say do we have the right tools in our toolbox to really go to the heart of these new ways of undermining democracy, and looking at our toolbox to say how can we amplify and consolidate some of the good work that the agency is already doing.

I think it is that part of understanding the ways in which democracy is being undermined and looking at the toolbox.

The CHAIRMAN. Can I get a commitment from you that you would engage with my staff on proposed changes to our democracy and governance programs in Africa to address this challenge?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Absolutely. I can commit to continuing to consult with the committee and your staff on this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. And, finally, Senator Kaine and I met with a series of members of the Ethiopian community last night, particularly, Tigrayans.

What do we do in a place like Tigray where, in fact, from my perspective, we have a genocide going on? We are seeing the slaughter. We saw a video of live people being burned.

I know we are focused on Ukraine, as we should be. But we cannot let the rest of the world think that they can get away with what they are doing because we are somehow diverted.

What do we do in a—what do we do in a country like that? How do we work to, first, get humanitarian assistance and then, of course, to develop a dialogue that brings us to a political solution?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Sure. Thank you, Senator. The situation in northern Ethiopia is a difficult one and the images that you were talking about, I think, we all saw those horrifying images this past weekend.

It is a tough question. I believe that the U.S. Government, including members of this committee, hitting all of the pressure points that I can see from where I sit, urging the political leadership to find a political situation to the situation, pressing on justice and accountability, ensuring that the Ethiopian and Tigrayan Government—sorry, the Ethiopian and Eritrean Governments focus on justice and accountability to ensure that those who are committing these gross violations are held to account, ensuring that national and international investigations can occur unfettered—the U.S. Government, including the agency, continue to press for unfettered humanitarian access.

I think continuing on all of those fronts needs to move forward, and if I were confirmed, that is—I would continue on those efforts on the humanitarian assistance, in particular.

The CHAIRMAN. We look forward to your confirmation as well as that effort, and we need our Government to double its efforts in this regard.

I think if this was happening in some other part of the world there would be a hue and outcry. It is happening in Africa and so, therefore, it does not quite seem to have the same outcry. My conscience will not be blotted by not raising it and continuing to drive our own country to deal with it.

Thank you very much.

Senator KAINE. Senator Hagerty?

And then Senator Coons.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Muyangwa, I would like to turn to you, if I might, and talk about the Prosper Africa Initiative. I was very pleased to learn that in July of last year this program that was launched back in 2019 is going to be extended. When the program was first enacted, it was promoting trade, commercial ties, and investment across Africa.

It is all done with an aim to provide a more viable alternative to the malign influence that China and Russia both purvey there in Africa.

And I would like to ask you how would USAID best leverage the private sector—the American private sector, which is a huge source of competitive advantage for us here—how would USAID leverage our private sector to better counter the malign influence of China and Russia in the region?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you very much, Senator, for that question.

I believe that Prosper Africa has already laid a solid foundation in terms of what it has accomplished to date—the 800 deals that it has already done with \$50 billion—worth \$50 billion—and I think building on that is going to be critical.

I think there are a number of ways that that can be leveraged. From my perspective, I think some of those ways include creating an environment in which American companies feel that their investments would be secure. Part of that is a regulatory framework.

I think in reducing the barriers to trade—that trade and investment that exists—and, really, just working to deepen some of the financial and capital markets.

I think there is a lot of space still in that area, but also just making American companies comfortable with the sense that their—they can invest in Africa safely and that they will yield a return on that investment.

I think all of those are key elements that the agency can continue to push on. But I think—

Senator HAGERTY. I could not agree with you more, and I am a very strong proponent of deeper economic ties because they lead then, certainly, to stronger security ties.

Ms. MUYANGWA. Absolutely.

Senator HAGERTY. I applaud your perspective on that and hope that you will continue to focus particularly on how to engage the private sector as an important partner in that initiative.

Ambassador Gonzales, I might turn to you now to talk about how Afghanistan is going to be represented in the United Nations.

In December, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution to delay a decision on who will represent the Government of Afghanistan in New York. The Taliban, of course, seeks to replace the envoy from the Afghan Government.

The Afghan Government's current envoy was appointed by the democratically-elected people of—the democratically-elected Government of Afghanistan. We do not know how long this decision will be deferred at the United Nations.

But in your prospective role at OFM, what factors would influence the extent of the services, if any services, that you would provide to a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan mission to the United Nations in New York?

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you very much for that question, Senator, and I share your concerns about Afghanistan and the Taliban.

I thank Congress, as I did earlier, Senator, for passing the Office of Foreign Missions Act and providing us with those tools that we can use to regulate the activities of foreign missions here in the United States.

If I were confirmed, you have my commitment that I will work to protect U.S. national security, foreign policy interests, and I look forward to working with you, Senator, and the Congress and our other national security stakeholders to look into these issues and how—and determine how to address these issues in the best manner.

Thank you, sir.

Senator HAGERTY. Would you would you consider, for example, restricting the travel of diplomats from a Taliban-elected government the way we do diplomats from Iran or North Korea?

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you, Senator Hagerty.

We do have travel restrictions, as you noted, and if confirmed, I, certainly, would in consultation with our other—with yourself and our other national security stakeholders.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you.

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator KAINE. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Acting Chairman Kaine and Acting Ranking Member Hagerty.

Thank you to the four nominees who are before me. It is great to have an opportunity to question you. I look forward to supporting your nominations and to working with you.

If I could, Ambassador Gonzales, just briefly, if confirmed, how would you improve the Office of Foreign Missions' work with local law enforcement to ensure the proper delivery of consular notifications to foreign nationals in the United States?

Ms. GONZALES. Thank you for that question, Senator Coons.

I would work—I know that our various offices of—our various offices throughout the United States work very closely with local authorities, municipal governments, and state governments as well as foreign missions located throughout the United States.

If I were confirmed, I will, certainly, travel to these areas and continue OFM's outstanding work in establishing—in communicating their relations with the various embassies and diplomatic missions throughout the United States.

And, of course, Senator, I welcome your advice and your partnership.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Dr. Muyangwa, I would be interested in your thoughts both on the DFC—the Development Finance Corporation—and how we might strengthen its ability to partner with our vital allies to crowd in private finance and to contribute to the transparent and sustainable development of Africa and, thus, sort of build out a little bit Prosper Africa.

And given all your deep experience across the continent, what do you think the administration's signature initiative might be as we prepare for the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit later this year?

Ms. MUYANGWA. Thank you, Senator.

I think there are a lot of opportunities for USAID to collaborate with the DFC and that is already underway in many ways. I understand that USAID is working with the U.S. Development Finance Corporation to implement Prosper Africa and Power Africa.

That is a good mechanism for harnessing the 17 agencies that work together to make sure that everybody is pushing in the right direction.

The work that the agency has working with the DFC to invest in vaccine manufacturing facilities across Africa to ensure that Africa can respond to the next pandemic, I think, is key—these two manufacturing facilities that they have in Africa and India, which will produce 2 billion COVID vaccines, mostly for the developing world, and then there is the pioneering investment vehicle that I talked about that is looking at how Americans can invest in West Africa's rapidly growing housing sector.

And so I think all of those opportunities that provide an opportunity to, really, leverage and crowd in the private sector that can continue and be expanded upon.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Dr. Nkengasong, thank you for your dedication to international public health. This is a particularly critical moment for us to remain vigilant and engaged around COVID-19 but to not forget that there continues to be public health challenges such as ones you have long addressed and that PEPFAR is a great example of a successful U.S.-led bipartisan approach to global public health.

I would be interested in your view. The Biden administration has agreed to host the next replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

Has COVID-19 negatively or positively impacted international efforts to combat some of the most deadly infectious diseases in the world, including HIV/AIDS?

Mr. NKENGASONG. Thank you, Senator.

It is obvious, Senator, that in the last two years the COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely disruptive and has, really, taken over the space and crowded the attention that other serious pandemics—i.e., HIV and other endemic diseases like malaria and tuberculosis used to happen.

If confirmed, Senator, it will be my goal to make sure that we work with our partner countries to elevate and make sure that they understand that HIV is still a serious threat and a threat that if we do not pay enough attention to it the gains that we have made over the last 20 years may significantly be disrupted.

But it also offers a unique opportunity, as I said earlier, that the platforms that we have all put in place, including developing public-private partnerships—one of those, I recall, you engineered with Siemens several years ago when I was still at the U.S. CDC—bringing the private sector and other foundations to help with the efforts there.

I believe what are called—if confirmed, I will promote this lot—what are called Partnership For Action, which means that you bring all the foundations, their private sector, together so that we can continue to elevate the fight against HIV/AIDS, which is, as I believe and I have said, a serious security threat for countries that we support.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Doctor. And if I could, with the forbearance of the acting chair—and by the way, just while I have two members here, I just—we failed to fund the COVID supplemental and it is something, I think, is desperately needed globally before we see another variant emerge.

If I could, Ms. Meehan, thank you for your service under both the Bush and the Obama administrations. I know you have been asked at length about the challenges of the U.S.-Chile relationship, about how you would address China, which remains Chile's largest partner, and the new president, Gabriel Boric.

I would be interested in your comments on the U.S.-Chile astronomy partnership and its potential, and then just how you would advise us on sort of the future of the left-right divide in Latin America and what the United States, in working more closely, hopefully, with the new administration in Chile can do to help sort of reset some of the expectations about U.S.-Chile relationships.

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. Thank you, Senator, for the questions.

Astronomy—so the United States has a bilateral science and technology agreement with Chile. Chile is a leader in this area.

The Atacama Desert provides some of the richest environments for astronomy and research anywhere in the world.

The U.S. is already a strong partner in these efforts, and what I find particularly exciting about opportunities and, if confirmed, what I would seek to expand on is that this is not just a government-to-government opportunity.

It is a way to bring in private-public partnerships, a way to include academia, entrepreneurs and, I think, given the need to focus on STEM in the United States and getting young people excited about science and technology, astronomy offers an interesting way to involve school-to-school and other people-people exchanges as a way of strengthening that already strong partnership.

With regards to your question about the left, President Boric has been in office only for a few days but we have already seen from him a strong defense of human rights, and what I have found particularly heartening is that he has made a point of saying that he will condemn violations of human rights whatever the creed of the government violating them.

He has spoken out strongly against autocratic tendencies in Nicaragua and Venezuela, and in defense of the Cuban people following the July 11th protests of last year.

I think this really represents an opportunity for the United States to say this is a shared goal and he has an opportunity to define a new model for what being a leader on the left really means in Latin America these days.

And, if confirmed, I would very much look forward to engaging with President Boric and his administration on this important issue.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Meehan. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KAINE. Just a few last items.

Ambassador Gonzales, I just wanted to say the position at Office of Foreign Missions is very important in Virginia. Not only is such a high percentage of our State Department personnel living in Virginia but a very high percentage of the members of foreign missions posted to the Washington area live in Virginia.

I will never forget meeting President Duque of Colombia for the first time and he said, you know, I have followed you since you were mayor of Richmond. And I said, why would you do that? He goes, because I was living in northern Virginia for many of the years when I was posted here, I think, to the World Bank before getting into electoral politics in Colombia.

The operation—the efficient operation of these missions matters a lot to Virginians. The health and safety of our Virginians who are deployed overseas but own houses in Virginia matter a lot so your position is really important to my commonwealth and I just wanted to put that on the record that it is not just about things thousands of miles away. There is a home audience that really cares about the work of your office.

Dr. Muyangwa, I just want to associate myself with comments made by Senator Menendez about just the tragedy in Ethiopia, and nobody has been more active on this than Senator Coons. He has done just yeoman's work to try to leverage assets of the United

States to bring relief to suffering in Tigray and elsewhere in Ethiopia and find a path forward to negotiation and peace.

Your opening statement was very vivid as you described your excitement and your recollection of seeing grain delivered in bags with the USAID label emblazoned on them. One of the significant challenges now in Ethiopia is difficulty of delivering humanitarian aid in the midst of a crushing famine.

And so I would look forward to working with you, should you be confirmed, to make sure that we are really leaning forward on the humanitarian efforts there.

And then finally, Ms. Meehan, I wanted to ask you one more question about Chile. I understand that before you were in Foreign Service you had a first career in finance on Wall Street, and I actually think—I think it was Senator Hagerty who was asking you questions about the U.S.-Chile trade relationship.

We had been number one. China is number one, but we still have significant economic ties. How would that finance background be of assistance, should you be confirmed?

Ms. MEEHAN. Sure. Thank you for the question, Senator Kaine.

As you noted, I started my career on Wall Street, and I think this is a particularly critical time for U.S. engagement with the Government of Chile to defend U.S. business interests.

Not only do we have a new administration where the president has made commitments to the Chilean people about expanding equality that will require some tradeoffs with fiscal decisions, we also have a constitutional convention that is rewriting the entire constitution from scratch.

I think it is a critical time for U.S. engagement and, if confirmed, this would be one of my highest priorities. I would routinely engage with the U.S. business community, with the AmCham, with members of Congress, to understand what the priorities of the U.S. business community are and to understand what their concerns are.

I would relay those concerns on a regular basis to the Government of Chile. I would be a firm supporter and advocate for maintaining adherence to the Free Trade Agreement as they undertake a lot of these legislative and regulatory reforms, and I would also encourage the Government of Chile to engage directly with industry representatives as they are considering legislative and regulatory changes to understand directly from business what the impact will be on U.S. investment and, frankly, the broader investment climate because in order to deliver on the equality that he has promised for the Chilean people, President Boric will need to manage that with good fiscal policy because he cannot achieve those goals without a robust economy to fund it.

Senator KAINE. Thank you very much.

To all of the witnesses, congratulation on your nominations. The record of this hearing will remain open till close to business 5:00 p.m., Friday, March 18th, for colleagues that want to submit questions.

I would encourage each of you, should questions be submitted to you, that you respond promptly.

And with that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:32 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Anomalous Health Incidents

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

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

Answer. Yes. I take nothing more seriously than the health and security of the people who will work with me, should I be confirmed. The interagency community continues its examination of a range of hypotheses. Secretary Blinken prioritizes the Department's response to Anomalous Health Incidents (AHIs), setting clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with its workforce and providing care for affected employees and family members.

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

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

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

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will take nothing more seriously than the health and security of the people working at U.S. Embassy Santiago. I commit to working with health and security officials and other parties as recommended to establish and maintain appropriate protocols and ensure a healthy working environment for both Americans and local staff.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

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

Answer. Overall, Mission morale has been resilient in the face of COVID-19 restrictions and challenges. I understand that Embassy leadership did an excellent job maintaining morale during the strict shutdowns mandated by Chilean authorities in 2020 and the move back to in-person engagements in 2021. The Chargé d'Affaires was widely commended for his proactive communication with the Country Team and Embassy community. Chile has the highest vaccination rate in the world, and nearly 100 percent of eligible U.S. employees and 95 percent of local Embassy staff are fully vaccinated. Restaurants, businesses, workplaces, and schools are open, and the Embassy conducts in-person official engagements and activities, while following U.S. and Chilean Government guidance on masking and social distancing.

Question. Many U.S. Missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Santiago?

Answer. As Embassy Santiago, like many Missions around the world, emerges from a period of stress and isolation due to COVID-19, I will prioritize, if confirmed, personal engagement with the Embassy community—with an emphasis on listening so I can best understand concerns and priorities. If confirmed, I will be the first Ambassador to lead Embassy Santiago in more than three years, and I will build on

the excellent work of the Chargé d’Affaires to prioritize communication through regular, Mission-wide Town Hall forums and dedicated office hours for more personal conversations. Finding ways to celebrate the accomplishments of team members will also be a focus, including contributions by Locally Engaged Staff. The well-being of families is key to Embassy morale, and I look forward to being a frequent participant at events coordinated by the Community Liaison Officer.

Question. Many U.S. Missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. How do you intend to create a unified Mission and vision at Mission Santiago?

Answer. To be successful, Embassy Santiago must work towards shared objectives, and all agencies and individuals must understand how they contribute to them. I understand that the Embassy is developing a new integrated country strategy (ICS) with the input of all agencies at post that aligns with the administration’s priorities. If confirmed, I would use the ICS process to invest all team members in the unified vision—not just Agency and Section heads—by prioritizing communication and feedback, and creating diverse, inclusive interagency teams to accomplish the resulting objectives.

Management is a Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. My management style is approachable, inclusive, and engaged. I lay out clear objectives and motivate individuals while creating a strong sense of community and shared purpose among the entire team. If confirmed, my focus on the wellbeing of the community will include families of Mission personnel. I strive to provide clear direction and give people autonomy, while always being available to offer guidance and feedback, and I will welcome feedback from all members of the Embassy community. I treat all team members with respect and will foster a culture that emphasizes respectful feedback and celebration of accomplishments throughout the Mission. I care deeply about supporting professional development and have a particular interest in nurturing future leaders within the Embassy community.

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

Answer. No, I do not believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or in private.

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

Answer. The Ambassador’s relationship with the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) is a partnership that is critical to the success of any Embassy. If confirmed, I intend to partner with my DCM to create an environment where all team members feel empowered to achieve the Mission’s goals and take pride in their work.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will empower my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) to act as a Chief Operating Officer who will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Embassy. These responsibilities will include leading the Emergency Action Committee and other Embassy working groups, as well as supporting employee-led initiatives, including diversity and inclusion efforts. I believe deeply in professional development opportunities and will ask the DCM to lead leadership development and mentorship programs for all levels of staff, both American and locally employed. I will also ask the DCM to support efforts of the Community Liaison Officer to maintain the well-being of the broader Embassy community, including families. I view the Ambassador and DCM as partners, and intend to have a close, collaborative relationship where the DCM is encouraged to provide feedback and guidance to me on a wide range of issues.

Question. The Department has a well-established system for providing regular, ongoing feedback through formal counseling sessions and employee evaluation reports (EERs). If confirmed as Ambassador, it will be essential for me to establish clear expectations and guidelines for all Embassy personnel, both American and locally employed staff, to ensure employees are performing as a team and at the highest level.

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

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles. I will also ensure that this is a priority for all Embassy managers.

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

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees to improve performance and reward high achievers.

Question. It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in Chile.

- In your opinion, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our Embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their Missions?

Answer. It is important for diplomats to get outside of Embassy walls and engage with more people to accomplish the Mission. I understand that Embassy Santiago has a very positive relationship with civil society, the private sector, host government officials, and fellow foreign diplomats, and if confirmed I hope to continue these constructive relationships in pursuit of our goals. The current staff of the Embassy travel throughout the country and, if confirmed, I plan to visit each region of Chile personally and will encourage Embassy staff to frequently get out of the Embassy to meet with our interlocutors.

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

Answer. Accessing local populations is key to meeting our objectives. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed the way Embassy Santiago engages with local communities, by using virtual and hybrid engagements to maintain communication. If confirmed, I will work with the Embassy's health unit and regional security office to ensure our diplomatic staff can safely access all local populations in person when needed and with our public affairs section to continue to incorporate online engagements to reach more people outside of the capital of Santiago.

Public diplomacy is an Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts

Question. What is the public diplomacy environment like in the Chile?

Answer. Chileans have a strong baseline affinity for the United States and are receptive in general to U.S. points of view. Chile enjoys a free and professional press, though overall public trust in the media has been decreasing according to public opinion surveys. Traditional media ownership is highly concentrated, but new digital media outlets are gaining traction. Embassy Santiago operates 14 American Spaces throughout Chile as a key platform for people-to-people engagement, including in areas that are increasingly influenced through the People's Republic of China's (PRC) 21 Confucius Institutes. The United States engages in a wide range of educational, cultural, and professional exchanges and programs in Chile to build people-to-people relationships, promote economic ties, and enhance institutional and civil society networks.

Question. What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

Answer. While nearly seven in ten Chileans expressed a favorable opinion of the United States, around half of Chileans expressed favorable views of the People's Republic of China (PRC), which is aggressively trying to expand its influence in Chile through a network of 21 Confucius Institutes, outreach by the ambassador, and a robust media campaign including paid advertising. U.S. public diplomacy efforts to counter the PRC's influence campaign in Chile are focused on highlighting our shared values, security interests, and commercial and academic links.

The low rate of English language fluency, and Embassy Santiago's limited resources to help the Chilean Ministry of Education improve English language teaching, present additional challenges.

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

Answer. Our countries share many of the same values and priorities, and Chile has the capacity to help advance those priorities. To do so, it is critical that the Embassy tailors Washington messaging in a way that demonstrates our expectations and belief that Chile can and should be an equal partner and regional leader. Based on their expertise of the Chilean media environment and public, Embassy Santiago's Public Affairs team is well suited to convey U.S. policy objectives in a way that pre-

serves Department goals while gaining maximum traction with the Chilean public. Depending on the topic and target audience, some messages are more effective coming from Washington voices. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Embassy and Washington continue to work closely together to not only get the message right but also the messenger.

Question. “Anomalous health incidents”, commonly referred to as “Havana Syndrome”, have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to taking this threat seriously.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Santiago personnel?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to talking as openly as I can to Mission Santiago personnel. I believe it is important to communicate regularly and transparently with all elements of the Mission.

Question. China is building a logistics base in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, near the Chilean border. Please describe your concerns with this logistics base and growing Chinese presence in Argentina and Chile in particular.

Answer. The U.S. Government does not discourage or prohibit countries from working with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), however we are concerned about its growing number of projects in critical infrastructure and sensitive sectors in the region, including investments in lithium production, energy distribution, telecom, space, and renewable energy in Chile. The United States and Chile share a close relationship based on shared values. Both countries also recognize the benefits of working together on issues of common interest, including economic growth; clean energy development; cooperation on science, technology, and innovation; access to quality education; improved natural resource management; biodiversity conservation; and environmental enforcement and facilitating trade.

If confirmed, I will continue our collaboration with Chile in these critical sectors and ensure that I voice U.S. concerns about the national security implications of potentially risky or sensitive projects with the PRC. Embassy Santiago will also continue to promote transparency, cooperation, and international security to strengthen our bilateral relationship in the process.

Question. What tangible efforts should Chile pursue to counter malign Chinese presence?

Answer. Chile is a democratic country with strong institutions and a positive relationship with the United States in terms of shared values and common interests. If confirmed, I will continue to foster our relationship to promote fair labor practices, human rights, and strong environmental policies. I believe Chile’s commendable tradition of openness, combined with a robust national security-focus investment screening regime, would help to protect Chile’s critical infrastructure and sensitive technologies, as well as Chile’s attractiveness to foreign investors. If confirmed, I will work with the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), chaired by the Treasury Department, to build understanding with the Chilean Government about the CFIUS process and best practices in foreign investment reviews. I will also advocate for a continued business climate in Chile that is based on respect for free trade, transparency, and democratic good governance.

Question. If confirmed, how would you engage the Chilean public about their constitutional reforms?

Answer. The Constitutional Convention is a sovereign process that allows the people of Chile to weigh in on the future path that their country will take. Chile continues to serve as a model for the Western Hemisphere as its people channel their discontent into a peaceful, democratic, and transparent process. If confirmed, I will convey respect for the Chilean people to determine the nature of their constitution and express faith in the Chilean people’s dedication to democratic principles. If the new constitution is approved, I will ensure that it is clear to both the Chilean public and government that the United States will continue to deepen our strong bilateral cooperation as Chile moves forward under its new constitution.

Question. What implications do you see for the bilateral relationship if the constitution moves away from the rules-based order built over the past forty years?

Answer. Chile continues to prove itself as an example of a strong democracy, rooted in the safeguarding of human rights and rule-of-law. Chile is deeply committed to the promotion of human rights and democratic principles on a global level, and a strong proponent of rules-based open trade, both in bilateral and multilateral settings. President Boric emphasizes his administration's commitment to holding all human rights abusers accountable, regardless of a leader's political affiliation. Although we do not yet know the outcome of Chile's Constitutional Convention, the Biden-Harris administration is optimistic that the new constitution will reflect Chile's steadfast commitment to these principles as the United States deepens its robust political and economic cooperation with the Boric administration based on our shared values.

Question. Please describe your assessment of Chile's role in the mass migrations taking place across Latin America?

Answer. As host to a growing population of approximately 500,000 Venezuelan migrants and 180,000 Haitian migrants, Chile plays an integral role providing humanitarian support to migrants in country, as well as an important leadership role in addressing this crisis regionally. For example, during the Regional Migration Ministerial held in Bogota, Colombia, in October 2021, Chile supported the Ministerial statement to advance more humane migration management policies in the region. The new Foreign Minister, Antonia Urrejola, publicly stated that Chile must play a leadership role in coordinating the regional response and indicated that Chile will adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. Migrants from the region continue to view Chile as a destination that offers economic opportunity. A migration law passed in April 2021 offered a pathway to legal status for irregular migrants, but some civil society organizations expressed concern that bureaucratic obstacles still prevent some migrants from regularizing their status.

Question. How would you engage with the Chilean Government to have a more productive role in migration management?

Answer. The United States is negotiating a non-legally binding bilateral Migration Arrangement with Chile, as well as with several other key partners throughout the hemisphere. Each bilateral Arrangement is expected to draw from a common framework of priorities on stabilization of migrant and refugee-receiving communities, expansion of legal pathways for migration and protection, and increased humane migration management. The proposed bilateral Migration Arrangement with Chile provides a mechanism to urge Chile to take on greater responsibility to humanely manage migration and expand the reach of our collaborative efforts throughout the hemisphere. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Government of Chile, civil society, and international partners to make progress on this issue.

Regional Politics

Question. What do you view as the biggest challenge to regional stability in Latin America?

Answer. One of the most prominent challenges to regional stability is the gap between the aspirations of the people of the Americas for improved social and economic conditions, more inclusive democracy, and greater opportunities and the capacity of governments to meet those expectations. Frustration with weak and ineffective governance and corruption create opportunities for populist and authoritarian actors to take advantage of that frustration to gain power. Chile's strong institutions and leadership can help address this challenge. Transnational organized crime represents a continuing threat as well.

Trafficking in Persons

Question. In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Chile was identified as Tier 1 for its ongoing efforts to combat human trafficking in-country but there are still areas of improvement such as increasing lenient sentencing for traffickers.

- What is your assessment of this issue?

Answer. Chile met the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and demonstrated serious and sustained efforts to combat trafficking. However, lenient sentencing means that many convicted traffickers receive only probation without time in prison, which creates potential safety concerns for trafficking victims, weakens deterrence, and undercuts Chile's wider efforts to fight trafficking. Nevertheless, the Chilean Government identified more trafficking victims in the last reporting period, established a new specialized anti-trafficking investigative unit, and expanded the capacity of an existing specialized unit—all positive efforts. If confirmed, I will

continue to work with the appropriate authorities to ensure Chile continues to make progress in its efforts combating sex and labor trafficking.

Question. If confirmed, how will you work with the office of the Ambassador-at-Large to combat and monitor trafficking in persons to improve anti-trafficking efforts in Chile?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the Ambassador-at-Large to integrate anti-trafficking components into our broader engagement with the Chilean Government. I will build on current efforts in Chile to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement and public officials at the local and national level to raise awareness, effectively investigate and prosecute trafficking crimes, and to provide increased services to victims. I will encourage the Embassy team to think creatively about engaging with the Chilean Government and public on trafficking and responding to local challenges.

Question. If confirmed, how can you work with other regional U.S. ambassadors to improve trafficking efforts in neighboring countries?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate with other U.S. Ambassadors to support consistent outreach and messaging within the region, to identify best practices and lessons learned across legal frameworks, law enforcement efforts, and programming to combat sex and labor trafficking and address the needs of vulnerable communities.

Question. In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Chile was reported to have had serious incidents motivated by anti-Semitic or anti-Muslim behavior and rhetoric. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. I strongly condemn any religious freedom violations and any violations of the rights of members of religious minority groups. If confirmed, I will engage a wide range of religious groups, including Chile's Jewish and Muslim communities, to understand their concerns and priorities and to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding. I will work with the Ambassador-at-Large to apply best practices to foster a zero-tolerance environment for religious discrimination in Chile.

Question. In 2020, the Chilean senate passed a pro-BDS resolution calling on President Pinera to adopt a law boycotting goods from Israeli settlements in the West Bank and commercial activities with companies operating in the West Bank. If confirmed, do you commit to pushing back on the BDS movement and any bias against Israel?

Answer. The administration and I firmly reject the BDS movement, which unfairly singles out Israel. While the administration always respects the right to freedom of expression, the United States will be a strong partner in fighting efforts to delegitimize Israel. We will continue to support Israel's further integration into the international community, and if confirmed, I will do the same in Chile.

Question. If confirmed, how will you work with the Chilean Government and civil society on such matters relating to their efforts to support BDS?

Answer. If confirmed, I will build on previous efforts by Embassy Santiago to actively engage with Chilean lawmakers and the Boric administration to convey the United States' firm opposition to boycott movement worldwide and the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) legislation that currently sits in the Chilean Chamber of Deputies, as well as any efforts to delegitimize Israel. While the bill does not explicitly mention Israel, many of the bill's supporters have made clear that their goal is to implement BDS restrictions on all Chile-Israel trade. I will also engage relevant community members, businesses, and embassies from like-minded countries to speak out against support for the BDS movement.

Human Rights

Question. In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Chile had isolated reports of serious human rights abuses or concerns by the Government including arbitrary or unlawful killings.

- If confirmed, how can you engage with civil society to bolster human rights on the ground and at the US Mission?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy in Santiago engages with civil society, especially regarding human rights, and meets regularly with non-profit organizations and the Chilean Government to address concerns when appropriate. If confirmed, I will continue our work on this issue with the newly inaugurated Boric administration,

whose Foreign Minister, Antonia Urrejola, has an extensive human rights background.

Question. If confirmed, please describe your human rights strategy and priorities as U.S. Ambassador to Chile.

Answer. The United States and Chile have a strong, shared foundation of values that encompass respect for human rights and democratic principles. President Boric has spoken out against human rights abuses committed in Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba. Human rights and multilateral cooperation make up core tenets of his stated foreign policy goals, which provides an opportunity for him to be a leader in the promotion of our shared values across the hemisphere. If confirmed, I will use this opportunity to encourage new avenues of cooperation with the Boric administration to ensure that human rights remain a central pillar of U.S.-Chilean cooperation, both within Chile and the hemisphere. I also commit to supporting the Embassy team in policy and programming endeavors to advance respect for human rights and to identify bilateral cooperation opportunities with the new Boric administration.

The United Nations

Question. The Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (MSP) in the State Department's bureau of International Organizations leads a whole-of-government effort to identify, recruit, and install qualified, independent personnel at the U.N., including in elections for specialized bodies like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). There is an American candidate, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who if elected would be the first American and first woman to lead the ITU. She is a tough race that will require early, consistent engagement across capitals and within the U.N. member states.

- If confirmed, do you commit to demarching the Chilean Government and any other counterparts necessary to communicate U.S. support of Doreen?

Answer. Yes. Secretary Blinken publicly endorsed Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin's candidacy to lead the ITU in March 2021. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) to support Ms. Bogdan-Martin's candidacy and encourage Chile to vote for her for ITU Secretary-General, as well as the candidacies of other Americans endorsed by the Department to fill critical positions at the U.N. and its specialized bodies.

Question. If confirmed, how can you work with the International Organizations (IO) bureau and other stakeholders to identify, recruit, and install qualified Americans in positions like the Junior Program Officer (JPO) program at the U.N.?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with IO to identify U.N. and JPO opportunities for qualified U.S. citizens, recruit U.S. citizens for these positions, and advocate on their behalf where appropriate.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. I have the honor and privilege of representing the country's largest Cuban American community in Florida. I am the son of Cuban immigrants. For all of us in South Florida, our history with Cuba is complicated and tragic. Today, Cuba is a country where Cubans cannot succeed. Instead, the Cuban people are jailed and tortured for simply exercising the fundamental freedoms of speech, religion, and assembly.

In 2018, you spoke with Ben Rhodes on his podcast about your experience organizing President Obama's 2016 trip to Havana. In that podcast, you spoke glowingly of your experience in Cuba and working with Alejandro Castro, Fidel's nephew. You said that there was a "sexiness" to Cuba's history and even a "sultry mystery."

- Do you stand by those statements, in light of the experience of Cuban Americans with the regime? Please explain.

Answer. I recognize, and feel deeply about, the plight of the Cuban people. I believe that the Cuban people are entitled to a stable, prosperous, and free country, and I admire their courage and strength as they seek access to fundamental freedoms and human rights. I believe that the Cuban regime needs to be held accountable for its systemic oppression of the Cuban people and its malign activities in the region. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Chile, I will support all U.S. efforts to

empower the Cuban people to determine their own future and efforts to hold the regime accountable.

Question. Given your egregious misreading of Cuba’s history, why should Chilean Americans, and the Senate, trust your judgement when it comes to representing America’s interests in Chile, if confirmed?

Answer. As a career Foreign Service Officer my duty was to assist in the implementation of the President’s policies to the best of my ability, and I did so faithfully in Republican and Democratic administrations, in assignments around the world. In those 13 years of service to the United States as a career Foreign Service Officer I willingly made personal and career sacrifices to advance U.S. interests and values around the world. I also have broad and deep experience working in finance, which has prepared me to be a strong advocate for U.S. trade and investment interests in Chile, particularly at a time of increasing competition from the People’s Republic of China. In addition, I have spent years working to provide access to opportunity to young people around the world, which I believe to be not only in their interest, but in the interest of the United States. I have been honored to volunteer to assist families of Americans held hostage or unjustly detained overseas as well. If confirmed, I will use all of these experiences to promote U.S. interests in Chile and throughout the Western Hemisphere, which I believe my record of service shows I am well qualified to do.

Question. March 20th marks the 6th anniversary of President Obama’s visit to Havana, the first by an American president since the revolution. In the podcast with Ben Rhodes, you described the evening of the 20th extremely vividly. You went to a state-owned restaurant, a paladar, called LaGuardia. You described the evening as “this great roof deck and people are smoking cigars and drinking rum” with Jimmy Buffett, Derek Jeter, and Jose Andres.

- Is this an inaccurate recounting of your description of that night?

Answer. In my capacity as a career Foreign Service Officer, my duty was to assist in the implementation of the President’s trip to Cuba. The trip was in support of the administration’s policy to help empower ordinary Cubans to take greater control over their own lives and convey U.S. Government support for the fundamental freedoms and human rights of the Cuban people. We met with a broad array of people, including Cuban civil society actors, human rights defenders, journalists, artists, and entrepreneurs. Each of these actors shared and reinforced concerns, triumphs, grievances, and the grave injustices that the Cuban people have experienced under decades of repression. I also experienced a sense of hope among the Cuban people and those who traveled to Cuba, that the lives of the Cuban people could change for the better.

Question. Do you recall any protesters, or demonstrators that disrupted this glamorous evening with celebrities in old Havana?

Answer. The most meaningful aspect of my discrete role working on Cuba as a career Foreign Service Officer was the honor of meeting with Cuban civil society actors during the President’s roundtable conversation with them. It was deeply impactful to hear the concerns, grievances, and the grave injustices that the Cuban people have experienced under decades of repression. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Chile, I will support all U.S. efforts to empower the Cuban people to determine their own future and efforts to hold the regime accountable.

Question. Were you aware that in the three months before March 2016, the Cuban regime had arrested more than 300 dissidents as part of a crackdown on opposition leaders, to ensure a smooth visit for you and President Obama?

Answer. I was aware of the Cuban regime’s poor human rights record and its abusive treatment of civil society actors and understood that the U.S. Government policy was one aimed at empowering ordinary Cubans to take greater control over their own lives. I supported the administration’s efforts to increase access to the Internet for Cuban citizens and promote private sector activity, consistent with my support for fundamental freedoms and human rights around the world over the course of my 13-year career as a Foreign Service Officer and non-government work in support of those values.

Question. Were you aware that on March 20, the same day you, President Obama, and the Castros were watching the baseball game, Cuban officials arrested Lazaro Yuri Valle Roca, beat him, and detained him for five days—all because he tried to video a protest on March 20th?

Answer. I am aware of the Cuban regime’s poor human rights record and its abusive treatment of civil society actors. I admire the courage and strength of the

Cuban people, who are fighting for access to fundamental freedoms and human rights. I condemn the Cuban regime's repression and human rights abuses. I support the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to promote accountability for Cuban Government officials involved in human rights abuses, and the consideration of all tools to do so.

Question. In response to Chairman Menendez's question during your nominations hearing, you responded that at the time of the visit in 2016, you were a foreign service officer with a duty to carry out the policy of the President. But in 2018, at the time you spoke with Ben Rhodes, you had no obligation to defend or agree with the President's policies. Why, then, did you still speak so glowingly with Ben Rhodes about working with a regime responsible for egregious human rights abuses?

Answer. I greatly admire the spirit, courage, and ingenuity of the Cuban people and the resilience of Cuban culture in the face of decades of repression. I saw my work as a career Foreign Service Officer as supporting efforts to promote greater freedoms so that individuals living in Cuba can realize their potential. During this conversation in 2018, when I still worked for President Obama, I did not have the intention of taking the focus away from the suffering of the Cuban people and the courage they have demonstrated over decades in pushing back against a repressive regime. My admiration is for the Cuban people, not those who oppress them. I firmly believe that the Cuban people are entitled to a stable, prosperous, and free country, and I admire their bravery as they seek access to fundamental freedoms and human rights. I believe that the Cuban regime needs to be held accountable for its systemic oppression of the Cuban people and its malign activities in the region. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Chile, I will support all U.S. efforts to empower the Cuban people to determine their own future and efforts to hold the regime accountable.

Question. In 2010, the U.S. and Chile negotiated a bilateral treaty on income tax. While Chile has ratified the treaty, the Senate has not. This treaty would ensure that American businesses in Chile are not unfairly taxed for income their investments earn there. Do you support ratification of this treaty?

Answer. I support ratification of the bilateral tax treaty. The treaty would reduce withholding tax rates on royalties, dividends, interest payments, and capital gains and avoid double taxation of U.S. companies, which would ultimately ensure that they are not adversely impacted when operating in Chile. Ratification of this treaty would encourage increased U.S. investment into Chile, thus strengthening our bilateral commercial ties to bring additional economic benefits to both countries. At present, U.S. firms in Chile compete against firms from 33 other countries that have tax treaties with Chile, such as the People's Republic of China, Russia, Canada, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and Japan. The treaty also receives widespread support from U.S. businesses that operate in Chile, as its implementation will ensure that U.S. companies are not placed at a disadvantage from double taxation.

Question. If confirmed, how would you work with the new Chilean Government to ensure the treaty is implemented so that American businesses in Chile are treated fairly?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively communicate with Chilean lawmakers and the Boric administration to identify best practices that will ensure that the Chilean Government fully implements the treaty and that U.S. businesses are treated fairly. To this end, I will engage regularly with the U.S. business community and associations including the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), to understand their views, convey their concerns to the Government of Chile, and ensure that implementation of the treaty meets their needs. I will engage with likeminded partners that already have active bilateral tax treaties to understand the best ways to promote full implementation. I will also consult with the Congress to understand the views of their constituents.

RESPONSES TO FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Question. Thank you for your answers to my questions from March 15, 2022. I appreciate that you now seem to recognize the plight of the Cuban people and that the regime in Cuba needs to be held accountable. Expressing these sentiments is the bare minimum that should be expected of public servants that represent the United States, but they, unfortunately, do not answer my original questions to you. Therefore, I re-state the question here again: Do you stand by your statements that you felt there was a "sexiness" and a "sultry mystery" to Cuba's history?

- At the time of the President's visit to Havana in 2016, were you aware that the regime had arrested, beaten and detained Lazaro Yuri Valle Roca?

Answer. The quotes referenced were part of a response to a question in 2018 about “why Cuba occupies an outsized role in the world and Americans’ imagination” and spoke to part of the long and extensive history of Cuba. My response was not meant to reflect my personal view. As part of the same question in 2018, when asked what was most important to me personally about my discrete role working on the President’s trip to Cuba, I spoke about my admiration for the Cuban-American community and the Cuban people. Today, for the record, I reaffirm that the quotes referenced do not reflect my personal view. My admiration is for the Cuban people and their courageous history seeking access to fundamental freedoms and human rights. It was not my intention in 2018 to suggest otherwise.

As a career Foreign Service Officer, my role was to assist in the organization of the President’s trip to Cuba. At the time of the President’s visit to Havana in 2016, I was not personally aware of the case of Lazaro Yuri Valle Roca or its details.

Question. In response to one of my questions, you said that you were “aware of the Cuban regime’s poor human rights record and its abusive treatment of civil society actors” at the time of President Obama’s trip to 2016. In 2018, why did you describe Cuban history as having “sexiness” or “sultry mystery” in this way when speaking with Ben Rhodes?

Answer. The quotes referenced were part of a response to a question in 2018 about “why Cuba occupies an outsized role in the world and Americans’ imagination” and spoke to part of the long and extensive history of Cuba. My response was not meant to reflect my personal view. As part of the same question, when asked what was most important to me about my limited role working on the President’s trip to Cuba, I spoke about my admiration for the Cuban-American community and the Cuban people. The Cuban regime’s record on human rights is reprehensible. I care deeply about the plight of the Cuban people, and it was not my intention to express otherwise. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Chile, I will work tirelessly to advance U.S. policy to help the people of Cuba and advance their human rights by partnering with the Government of Chile, and if confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to consult with you on how we might encourage the Chileans to take a more active role in this effort.

Question. Even though you were aware of the regime’s appalling human rights record and the decades of suffering experienced by the Cuban people and Cuban American community, why then, when asked by Rhodes to sum up your experience working on Cuba, did you answer “I can hold my rum”?

Answer. Throughout that 2018 conversation, I spoke of my admiration for the Cuban-American community and the Cuban people and the work I did as a career Foreign Service Officer to assist in the implementation of the President’s trip to Cuba. I discussed the broad array of people we met with on the trip, including Cuban civil society actors, human rights defenders, journalists, artists, and entrepreneurs. It was a broad-ranging, informal conversation and taken in its totality, emphasized my respect for the Cuban people and their efforts to seek access to fundamental freedoms and human rights, and how the trip supported the administration’s policy to help empower ordinary Cubans to take greater control of their lives and convey U.S. Government support for the fundamental freedoms and human rights of the Cuban people. It was not my intention to take away from the focus that should be on the suffering of the Cuban people. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Chile, I will support all U.S. efforts to empower the Cuban people to determine their own future, and efforts to hold the regime accountable.

Question. Thank you for your responses in support of implementing the bilateral tax treaty in Chile. As you know, Chile is still in the midst of a historic constitutional convention, which may undo decades of progress in Chile. What is your view of the constitutional convention process in Chile?

- If confirmed, how would you work with the Convention to support its work so that it results in a constitution responsive to the desires of the Chilean people and in the best interests of Chile and the United States?

Answer. The Constitutional Convention is a sovereign, democratic process that allows the people of Chile to weigh in on the future path that their country will take. Chile continues to serve as a model for the Western Hemisphere as its people channel their social, economic, and political demands into a peaceful, democratic, and transparent process. If confirmed, I will convey respect for the Chilean people’s right to determine the nature of their constitution and express faith in the Chilean people’s dedication to democratic principles, including good governance, human rights, and a continued business climate based on respect for free trade, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed, I would offer U.S. support to government and civil society

organizations and promote exchanges between U.S. and Chilean constitutional experts so that Chile can the benefit of our experience with our own constitutional model, as Chileans seek to enhance and consolidate the impressive democratic and economic advances Chile has made over the past three decades. If the new constitution is approved, I will ensure that it is clear to the Chilean public and government that the United States will continue to deepen our strong bilateral cooperation as Chile moves forward under its new constitution.

Question. Last year, the Chilean Congress drafted a bill mandating that Chile formally institute a boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) policy against the Jewish state of Israel. Fortunately, that measure did not progress through the Congress. Do you support BDS policies? If confirmed, what would you do in response to future actions by the Chilean Government to institute this policy of hate against Israel?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration and I firmly reject the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and associated policies, which unfairly single out Israel. If confirmed, I will build on previous efforts by Embassy Santiago to actively engage with Chilean lawmakers and the Boric administration to convey the United States' firm opposition to the boycott movement worldwide and the BDS legislation that currently sits in the Chilean Chamber of Deputies, as well as any efforts to delegitimize or discriminate against Israel. While the bill does not explicitly mention Israel, many of the bill's supporters have made clear that their goal is to implement BDS restrictions on all Chile-Israel trade. If confirmed, I will also engage relevant community members, businesses, and embassies from like-minded countries to speak out publicly against BDS legislation and the BDS movement.

Question. In your opinion, how would a new constitution in Chile support or obstruct future policies similar to the 2021 BDS bills?

Answer. It is not yet clear whether the new constitution currently being drafted in Chile will support or obstruct future policies similar to the 2021 Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) bill. Embassy Santiago has been actively engaging with Chilean lawmakers and the Boric administration to convey the United States' firm opposition to the boycott movement worldwide. If confirmed, I will build on this engagement, including with other relevant stakeholders, to oppose BDS legislation. Additionally, my public comments will make clear the United States' firm opposition to the BDS movement and any other policies that unfairly single out Israel and I will underscore that BDS legislation is counterproductive and runs contrary to values of free trade and non-discrimination that are shared values for both the United States and Chile.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

Question. How do you view the current status and future of the U.S.-Chile trade and investment relationship in the context of growing Chinese engagement and the pending new constitution?

Answer. The United States continues to lead in new foreign direct investment into Chile and ranks second, behind the People's Republic of China (PRC), in terms of overall trade. I believe there is an opportunity to deepen our commercial relationship with Chile and collaborate on sharing and implementing best practices in trade and investment, including advocating for steps Chile can take to establish a robust investment screening mechanism. Unlike the PRC, the United States upholds high standards for labor rights, environmental policies, and privacy standards when pursuing investment opportunities. Chile's strong institutions, free trade, and commitment to the rule of law serve as opportunities to expand our bilateral relationship. The new Boric administration stresses that it supports increased, "responsible," investment, and, if confirmed, I plan to engage with the Boric administration and the business community to find additional trade and investment opportunities that exemplify U.S. best practices. It is not yet clear how the new constitution currently being drafted in Chile will impact trade and investment opportunities, but my engagement with the Boric administration will prioritize the need to ensure the safeguarding of both U.S. and Chilean business interests.

Question. What is your perspective on the pending U.S.-Chile bilateral tax treaty and its impact on U.S. businesses in Chile?

Answer. I understand the bilateral tax treaty would put U.S. businesses in a far more advantageous position when pursuing investment opportunities in Chile. The

treaty would reduce withholding tax rates on royalties, dividends, interest payments, and capital gains and avoid double taxation of U.S. companies. The lack of a bilateral tax treaty puts U.S. companies in Chile at a disadvantage against their competitors. U.S. firms in Chile compete against firms from 33 other countries that have a bilateral tax treaty with Chile, such as China, Russia, Canada, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Both U.S. and Chilean companies, including members of AmCham Chile, urge the ratification and enactment of the tax treaty.

Question. To ensure that the tax treaty is in line with the Base Erosion and Anti-Abuse Tax (BEAT) enacted as part of the Tax Cut and Jobs Act, the U.S. Department of Treasury has indicated the Chilean Government needs to approve reservation language clarifying how the tax treaty interacts with BEAT. In your opinion, how will the government of Chile respond to this reservation language?

Answer. President Boric has not yet publicly stated his views on the tax treaty or reservation language. Given that this treaty was ratified by the Chilean congress in 2014, I expect that among the new Congress that took office on March 11, there will be some support among its members to approve a U.S. Senate reservation. Boric's administration advocates for tax reforms, including increases in mining royalty fees, that seek to increase state revenue. If confirmed, I will engage with Chilean lawmakers and the Boric administration to underscore the fact that increased private sector cooperation between the United States and Chile will not only bring additional economic benefits to both countries, but also a number of social and environmental benefits, such as improved labor laws, privacy protections, technology sharing, and high environmental protection standards.

Question. What challenges do you expect approval of the reservation language will face with the Chilean Congress and administration? What efforts will you undertake to overcome those concerns and challenges?

Answer. No coalition has a majority in the new session of the Chilean Congress, which began on March 11. This could translate to challenges in reaching the necessary votes to approve reservation language. If confirmed, I plan to engage Chilean lawmakers and the Boric administration to highlight that the benefits brought to both the United States and Chile are innumerable, since implementing the bilateral tax treaty will allow for deeper economic cooperation between our two countries. I will continue to highlight the benefits of U.S. investment and make the case that U.S. investment falls in line with Boric's goals of increased, "responsible" foreign investment in Chile, especially when compared to other investment partners, like the People's Republic of China.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO BERNADETTE M. MEEHAN BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. As you know, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) plays a critical role in reviewing the national security implications of foreign investments in the United States. As I understand it, Chile has not established its own approach to effective foreign investment screening, even though China, which engages in malign economic influence, has its eyes on Chile and Southern Cone countries with respect to lithium and other critical minerals, and other critically important sectors.

- If you are confirmed, do you commit to working with the U.S. Department of the Treasury to increase engagement with Government of Chile in order to educate Chile about the CFIUS process of the United States and persuade Chile to establish its own effective investment screening mechanism?

Answer. If confirmed, I will find additional opportunities to brief the Chilean Government on best practices for investment screening, drawing on the U.S. CFIUS process, and building upon ongoing efforts from both the Departments of State and the Treasury to provide information on this issue. I will engage early on with the Boric administration to arrange briefings and engagements that would be most useful to encourage best practices that support Chilean and U.S. national security. I will also continue to engage with the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) Chile and other business associations to understand and advocate for steps Chile can take to establish a robust investment screening mechanism. In tandem with these efforts, I will ask the Embassy team to ensure that we amplify through media and speaking engagements our efforts and collaboration with Chile, with an empha-

sis on the shared values between the United States and Chile and the advantages of doing business with U.S. companies.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DR. JOHN N. NKENGASONG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. PEPFAR is the signature global health program of the United States, with a large budget administered by a complex organization that includes staff from multiple agencies, foreign service officers stationed abroad, contractors, and local implementing partners.

- What are the main challenges to effective coordination between S/GAC HQ and other elements of the PEPFAR organization?

Answer. As an alumnus of PEPFAR, I've worked with all the U.S. Government implementing agencies and many of the partners, and I have witnessed the remarkable focus on mission among PEPFAR teams and implementers. I've experienced a model that enables discussion and debate and a chance to recommend a course of action to the coordinator. We all share the goal of saving millions of lives and providing services utilizing expertise from all U.S. Government agencies. If confirmed, I hope to continue to inspire that level of cooperation and focus for our common goals while continuing to seek ways for improved coordination.

Question. How will you address staffing shortages across PEPFAR, if confirmed?

Answer. High vacancy rates are a major challenge across the U.S. Government, including PEPFAR. If confirmed, it will be my priority to ensure that PEPFAR staffing vacancies are addressed, and we are meeting the needs of PEPFAR staff here at home and in all our Embassies around the world. The staff must see themselves valued, respected, and treated well. We must offer a workplace that appeals to the workforce of today. I intend to lead with respect and appreciation for staff, and to learn from the experience of the past 18 months working through the COVID-19 pandemic. I will also continue the efforts within the Department of State to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in hiring practices and promotions.

Question. Will you commit to fully and proactively cooperating with the PEPFAR Effectiveness and Efficiency Review being conducted by the Government Accountability Office if confirmed?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Beginning in April 2018, PEPFAR began pursuing the goal of channeling 70 percent of its funding to local partners. This policy was the subject of an audit by USAID's Office of Inspector General, published December 13, 2021.

- What analysis informed the decision to channel 70 percent of funds through partners funding? Do you agree that 70 percent is the right number?

Answer. In response to countries' desire for expanded independence, PEPFAR further embedded sustainability and domestic financing elements into its work. To achieve and sustain epidemic control, HIV services must be owned and operated by local actors. Thus, the bold, but achievable goal of having 70 percent of PEPFAR resources by agency channeled through local organizations, took root. These organizations understand the local context and needs of PEPFAR beneficiaries and have complemented international efforts to strengthen local capabilities. If confirmed, I will fully review the results of the effort thus far, and the audit, and continue to work with Congress and implementing agencies to fully realize the recommendations of the report.

Question. What are the main challenges related to increasing local partner funding?

Answer. PEPFAR is not a replacement for partner government responsibility. Partner countries must also invest sufficient domestic financing for HIV programs and ensure an enabling policy environment for their effective and efficient allocation. Many partner governments have increased their investment in their respective HIV response over time. However, several cannot, and this has been compounded recently by COVID-19. If confirmed, I will support efforts to promote self-reliance by developing more efficient models of service delivery and strengthening technical, managerial and financial capacity for local stakeholders to maintain key services, systems and resources stewarded by local institutions.

Question. Do you commit to implementing the recommendations of the USAID OIG audit?

Answer. If confirmed, I will commit to a fair and open evaluation of the recommendations of the USAID OIG and work to realize its full potential across PEPFAR programs and processes.

Question. As many countries approach epidemic control, how should PEPFAR adjust its mission to cement those gains and, as appropriate, wind down operations?

Answer. PEPFAR has a duty to ensure high-quality prevention and treatment services throughout every stage of program evolution. As countries reach sustained control of HIV, we must ensure there is an enabling policy and programmatic environment for addressing key populations, underserved populations and other structural barriers to an effective and sustainable HIV/AIDS response. PEPFAR must work to identify areas where increased local financing and management responsibilities can occur. If confirmed, I look forward to working with partner governments, civil society, and multilateral organizations to create a shared and gradual sustainability pathway that is ambitious and resilient in the face of future threats.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief me and/or my staff as requested during your tenure as PEPFAR Coordinator?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO DR. JOHN N. NKENGASONG BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to working in a bipartisan manner with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including by providing timely, accurate, and complete information on relevant U.S. global health strategies, initiatives, and funding?

Answer. Yes, and if confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on these matters.

Question. A recent report by the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) Anti-Corruption and Governance Center suggests that an estimated seven percent of global spending on public health is lost to waste, fraud, and abuse. The United States is, by far, the single most generous donor of global health assistance. If confirmed, will you commit to upholding a zero-tolerance policy for waste, fraud, and abuse in the programs under your purview?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If confirmed, will you also uphold a zero-tolerance policy for all PEPFAR-supported staff and implementing partners who engage in the sexual exploitation and abuse of the vulnerable communities they are meant to serve?

Answer. Yes. This will be a priority for PEPFAR.

Question. It took the Biden administration nearly a year to nominate someone to fill this vital position. Despite the commitment and best efforts of career staff within the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (S/GAC), and compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of full-time, Senate-confirmed leadership appears to have taken a toll. What is your understanding of morale within S/GAC and how, if necessary, do you intend to improve it?

Answer. A successful Mission must begin with the people who make it happen. The staff must see themselves valued, respected, and treated well. I intend to lead with respect and appreciation for staff, and to learn from the experience of the past 18 months working through the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, it will be my priority to ensure that we are meeting the needs of PEPFAR staff here at home and in all our Missions around the world.

Question. How do you intend to create a unified Mission and vision across the PEPFAR program while holding implementing agencies and partners accountable for transparency and results?

Answer. As an alumnus of PEPFAR, I've worked with all of the U.S Government implementing agencies and many of the partners, and I have witnessed the remarkable focus on Mission among PEPFAR teams and implementers. I know that we all share the same goal of saving as many lives as possible from HIV/AIDS. If we continue sharing this goal, we will continue to be a highly successful program. If confirmed, I hope to continue to inspire that level of cooperation and focus for our common goals.

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I have mentioned before that respectful partnership will govern my approach if I am confirmed. Before I ask it of others, I live it myself first. My staff would describe me as easy-going and flexible. I like to be prepared and I listen well.

Question. In your view, how would your management style translate to PEPFAR, where your workforce and implementing partners are composed of a dizzying array of career foreign and civil servants, political appointees, Foreign Service Limited appointments, Participating Agency Service Agreements, foreign governments, international organizations, contractors, and grantees, often with competing priorities and interests?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to drawing upon the expertise that exists among all PEPFAR's U.S. Government implementing agencies. We all share the goal of saving millions of lives and providing services that require expertise from across the U.S. Government—whether it's USAID's experience with supply chain management, CDC's experience with laboratory programs, DOD's experience with peer-to-peer military programs, or Peace Corps' experience with community-based initiatives. All of us bring something different to the table and as a result, we have made lasting impact. What I've experienced is a model that enables discussion and debate and a chance to recommend a course of action to the Coordinator.

Question. The success of PEPFAR largely can be attributed to S/GAC's commitment to aggressively pursuing prevention and treatment goals, improving targeting, measuring impact, and holding partners accountable for outcomes. PEPFAR's Populations Based HIV Impact Assessments (PHIAs) have served as a particularly useful tool for identifying gaps and measuring impact on incidence, and will be even more critical in the context of COVID-19. If confirmed, will you commit to submitting to Congress the PHIAs planned for FY 2022 through FY 2024, in addition to Country Operating Plans (COPs) and required Congressional Notifications?

Answer. Yes, and if confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on these matters.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. Yes.

Question. USAID and CDC have a long history of stretching the boundaries when it comes to permissible uses of PEPFAR funds, including: using PEPFAR funds to finance the construction of schools in Malawi despite the availability of education funds earmarked by appropriators annually for this purpose; using PEPFAR funds statutorily set aside to support children who have been made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS for activities with no discernable connection to HIV/AIDS; and by using PEPFAR funds to support salaries for implementing agency staff who are only nominally focused on combatting HIV/AIDS. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring all U.S. Government-supported efforts to combat HIV/AIDS globally are efficient, effective, aligned, and complementary to the work of S/GAC?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you work to ensure that implementing agencies and partners, including USAID and CDC, meaningfully contribute to, but also strictly adhere to, PEPFAR's Country Operating Plan (COP) process?

Answer. Yes.

Question. In addition to directly enabling the provision of life-saving treatment for nearly 19 million people and averting 2.8 million newborn infections, PEPFAR support for public health infrastructure and personnel has contributed to stronger health systems and reductions in all-cause mortality in its focus countries. The "PEPFAR effect" on health systems has never been more evident than in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Congress repeatedly has made clear the intent to transition PEPFAR from an emergency response to enduring country-led programs. As we approach the 20-year anniversary of PEPFAR, what comes next?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with countries, and with my counterparts in the diplomatic corps and development community, to identify ways we can continue to expand long-term country responsibility on sustaining HIV impact while also closing gaps that exist for PEPFAR-supported beneficiaries. In consultation with Congress, it will also be important to explore how PEPFAR's model and platforms can be further maximized to efficiently and effectively deliver on preparedness and response to other health threats as COVID-19 has shown the urgency of doing so. Doing so without compromising the HIV/AIDS program would require additional resources and legislative support, including in its reauthorization.

Question. Given the negative impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria globally, when, if ever, would be an appropriate transition point for focus countries?

Answer. PEPFAR has a duty to ensure that the people receiving prevention and treatment are served high-quality services throughout any change. Many PEPFAR supported countries are not currently able to wholly finance the HIV response, in many cases compounded by COVID-19. Decreases to a country program's funding program must happen with considerable planning from both PEPFAR and our partners at the local and multilateral levels. PEPFAR continues to ensure that the program transitions to local ownership, ever expanding independence of local actors. PEPFAR is not a replacement for partner government responsibility and must work to identify areas where increased financing and management responsibilities can occur.

Question. In July, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed S. 2297, the International Pandemic Preparedness and COVID-19 Response Act, with overwhelming bipartisan support. Many aspects of this legislation were built upon the foundation of PEPFAR, including its authorization for a Special Representative for Global Health Security at the Department of State. Do you agree with the legislation's basic premise that U.S. global health security and diplomacy are inextricably linked, and that enhanced leadership by the Department of State will be required to advance an effective U.S. global health security and diplomacy strategy overseas?

Answer. Global health security is inextricably linked to U.S. foreign policy and national security goals. If confirmed, I commit to working with you and others to leverage the strengths of PEPFAR and ensure that the State Department is best positioned to most effectively address current and future global health challenges. I look forward to working with the State Department, including the Bureau of Oceans, International Environmental, and Scientific Affairs (OES), Coordinator for COVID-19 Response and Health Security (CRHS), and Office of Foreign Assistance (F) to ensure that the health diplomacy, and global health security and pandemic preparedness efforts of the State Department are fully realized.

Question. Do you agree that PEPFAR could serve as an effective model for enhancing U.S. global health security and pandemic preparedness more broadly?

Answer. With the bipartisan support of Congress, PEPFAR rapidly mobilized an unprecedented and impactful response to the global AIDS epidemic. I believe PEPFAR has been one of the most successful foreign assistance efforts of its kind because of its focus on results, on science, the ability to bring the whole of U.S. Government to bear with strong accountability mechanisms, and the high-level political support it enjoys from all of you, as well as support across the State Department and broader interagency. I look forward to leveraging PEPFAR as one of the U.S. Government's tools to enhance global health security and pandemic preparedness broadly.

Question. Successive administrations—both Democrat and Republican—have launched initiatives to “localize” U.S. foreign assistance, including by building the capacity of local partners to design programs and manage U.S. funds directly, rather than working as sub-awardees to large, U.S.-based development contractors and non-governmental organizations. In 2018, S/GAC established a 70% localization target. There has, however, been confusion about how “localization” is defined and measured across the implementing agencies, and how oversight of local partners should be conducted. According to a December 13, 2021, report by the USAID Office of the Inspector General, USAID was not on target to meet the ambitious PEPFAR goal. If confirmed, will you commit to working with Congress to establish a formalized definition and plan for “localization,” to include support for partner government investment strategies and direct funding for both local faith- and community-based organizations?

Answer. Yes, and if confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on this matter.

Question. In your testimony, you spoke of the need to “act collectively to support the capabilities of local leaders and regional institutions and work in respectful partnership and accountability with them.” Do you agree that as the head of PEPFAR, your first responsibility would be to advance the global health interests of the United States?

Answer. Yes, PEPFAR's success would not be possible without the generosity of the American taxpayer and if confirmed, America's global health interests will be my foremost concern as the head of PEPFAR. We should continue to think about how PEPFAR can be leveraged to build the future health system needed to combat new health threats.

Question. Do you agree that “accountability” under the PEPFAR program must include accountability of partners (including partner governments, regional institutions, and local organizations) to uphold commitments and deliver measurable results?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you agree that “accountability” under the PEPFAR program must also include accountability of partners (including partner governments, regional institutions, and local organizations) to the American taxpayer?

Answer. Yes.

Question. There has been strong focus over the past 14 months on multilateral institutions to address global health challenges, including but not limited to the U.S. international response to the COVID–19 pandemic. Recognizing that multilateral and bilateral programs work collaboratively, and that each have their own unique strengths and challenges, what would you consider to be the appropriate balance between multilateral and U.S. bilateral assistance to combat HIV/AIDS and to address emerging global health security challenges?

Answer. Our multilateral and bilateral investments are mutually beneficial in leveraging resources and increasing access to quality health care services, and represent a balanced approach to maximize programmatic impact. At a time when our biggest global challenges defy national boundaries—from pandemics to climate change—the importance of multilateral organizations is only heightened. The administration has expressed repeatedly that when we are absent from the table, we cannot ensure the reforms needed to ensure the full effectiveness of these institutions. PEPFAR must continue to strengthen its bilateral relationships with partner countries and leverage the collective strength of multilaterals in combatting global health challenges.

Question. It is notable that PEPFAR has managed to expand services despite a flat budget since 2009. It also is notable that the Biden administration has signaled its intent to increase contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund). It would be difficult to justify this increase, particularly if coupled with a flat or declining bilateral PEPFAR budget, absent a clear strategy to shift responsibility for purchasing HIV/AIDS commodities to the Global Fund. If confirmed, will you commit to improving coordination and collaboration with the Global Fund in a manner that shifts greater responsibility to the Fund (or the partner countries themselves) for testing and treatment commodities, while bilateral PEPFAR funds are prioritized for creating an enabling environment for efficient and effective service delivery?

Answer. Yes, and if confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on these matters.

Question. The American Rescue Plan (ARP) provided the Secretary of State with \$3.75 billion “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus,” including through a \$3.5 billion contribution to the Global Fund. Though there was virtually no consultation on the authorizing language, the authors reportedly intended for this assistance to be used to leverage existing PEPFAR/Global Fund platforms and protect against backsliding. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that funds made available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for the international COVID–19 response are carefully aligned with and complementary to PEPFAR whenever and wherever applicable, including by ensuring that PEPFAR platforms are effectively leveraged (rather than duplicated) and that implementing agencies and partners are held accountable for measurable results?

Answer. Yes, and if confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on this matter.

Question. Within the Access to COVID–19 Tools (Act) Accelerator, the Global Fund’s COVID–19 Response Mechanism is responsible for the diagnostics and health systems strengthening pillars. The United States has committed \$3.5 billion to the Global Fund for this purpose. What is your assessment of the Global Fund’s performance to date? What is the Global Fund getting right, and what would you do differently?

Answer. I understand that the increased financial contributions from the U.S. have created a stronger and better functioning Global Fund, enabling more impactful U.S. bilateral programs across the three diseases and allowing the United States to continue to tackle HIV/AIDS on a truly global scale. Our multilateral and bilateral investments are mutually beneficial; they leverage resources and represent a balanced approach to maximize impact. The USG works closely with the Global Fund to provide complementary, not duplicative services, and work such as

strengthening the Global Fund's internal oversight systems, program coordination, and creating efficiencies between Global Fund and U.S. investments are all routine practices now.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. The Global Fund helped form the consortium of key multilateral agencies that came together in April 2020 to combine assets to respond to the COVID-19 emergency and enhance coordination and collaboration. The \$3.5 billion commitment from the United States made it the largest provider of support to LMICS across the three ACT A pillars (Diagnostics, Health Systems, and Treatment). They have brought assets and services to countries in desperate need, leveraging their sourcing and procurement expertise, and have done it well while staying in their lane. They have excelled in bringing new products, suppliers, and manufacturers to the arena with due diligence, safely and quickly procuring products in a very complex supply chain.

Question. Are you concerned by the Global Fund's aggressive push to take on broader health systems strengthening, rather than remain focused on the three diseases it was created to combat?

Answer. I believe that PEPFAR has had to be deliberate to not dilute its responsibilities to deliver on HIV. The Global Fund has faced similar pressures for HIV, TB, and malaria. However, COVID-19 must be addressed for each institutions' mandate to get back on track. PEPFAR has worked with governments and communities to address a plethora of COVID-19-related health challenges, and to strengthen primary, secondary, and tertiary service provision platforms. This work has demonstrated that health system investments by PEPFAR and the Global Fund, within their current mandates, have contributed to the broader COVID-19 response effort.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. I believe that the Global Fund's focus on the three diseases of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria has been on point and remains critical to finish the job the Global Fund was created to do. With the negative impacts on these diseases due to COVID-19, a focus on the countries that are at risk of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria is now even more necessary to save lives. While the Global Fund's disease-focused efforts have strengthened critical health systems capacities, expanding to broader efforts could dilute its focus. Consequently, the Global Fund should not expand to countries and areas that are not at risk of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

Question. Public health experts consistently are learning more about COVID19, including who is at greatest risk for severe disease and who should be prioritized for vaccination and treatment. This includes the 18 million HIV positive individuals receiving antiretroviral treatment (ART) through PEPFAR. If confirmed, what measures would you propose to take to ensure 100 percent vaccination coverage for individuals on PEPFAR-supported ART?

Answer. People living with HIV are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 and vaccination is recommended by both U.S. CDC and prevention and WHO guidelines. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that all PLHIV on PEPFAR-supported ART are prioritized for COVID vaccination. PEPFAR has demonstrated with American Rescue Plan Funds that vaccine uptake among PLHIV is efficient and effective by reaching PEPFAR beneficiaries through existing service delivery platforms. Current PEPFAR-supported infrastructure and health systems (e.g. supply chain management, health information systems, and human resources) could be leveraged quickly to support countries in COVID-19 vaccination, planning and administration.

Question. Should the United States engage in highly risky public health research—such as gain-of-function or other life sciences research that poses dual-use concerns—in cooperation with countries that do not have adequate biosecurity standards, that have violated or failed to uphold the International Health Regulations, or where the United States cannot certify that such country is in compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention?

Answer. No.

Question. If confirmed, will you ensure PEPFAR-supported research and development grants and contracts are fully vetted and do not flow to partners, including through sub-awards, engaged in such research, particularly in countries with lax biosecurity standards?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If confirmed, how would you enhance S/GAC's monitoring and evaluation of sub-awards related to life sciences research?

Answer. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is an essential function for S/GAC and PEPFAR U.S. Government implementing agencies. To execute M&E well requires knowledge in project planning, data collection, making data usable, and using data for decision-making. If confirmed, I would work to further strengthen S/GAC human resources with technical skills and tools required to ensure effective monitoring and to manage evaluations funded through prime and sub-awards related to life sciences research and implement quality HIV programs.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring full and complete compliance with current law, which prohibits the use of U.S. foreign assistance to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, support involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion overseas?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you recognize the fungibility of U.S. foreign assistance? If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that U.S. foreign assistance does not enable implementing partners to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, perform involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to ensure compliance with current policy regarding U.S. foreign assistance

Question. China has used the COVID-19 pandemic to advance its relations with other countries through vaccine diplomacy. As of May 2021, China has exported more than 250 million vaccine doses (about 42 percent of its total production). Many of these doses were sold, not donated, and yet Chinese public media messaging around the vaccine deliveries have laid the groundwork for the Chinese Government to broaden engagement with key countries. How can we counter misleading narratives around China's vaccine diplomacy? In your previous role, did you work to counter such narratives? If so, how?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure that the US continues to be recognized for its extraordinary leadership in mitigating covid including the provision of vaccines globally with no strings attached. At Africa CDC my focus was on expanding vaccine accessibility and once secured, getting shots into arms by creating rapid response teams who sought to provide technical assistance to countries so vaccines would be well utilized.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. The United States must counter the PRC's misleading narratives everywhere they emerge. In my previous role, I worked to counter these by publicly acknowledging U.S. efforts and raising the profile of the U.S. for being the largest contributor of vaccines, while also privately working diplomatically to dispel misinformation amongst AU Member States. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure that the United States continues to be recognized for its extraordinary leadership in mitigating COVID-19, including through the provision of safe and effective vaccines globally at no cost and with no political strings attached.

Question. What can PEPFAR do to better promote the programming and support the U.S. provides in terms of global health, particularly in areas where China is expanding its own aid footprint?

Answer. PEPFAR was extraordinarily helpful in Africa when COVID appeared. I witnessed this firsthand. The investments for HIV and HIV/TB were in place, and were utilized to offer test, treat, and vaccination services for COVID. PEPFAR staff across multiple disciplines at U.S. Embassies across the continent where the technical collaborators to offer surveillance, infection control and other innovations to counter the new pandemic. Many of the HIV investments that PEPFAR has made in lab, surveillance, HRH, supply chain, etc., were utilized. We can do more to be responsive—when we provide vaccines, we must also provide the supplies to get them into arms, as well as other critical medical products

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. PEPFAR is among the United States' most powerful diplomatic and programmatic tools and exemplifies its technical prowess, trusted relationships, and enduring efforts to save lives across the globe. The PRC's approach has been to hide funding arrangements with countries when investing in things that are visible—infrastructure projects, for example. Conversely, PEPFAR should be more outspoken about its tremendous investment, its very visible impact on HIV for the citizens of

the countries, and the health systems that have been strengthened through this outcome-focused effort that has also helped respond to COVID-19 and other health threats.

Question. In March 2021, you said in an interview to Chinese state-owned Xinhua that you would welcome Chinese vaccines and appreciate China's health efforts in Africa. Do you still stand by this statement? What would you consider the successes and failures of Chinese health engagement with Africa throughout the pandemic?

Answer. In my role as CDC Africa Director, at that time the countries were not on anyone's radar for vaccines and the appeal was made everywhere, including to China. Chinese engagement was practical and responsive to what countries asked for. Actions such as offering vaccines without transparency on efficacy data were barriers to overcome.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. As Director of the Africa CDC, an agency of the African Union, it was my role to confront this threat to the lives of over a billion people, and I was supporting a global appeal to make safe and effective, WHO EUL-approved vaccines available to African countries. The PRC engaged countries on a bilateral basis, which was outside the scope of the Director's authority, and Africa CDC had no role in countries' decisions regarding which vaccines to administer to their populations. If confirmed, I will continue to push for equitable access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines globally with no political strings attached.

Question. What lessons can the African continent learn about the risks of engaging with the Chinese on health issues?

Answer. One valuable lesson is to be science-based and look thoroughly and apolitically at the incentive structure of the partnership being offered. Valuing full and transparent relationships is better in the long-term.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. The United States seeks a science-based approach and looks thoroughly at the incentive structure of any partnership being offered. We require full and transparent relationships that remain in our interests and that of our partners. We must vigilantly uphold the principles of transparency and data accuracy throughout these engagements. As Director of the Africa CDC, I have ensured that collaboration with the PRC is guided by Africa CDC's five-year strategic plan and not determined or influenced by the PRC's offers for input.

Question. China has shown us, time and time again, that it is not a reliable partner in global health. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it suppressed vital information about the spread of the virus, impeded global research into the virus, and spread disinformation about its origins. China also engaged in early-pandemic stockpiling of key PPE, and later profited off of selling this PPE and its vaccines. To this day, it refuses to cooperate fully with global health organizations and spreads disinformation about the nature of the virus. Do you think there is still an opportunity to work with China on global health, given its unreliability and lack of transparency? Why or why not? Please be specific.

Answer. We welcome the PRC's cooperation on issues such as climate change, global health security, arms control, and nonproliferation—all issues that threaten the entire world and require everyone to do their part. The United States is committed to building back better global health security to mitigate future pandemics and other biological threats—emphasizing that all nations need increased capacity now. Countries and institutions must hold themselves accountable, fulfilling the commitments we've all made and surging resources required to end this pandemic by vaccinating the world, saving lives now, and building back better.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. The Department of State has noted transnational issues for cooperation with the PRC where our interests align, including global health security. Health diplomacy has been an effective tool of soft power. Cooperation between the U.S. CDC and China CDC as a public health goal to prevent, detect, respond to, and contain future health threats must be weighed with the risks associated with the lack of reliable data and lack of transparency. Our continuous engagement with the PRC could place additional pressure on the PRC to improve transparency.

Question. Under your tenure, the African CDC headquarters building was contracted to be built by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation, one of the largest Chinese state-owned enterprises for construction and a key player in

China's One Belt, One Road initiative. This contract was concluded after reports came out in 2018 that the Chinese state-owned enterprise-built African Union headquarters had been bugged by the Chinese Government and that the building was wired to transfer sensitive AU data back to China. What was the impetus for allowing yet another Chinese state-owned enterprise construct a key headquarter building after there had been clear evidence that previous Chinese construction was built with bugs?

Answer. Africa CDC, as an agency of the African Union, identifies areas of need including infrastructure development. Responsibility on fulfilling development plans sit within the African Union leadership processes and protocols.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. The decision to contract PRC-backed enterprises to construct the Africa CDC's headquarters predated my arrival as the head of the agency in January 2016. It was an agreement made by the African Union Commission, and a political decision several levels above me. The AU established a technical working group to ensure that the construction was carried out according to international norms and standards, and it took almost two years from the first meeting in May 2017 to agree on the format of the building, as we held firm on many key aspects. I pushed back in my limited capacity as a technical person within the AU system in this note here.

Question. What assurances, if any, did you receive to ensure the Chinese Government would not construct the African CDC building to spy on public health programming in Africa and transfer sensitive data back to China? What steps did you take to verify these assurances?

Answer. The African Union seeks transparency within every partnership development, including infrastructure development. Any unauthorized actions were a breach on the side of the partner, not negligence by Africa CDC.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. Africa CDC has requested that all software—including the building's information and data management systems—be handled by an independent group, as opposed to the PRC state-owned enterprise, to ensure that it is under the strict oversight of the African Union. The African Union seeks transparency within every partnership, including on infrastructure development, and does not condone spying or unauthorized data sharing.

Question. During your time with the African CDC, you supported cooperation with China on setting up Africa's Regional Integrated Surveillance and Laboratory Network to help coordinate and integrate healthcare capacity and public health data. What guardrails, if any, did you put on this cooperation to protect sensitive health data?

Answer. Africa CDC guidance aligns with WHO guidance to all WHO Member States regarding the protection of the individual rights of citizens for their health information to not be used without consent.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. None of the three Regional Integrated Surveillance and Laboratory Networks that Africa CDC is establishing in Central, Southern, and West Africa has benefited from any PRC support or input—absolutely none.

Question. Did you have any concerns, or do you have, about the integration of so many public services under Chinese technical expertise and infrastructure? How did you address those concerns at the time?

Answer. AU member states make their own decisions on who they partner with on technical expertise and infrastructure. The role of Africa CDC is to provide best practices, encourage collaboration and enhance communication amongst countries in an effort to build strong networks to fight ongoing and new health threats.

Revised Response (Received April 2, 2022)

Answer. During my tenure at Africa CDC, there have been three PRC-associated seconded staff, from 2017 to 2019, with each staying for one year. By contrast, during the last five years Africa CDC has benefited from ten U.S. CDC assignees and or seconded staff, with three embedded full-time. AU member states make their own decisions as to whom they partner with on technical expertise and infrastructure. Africa CDC's role is to provide best practices, encourage collaboration, and enhance communication amongst countries to build strong networks to fight ongoing and new health threats. I have been very clear on my stance that we must insist on respect-

ful and action-oriented partnerships that are fully aligned with Africa CDC's priorities.

Question. Do you commit to ensuring that any data collected by PEPFAR programs is protected and cannot be accessed by authoritarian governments?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO DR. JOHN N. NKENGASONG BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. On January 27, 2020, you wrote an article that called Beijing's response to the COVID-19 pandemic "swift and decisive" and praised its "political openness" as a "new dawn for global health security and international health diplomacy." This was certainly the early days of the pandemic, but already by January 27, the Chinese response to COVID-19 was anything but a "new dawn." A few days before January 27, on January 23, the PRC instituted a complete lockdown of Wuhan. The PRC took draconian measures that far exceeded the lockdowns that we all eventually experienced during the pandemic. They welded people into their homes to force them to comply with the lockdown, and to keep them from leaving once the hospitals were full. They harassed the family members of those who had died of the disease. A blogger who covered this, Zhang Zhan, still remains in custody for telling the world about the Chinese Communist Party's repression. What about this response was a "new dawn?"

Answer. In my role as CDC Africa Director at that time, we desperately wanted transparency and openness to understand the origins of this new global threat. We assumed that China, as a WHO Member State and a purported supporter of global health security, would behave responsibly and share all relevant information, data, and samples in a timely and transparent manner; but unfortunately that was not—and still is not—the case.

Question. Do you still believe the PRC's response to the COVID-19 crisis is a model other countries should follow now, or for future pandemics?

Answer. The world still does not definitely know the origins of the virus and the early spread of COVID-19. The PRC is politicizing this issue, when it should be a straightforward discussion and analysis of data among experts. The inquiry into the origins of this pandemic must be science-based and have access all relevant data, samples, and information. We owe it to our people and people all around the world to look thoroughly and apolitically into the origins of COVID-19.

Question. In the same piece, you wrote the following: "By 10 January 2020, the consortium had sequenced and publicly released partial sequences obtained from a patient in Wuhan that demonstrated at least 70 percent similarity in genetic material to severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). Such transparency in sharing sequence information is critical for the development of diagnostic tests and potential therapy and vaccines to help control the outbreak, should it spread widely. The sequences were deposited in GenBank." The "transparency" you praised was not transparency at all. It was the result of a brave Chinese scientist, Zhang Yongzhen, releasing the sequences without Beijing's permission. Zhang's lab at the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center sequenced the full genome of SARS-CoV-2 by January 5, and immediately shared the sequence with the National Health Commission and sought permission to publish. After receiving no answer for six days, Zhang asked a colleague in Australia to release the sequence on GenBank on January 11 (local time). A day later, the authorities closed his lab for "rectification." The NHC did not share the genome sequence with the WHO until after Zhang published it. We have a whistleblower to thank for the information that allowed us to develop our diagnostic tests, vaccines, and treatments, not the PRC authorities. When you wrote this article, did you know that the "transparency" you praised was actually a courageous scientist acting in defiance of Beijing for the sake of global public health?

Answer. No.

Question. On January 3, the PRC National Health Commission issued a confidential gag order to prevent Chinese scientists from sharing information related to the virus with anyone without authorization and ordered them to destroy samples in their possession. While this information did not become publicly known until April 2020, given the extent of the initial cover up with SARS in 2003–2004, and many other instances of PRC authorities covering up, distorting, or misrepresenting data

of various types over the years since then, shouldn't you have been more skeptical of Beijing's claims early in the outbreak?

Answer. My position at the time was we would take the information in good faith in the hopes it would encourage a meaningful partnership to fight COVID-19. Over time it became apparent that not all the information was being freely shared.

Question. Thanks to investigative reporting by brave Chinese journalists, we've known since 2021 that the genome had been sequenced by commercial companies at least as early as December 27, 2019, and these companies had provided the results to Wuhan and central authorities. So the truth is far more complicated than the picture that you painted in your article, which was based on data curated by Beijing. Do you regret jumping to conclusions in the absence of reliable data? In retrospect, how do you account for this misjudgment? What lessons have you learned?

Answer. At that time, we sincerely thought that maybe the relationship Africa CDC had fostered with Chinese counterparts would yield scientific dividends to fight COVID-19 and as a result of our scientific and technical exchange, there would be the emergence of information to fight the spread. With hindsight now, it is clear that we were premature in drawing conclusions that did not stand the test of time.

Question. Going forward, do you commit to being more circumspect when making assessments of developing situations, and more skeptical of data coming out of China?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If confirmed, will you rigorously question the integrity and quality of any assistance provided by the Chinese Communist Party to global AIDS relief?

Answer. Yes.

Question. I understand that you played a leading role in standing up Africa's CDC. While more coordination in infectious disease control is certainly needed in Africa, Africa's CDC was built and funded by China. Similarly, Beijing designed, built, and paid for the African Union's \$200 million headquarters, with Huawei installing its servers. It turns out that the headquarters was hacked and had its data transferred to a server in China. This raises concerns that Beijing will seek to steal data from the Africa CDC in the same way they did with the AU headquarters. Can you explain your role more in Africa's CDC?

Answer. As a U.S. Government official, I was seconded from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as its Director from 2021-2026. The AU process dictated how Africa CDC would be financed; my role was to realize a vision I had to build local competency and resilience and expand partnership between the U.S. CDC, my home of thirty years, and Africa.

Question. Did you ever push back on China's role in constructing the facility?

Answer. The decisions were promoted through complicated AU discussions and negotiations. I had no vote.

Question. Since establishing the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Congress has stipulated that the program has overall management and budget authority across agencies, enabling it to strategically guide U.S. efforts on global HIV and AIDS. In addition, as a program situated in the State Department, PEPFAR has been able to incorporate global health leadership with U.S. diplomatic assets, helping to integrate its work on the ground and strengthening its relationships with partner governments. Many have credited these attributes as core to PEPFAR's success. What do you see as opportunities to utilize the program's diplomatic relationships and its cross agency authority to address the next phase in the global HIV response?

Answer. First, all credit to PEPFAR's founding legislation which equipped the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator with the budget, authority, and the Department of State's foreign assistance leadership to execute what I believe is one of the most successful development initiatives ever launched by a country. That focus, aligned with impressive support to keep the program committed to its goal has yielded dividends that can appropriately evolve into an effective multisectoral instrument to demonstrate how a focused approach to problems can continue to drive results and make a lasting impact. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with all stakeholders to identify ways we can continue to expand country responsibility on sustaining HIV impact.

Question. If confirmed, will you continue to maintain PEPFAR's management and budget authority across the interagency?

Answer. Yes, and if confirmed, I commit to working with Congress on this matter.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO DR. JOHN N. NKENGASONG BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

Question. In January 2021, the State Department called for a transparent and thorough investigation into the origin of the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding the origin of COVID-19 is essential to advance global public health, economic recovery, and international security. In particular, the State Department urged the World Health Organization to press the Government of China to show transparency and share information about the initial outbreak and spread of COVID-19. China, however, has resisted the international community's effort to understand the outbreak and spread of COVID-19. What is your view of China's role in the outbreak and spread of COVID-19?

Answer. While fighting the current COVID-19 pandemic must be our priority, understanding its origins and transparency of data are critical to prepare for, prevent, and more rapidly respond to the next pandemic. If confirmed, I will work across the U.S. Government interagency and with our external partners to ensure that we continue to support the WHO's ongoing efforts to identify the origins of COVID-19. Toward this end, WHO has appointed a new expert panel to focus on better managing outbreaks of unknown origin in the future, and, if confirmed, I will cooperate with it to the extent appropriate.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. In its own backyard, the People's Republic of China (PRC) responded to COVID-19 by cracking down on public health officials who wanted to alert the world on early observations about how the virus was spreading, which could have saved lives. The lack of transparency and misinformation by PRC officials, their actions to block flow of helpful information from their own scientists, and the PRC's refusal to collaborate with countries when it was crucial to do so led to the escalation of this pandemic. I agree that the inability of WHO to compel collaboration by PRC hampered global efforts further. The United States must counter the PRC's misleading narratives everywhere they emerge. I worked to counter these by publicly acknowledging U.S. efforts and raising the profile of the United States for being the largest contributor of vaccines, while also privately working diplomatically to dispel misinformation circulating amongst AU Member States. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure the preeminence of the United States as the credible partner to assist in mitigating COVID-19, including through the provision of safe and effective vaccines globally at no cost, and set countries on a course for true health security.

Question. What mistakes, in your view, did China commit in the outbreak and spread of COVID-19?

Answer. As the world continues to seek to control the COVID-19 pandemic, we must ensure the lessons we have so painfully learned are never repeated. If confirmed, I will work with both the U.S. Government interagency and collaborating partners to strengthen the global health architecture so that all countries are better prepared to prevent, detect, and respond to the threats of infectious disease.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. The primary mistake the People's Republic of China (PRC) made, in my view, was its choice to hide the truth of its earliest observations of how the COVID-19 virus spread. Once it became clear that the virus spread asymptotically, it was crucial that the world know that fact immediately. The PRC's blocking the WHO from conducting an independent investigation was another mistake, leading to perceptions, rather than science driving global decision-making. Also, as stated above, the PRC's cracking down on public health officials who wanted to alert the world on early observations about how the virus was spreading, which could have saved lives, was a serious miscalculation. Lastly, the spread of misinformation has been concerning. For instance, despite the May 2020 statement by the PRC leadership that \$2 billion will be allocated to fight COVID-19, no funding has materialized.

Question. From 2016 to 2021, you served as the Director of Africa's Center for Disease Control and Prevention. China has used public health assistance to Africa to exert further influence often at the expense of Africans. Please provide details on

your cooperation and collaboration with the Government of China during the time that you served as the Director of Africa's Center for Disease Control and Prevention?

Answer. In my role as Director, our goal was to broaden collaboration. I sought to create as many partnerships and third-party engagements to support the needs of AU member states. Since the Ebola outbreak, in seeking a coordinated response, the Africa CDC forged partnerships with China, with the EU, with the United States and many others, to collaborate on technical issues that would enhance health security. When COVID appeared, Africa CDC leveraged WHO to try to bring China into the on-going dialogue on how best to understand the etiology of this new disease.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. As Director of the Africa CDC, an agency of the African Union, it was my role to confront threats to the health of over a billion people, and I supported a global appeal to make safe and effective, World Health Organization Emergency Use Listing Procedure (WHO EUL)-approved vaccines available to African countries. The PRC engaged countries on a bilateral basis, which was outside the scope of the Director's authority, and Africa CDC had no role in countries' decisions regarding which vaccines to administer to their populations. When the PRC offered vaccines to the African Union Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa that had not received WHO EUL-approval, I opposed it very strongly and advised the AUC to only use vaccines that had received proper regulatory approvals. If confirmed, I will continue to push for equitable global access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. When I arrived in January 2017 as Director, my priority was to develop a 5-year strategic plan for Africa CDC. I used the plan, which was endorsed by the Africa CDC governing board, to constrain the ability of the PRC to discuss public health priorities for Africa only in the context of the strategic plan. For instance, I stopped programs to send young African scientists to China for short term training, and instead argued that such training could be done on the continent of Africa.

Question. When you served as the Director of Africa's Center for Disease Control and Prevention, what efforts did you take to protect the data of Africans from exploitation by China?

Answer. Data use and sharing is an important aspect of the COVID-19 response, and AU member states encouraged data transparency, which was instrumental in mitigating transmission of the virus across the continent. Relevant data were also available to our technical partners including China and other countries to inform mitigation and vaccine efforts.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. Africa CDC has requested that all software—including the building's information and data management systems—be handled by an independent group, as opposed to the People's Republic of China (PRC) state-owned enterprise, to ensure that it is under the strict oversight of the African Union. Currently, Africa CDC is actively looking for African organizations that can develop needed software for Africa CDC, so that the PRC is not doing it for Africa CDC. The African Union seeks transparency within every partnership, including on infrastructure development, and does not condone spying or unauthorized data sharing.

Question. If confirmed, what limitations or safeguards will you put in place for all future interactions with the Government of China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America's comparative advantages in global health and development and engage directly with partner countries and civil society to ensure that good governance, transparency, and accountability are integrated into all our PEPFAR programming.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. One obvious limitation that should be imposed on the People's Republic of China (PRC) is unfettered access to data and information which has been the hallmark of scientific collaborations before COVID-19. It would be important to not simply embrace the high cost of PRC inaction, but for the United States to boldly call for adoption and implementation of new global standards for health engagement with the PRC based on the painful lessons learned. Any interaction with the PRC should be handled with the utmost of care. If confirmed, where PRC influence is taking hold, I would seek for PEPFAR to be more outspoken to safeguard against PRC-induced corruption, and to speak more about PEPFAR's tremendous investment over time, it's very visible impact on HIV for the citizens of the countries, and

the health systems that have helped respond to COVID-19 and other health threats and stand to further promote health security efforts.

Question. PEPFAR has previously worked best when U.S. taxpayer dollars were granted to partner countries only in return for concrete improvements in their processes. In specific, U.S. taxpayer dollars must operate as an instrument of accountability—not simply as largesse for foreign governments. A key goal of U.S. foreign assistance should be to ensure that recipients someday achieve self-reliance. If confirmed, what are your plans to impose accountability on partners of PEPFAR program to ensure high performance?

Answer. PEPFAR is recognized as an exemplary steward of American taxpayer dollars. I believe it has some of the most rigorous data reporting and monitoring measures in place across all its programs that tracks to real outcomes. If confirmed, I intend to ensure program and policy decisions continue to be driven by the most robust, granular data available so that U.S. taxpayer dollars continue to have the greatest impact and reach those with the greatest need and at highest risk—a hallmark of the PEPFAR program. I will work collaboratively with countries, and with my counterparts in the diplomatic corps and development community, to identify ways we can continue to expand country functional and financial responsibility and capacity for self-reliance.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. PEPFAR is recognized as an exemplary steward of American taxpayer dollars. I believe it has some of the most rigorous data reporting and monitoring measures in place across all its programs that track to real outcomes. If confirmed, I intend to ensure program and policy decisions continue to be driven by the most robust, granular data available so that U.S. taxpayer dollars continue to have the greatest impact and reach those with the greatest need and at highest risk—a hallmark of the PEPFAR program. I will work collaboratively with countries, and with my counterparts in the diplomatic corps and development community, to identify ways we can continue to expand country functional and financial responsibility and capacity for self-reliance.

Question. If confirmed, what are your plans to empower recipients of PEPFAR foreign assistance to eventually achieve self-reliance?

Answer. Because of PEPFAR's support, countries are achieving or nearing epidemic control of HIV. We must work together with others as epidemic control is a dynamic state. Many partner governments have increased their investment in their respective HIV response over time. However, several cannot, and this has been compounded recently by COVID-19. PEPFAR is not a replacement for partner government responsibility. If confirmed, I will support efforts to promote self-reliance by developing more efficient models of service delivery and strengthening technical, managerial and financial capacity for partner governments to maintain key services, systems and resources stewarded by local institutions.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. Because of PEPFAR's support, countries are achieving or nearing epidemic control of HIV. We must work together with others as epidemic control is a dynamic state. Many partner governments have increased their investment in their respective HIV response over time. However, several cannot, and this has been compounded recently by COVID-19. PEPFAR is not a replacement for partner government responsibility. If confirmed, I will support efforts to promote self-reliance by developing more efficient models of service delivery and strengthening technical, managerial, and financial capacity for partner governments to maintain key services, systems and resources stewarded by local partners and institutions.

Question. During your SFRC nomination hearing on March 15, 2022, you referenced your desire to continue to strengthen cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) in an effort to curb the current global pandemic, as well as prevent the next pandemic. The WHO, however, has come under significant scrutiny as a result of its inability to conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation into the origin of COVID-19 from China. Moreover, China's increasing influence at the WHO continues to jeopardize the integrity of the organization. What is your view of the World Health Organization's role in the outbreak and spread of COVID-19?

Answer. The WHO plays a key role in helping countries to prepare and respond to a wide range of health issues. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO has ensured that vital supplies reach frontline health workers with personal protective equipment (PPE), diagnostics, and other tools. If confirmed, I will work across the

U.S. Government interagency and with our external partners to ensure that we continue to support reforms and improvements of the WHO, including its ability to thoroughly and transparently lead studies into outbreaks of unknown origin. American leadership and American values can help to strengthen the WHO, ensure availability and accessibility of health services for all people, and support a recovery from the global disruption of COVID-19 to enhance preparedness, detection, and response to future pandemics in order to protect everyone.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. The WHO took an overly supportive posture of the People's Republic of China (PRC) at the start of the pandemic, which tempered the more aggressive stance all nations should have taken when information on the potential of COVID-19 to spread widely was scarce. Following that misstep, the WHO has ensured that vital supplies reach frontline health workers with personal protective equipment (PPE), diagnostics, and other tools. If confirmed, I will work across the U.S. Government interagency and with our external partners to ensure that we continue to support reforms and improvements of the WHO. I will support the U.S. negotiating team that is exploring how to strengthen the WHO's ability to lead transparent studies into outbreaks of unknown origin through language in a possible new international agreement. American leadership and American values can help to strengthen and reform the WHO, ensure availability and accessibility of health services for all people, and support a recovery from the global disruption of COVID-19 to enhance preparedness, detection, and response to future pandemics in order to protect everyone. A reformed and accountable WHO is what is needed most to ensure that the world does not witness such a catastrophic pandemic again.

Question. What should the United States do to achieve accountability and competence from the World Health Organization?

Answer. Much work remains to strengthen and improve the performance of the WHO and our global pandemic preparedness and response. If confirmed, I will support the work of our U.S. Government interagency team to strengthen and reform the WHO, I look forward to working with you and others in joining the effort to do so.

Revised Response (Received April 26, 2022)

Answer. Much work remains to strengthen, reform and improve the performance of the WHO and our global pandemic preparedness and response. The United States wants to strengthen the role of Member States in WHO governance, specifically in determining the strategic direction and core functions of WHO. The United States has highlighted several high-priority reform areas with WHO where we understand there is Member State consensus to move forward quickly, including WHO governance, budget and financial transparency and oversight, accountability, allocation of resources between headquarters, regional and country offices, human resources management, and compliance, risk management, and ethics. We must work to match funding to expectations, ensure the institution moves forward on reforms, and strengthens capacity to govern disease events in a more transparent manner. If confirmed, I will support the work of our U.S. Government interagency team to strengthen the role of Member States and press for reform at the WHO. I look forward to working with you and others in joining the effort to press on the reform area of accountability.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DR. MONDE MUYANGWA BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Global sovereign debt is at record levels—the highest in 50 years and triple 2008 levels; China is Africa's largest bilateral creditor, holding more than 20 percent of African debt—and payments to China account for nearly 30 percent of 2021's debt service. The rise of commercial creditors is another trend, with nearly half of African countries' public sector debt owed to the private sector. This shift in the lender landscape brings with it a set of challenges, particularly the increasing levels of opaque or hidden debt; collateralization of strategic reserves and commercial interest rates. This dynamic has a high social cost with ballooning debt service payments, diverting funds from vital public services. Of equal concern is the impact opaque debt has on democratic governance in terms of facilitating corruption, bolstering authoritarians, and expanding foreign malign influences.

- Under your leadership, how will USAID raise awareness of the challenge of hidden debt and leverage democracy assistance programs to support parliaments, civil society, governments, and others to prioritize transparency, oversight, and sound debt management?

Answer. I understand that USAID supports partner government institutions to become more transparent, responsive, and effective. This includes efforts to strengthen justice systems, enhance public administration and public financial management, and promote transparency and accountability across the public sector. In addition, USAID supports civil society, media and government entities to perform and enhance oversight functions and information sharing. Finally, I understand that under Prosper Africa, USAID also seeks to increase investment from U.S. institutional investors, further demonstrating an alternative to state-backed debt financing of the United States' strategic competitors. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues in the Bureau for Africa to strengthen these efforts.

Question. When our attention is focused on crises such as the spate of coups or closing democratic space, we sometimes overlook countries that are quietly moving in the right direction and merit additional support and assistance.

- What does the U.S. provide to countries as a "democracy dividend" when they do show progress or begin transitions?

Answer. I believe that it is important to support countries as they work to demonstrate to their citizenry that democracy leads to improved social and economic outcomes. Demand for democracy in Africa remains high, underscoring the need to encourage open dialogue to identify opportunities and challenges and help governments to manage expectations.

Moreover, Africa is home to many of the world's most striking democratic openings in recent years, for example those in Zambia, Malawi, and Gambia. It is crucial that we help democratic reformers in countries like these succeed.

Question. What should we be doing by way of assistance to help cement transitions?

Answer. It is important for development actors to listen to government officials and citizens in partner countries to understand how assistance can be deployed to encourage positive state-society relations that will support democratic development and consolidation. There is not a single approach, and responses should be tailored to the country-specific context. Efforts may include capacity building of government institutions, delivery of basic services, facilitating consultative and participatory decision-making, or peacebuilding and reconciliation activities, among others.

Question. Do you commit to coming back to the committee with your ideas for a democracy dividend for countries that take important steps toward democratic transitions, if confirmed?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to consulting with the committee and sharing my ideas for how USAID can support countries that are demonstrating democratic progress.

Democracy and Human Rights

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

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I will prioritize meeting with civil society actors in the U.S. and from African countries as a means to ensuring their voices, which are critical to advancing development solutions, are heard. Supporting civil society also means working to promote an enabling environment where organizations and citizens can operate freely. This may include supporting civil society demands to reverse draconian laws and calling out repressive measures. If confirmed, I will also work closely with my counterparts at the Department of State to encourage diplomatic engagement on rolling back restrictive measures and advocating against the adoption of new measures.

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

Answer. The rapid growth of social media in particular has changed how the world communicates, and with that comes increasing risks of misinformation and disinformation. I believe that USAID does have a role to play in ensuring that part-

ners have the tools to combat misinformation and disinformation, which may require training service providers, as well as promoting the role of traditional media and journalists, to disseminate accurate information.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in across Africa, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Africa?

Answer. Yes. LGBTQ+ people throughout Africa face harassment, physical attacks, and arrest, and are often denied access to basic education, health, housing, economic opportunities, and other services. Their participation in democratic processes and government is also limited. If confirmed, I pledge to implement USAID's comprehensive, inclusive non-discrimination policies for the beneficiaries of USAID assistance; ensure programs continue to reach out to the most-marginalized members of society, including LGBTQ+ populations; and elevate the importance of practices that ensure the dignity of all Africans, irrespective of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Congressional Consultations

Question. How do you intend to revitalize the relationship between Congress and USAID through the Africa Bureau? What steps will you take to make sure transparency is a central tenant within USAID's programs?

Answer. I appreciate the support that this committee, and the full Congress, have given to matters on the African continent over the years. Your attention to key issues affecting the continent and continued focus on opportunities for U.S. assistance has been invaluable. If confirmed, I will take steps to ensure that transparency is core to all of USAID's programming in Africa, and look forward to consulting with you on a regular basis on areas of mutual concern.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief me and/or my staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Assistant Administrator of the Africa Bureau of USAID?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to briefing the committee and consulting with the committee throughout my tenure at USAID.

Power Africa

Question. The initial Electrify Africa Act of 2015 embraced all power generating options available, including fossil fuels. Times are changing and the availability and effectiveness of renewables have never been better, in addition to the need for rapid decarbonization.

- What direction do you think Power Africa should go to meet both energy needs and mitigation goals?

Answer. I believe that Power Africa will continue to drive energy transformation for sub-Saharan Africa under the Electrify Africa Act of 2015 and support the administration's climate action agenda. It is my understanding that Power Africa and USAID take a renewable energy first approach, but will consider support for carbon-intensive power projects to achieve highly impactful development objectives that cannot be met by less carbon-intensive alternatives under the administration's Interim International Energy Engagement Guidance. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in Power Africa to continue to promote mutual economic prosperity between the U.S. and African partners via technical/field expertise, innovation, investment, and enabling environment reform. With a strong emphasis on renewable energy and advancing the pledged climate ambitions of both the U.S. Government and African leaders, the ambitious goals of the program continue to advance universal energy access—adding 30,000 megawatts and 60 million connections by 2030, in addition to tracking metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), reduced, sequestered, or avoided through clean energy.

Question. What role should USAID play in addressing slave and child labor and corruption in supply chains that produce materials essential to renewable energy development?

Answer. I understand that USAID is working with interagency counterparts to develop a policy on forced labor that will end financing for purchases from suppliers that are the subject of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Withhold Release Order (WRO), on the Commerce Entity List, or otherwise sanctioned for their use of forced labor. In addition, USAID is dedicated to addressing the role of forced labor in the extraction of critical minerals necessary for renewable energy technologies and high performing batteries, noting the majority of supplies come from

Africa. This should be done through work with interagency partners and private industry investors to promote strong labor rights, protection for private capital, financial transparency, and other social safeguards as the demand for “green industry” minerals rises.

DEI/Workforce

Question. How do you anticipate fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Africa Bureau’s workforce and among its implementing partners in Washington and overseas?

Answer. First, I would like to commend the Agency for the designation of a Chief Diversity Officer. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with her on diversity and inclusion issues that impact the Bureau for Africa. If confirmed, I will ensure the Bureau and USAID’s Missions across Africa continue to engage implementing partners to promote the rights and inclusion of marginalized and underrepresented populations throughout the development process. I also understand that USAID is escalating its efforts to enhance staff diversity, equity, and inclusion, and that the Bureau for Africa has a volunteer employee-led Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) Council, as do the majority of USAID Missions in Africa. If confirmed, I will elevate and give my full support to these efforts.

Local Partnerships

Question. What are the key challenges to meeting administrator Power’s charge that 25 percent of all USAID funds shall be programmed via local partners, and how would you address them?

Answer. The geography and variation in size and political context of countries across Africa require distinct approaches to advancing localization. We have seen compelling examples of how effective development and humanitarian assistance can be when local actors and communities in African countries lead in addressing local challenges. Administrator Power’s 25 percent target is global in scope, and there will be significant variation by region. In all instances, it is essential that USAID elevate local voices, expand rigorous co-design, strengthen local capacity, and ensure that all activities support sustained locally led and community responsive development. This includes taking lessons learned from historical and ongoing localization efforts, and engaging with regional leaders and USG stakeholders, like the African Development Fund and the Development Finance Corporation, to determine what localization looks like for the African continent. If confirmed, I look forward to working to unleash the potential of local businesses and institutions in various African country contexts.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DR. MONDE MUYANGWA BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Management

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to working in a bipartisan manner with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including by providing timely, accurate, and complete information on relevant USAID strategies, initiatives, programs and funding in Africa?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with the committee in a bipartisan manner to provide information requested in a timely, accurate, and complete fashion.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to upholding a zero tolerance policy for waste, fraud, and abuse in the programs under your purview?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will uphold a zero tolerance policy for any waste, fraud and abuse across all of USAID’s programming under my purview.

Question. If confirmed, will you also uphold a zero tolerance policy for all USAID staff and implementing partners under your management responsibility who engage in the sexual exploitation and abuse of the vulnerable communities they are meant to serve?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will uphold a zero tolerance policy for any USAID staff and implementing partners under my management responsibility who engage in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse of any kind.

Question. What is your understanding of morale within USAID’s Africa Bureau and how, if necessary, do you intend to improve it?

Answer. It is the responsibility of leadership to be highly attuned to the state of staff morale, particularly in large and complex organizations such as USAID. It is my understanding that the impacts of the COVID pandemic, the increased need to deliver development and humanitarian assistance across the African continent, as well as the uptick in political violence in several countries, have had an impact on the morale of Africa Bureau staff. If confirmed, I will consult with Africa Bureau staff, both in Washington D.C. and the field, and representatives from the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management to gauge the state of morale as well as the resources available to address staff concerns, and develop a plan of action to address the issues identified.

Question. How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across the Africa Bureau's offices, initiatives, and programs while holding managers and implementing partners accountable for transparency and results?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to promote joint strategic planning within the Bureau to overcome stove-piping and unify across streams. I will empower components to develop contextualized implementation plans with clearly stated objectives and results that derive from and support the Africa Bureau joint strategy and its priorities. I will also work with Bureau leadership to continually highlight the importance of our unified mission and the factors that make for a successful "Team USAID." Where necessary, I will strengthen the Bureau's various mechanisms for accountability and transparency, including performance reports, site visits, robust program evaluations, and audits.

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I would describe my management style as vision-driven and results-oriented. My goal is to create an inclusive, team-oriented environment where staff are held accountable for achieving results and feel empowered and supported by management.

Question. In your view, how would your management style translate to USAID, where your workforce and implementing partners are composed of a dizzying array of career foreign and civil servants, political appointees, Foreign Service Limited appointments, Participating Agency Service Agreements, foreign governments, international organizations, contractors, and grantees, often with competing priorities and interests?

Answer. I spent 13 years at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies and eight years at the Wilson Center leading diverse teams composed of federal employees, foreign nationals, and contracted staff hired under various employment mechanisms. If confirmed, I will utilize my experience to address staffing and human resource concerns that may hinder a cohesive, team-oriented work environment. My transparent and agile management style will allow me to effectively balance the Bureau's competing priorities while holding everyone accountable for achieving the overall Agency and U.S. Government foreign policy objectives.

President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Question. USAID missions have a long history of stretching the boundaries when it comes to permissible uses of PEPFAR funds, including: using PEPFAR funds to finance the construction of schools in Malawi despite the availability of education funds earmarked by appropriators annually for this purpose; using PEPFAR funds statutorily set aside to support children who have been made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS for activities with no discernable connection to HIV/AIDS; and by using PEPFAR funds to support salaries for implementing agency staff who are only nominally focused on combatting HIV/AIDS.

- If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring all U.S. Government-supported efforts to combat HIV/AIDS globally are efficient, effective, aligned, and complementary to the work of the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring USAID's HIV/AIDS efforts are efficient, effective, aligned, and complementary to the work of the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (OGAC).

Question. Will you work to ensure that implementing missions and partners meaningfully contribute to, but also strictly adhere to, PEPFAR's Country Operating Plan (COP) process?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure continued Africa Bureau engagement with Missions and partners in the field to ensure meaningful contributions to, engagement with, and adherence to each country's annual PEPFAR Country Oper-

ating Plan (COP) process. In addition, I will fully collaborate with Global Health Bureau leadership, who remain USAID's principal interlocutor with the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator.

Localization

Question. Successive administrations—both Democrat and Republican—have launched initiatives to “localize” U.S. foreign assistance, including by building the capacity of local partners to design programs and manage U.S. funds directly, rather than working as sub-awardees to large, U.S.-based development contractors and non-governmental organizations. There has, however, been confusion about how “localization” is defined and measured across the implementing agencies, and how oversight of local partners should be conducted.

- What should “localization” look like in Africa?

Answer. The geography and variation in size and political context of countries across Africa require distinct approaches to advancing localization. We have seen compelling examples of the effectiveness of development and humanitarian assistance when local actors and communities in African countries lead in addressing local challenges. Administrator Power's 25 percent target is global in scope, and there will be significant variation by region. In all instances, it is essential that USAID elevate local voices, expand rigorous co-design, strengthen local capacity, and ensure that all activities support sustained locally-led and community responsive development. This includes taking lessons learned from historical and ongoing localization efforts, engaging with regional leaders and USG stakeholders, like the African Development Fund and the Development Finance Corporation, to determine what localization looks like for the African continent. If confirmed, I look forward to working to unleash the potential of local businesses and institutions in various African country contexts.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to working with Congress to establish a formalized definition and plan for “localization”, to include support for partner government investment strategies and direct funding for both local faith- and community-based organizations?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working with USAID colleagues and with Congress to implement the vision for localization described by Administrator Power in her November 4, 2021 policy speech at Georgetown University, including plans for government-to-government assistance, where appropriate, and direct funding for local faith- and community-based organizations as critical partners in USAID's localization efforts.

Question. If confirmed, how would you approach oversight of local partners by USAID's missions in Africa?

Answer. USAID has significant experience partnering directly with local actors across Africa, in a variety of contexts. It is my understanding that USAID awards in Africa and around the globe include substantial compliance provisions, both required by law and enhanced through USAID-specific policies to ensure that the Agency is an effective steward of taxpayer dollars. Similarly, direct awards are monitored by Agency staff to ensure compliance with award terms and conditions and to ensure the achievement of the intended results. If confirmed, I would ensure that USAID staff are appropriately trained for, and properly implement, these robust award management and oversight duties.

Humanitarian Assistance

Question. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released a memo which, among other things, directs the new OMB Made in America Office to “review how best to ensure agency compliance with cargo preference requirements to maximize the utilization of U.S.-flag vessels, in excess of any applicable statutory minimum, to the greatest extent practicable.” This is likely to increase pressure upon USAID to exceed existing cargo preference requirements for food aid under the Food for Peace Act, notwithstanding the fact that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) repeatedly has found that such requirements significantly increase the cost of food aid while failing to advance the purposes of the Cargo Preference Act of 1954.

- In your testimony, you delivered impassioned remarks about how USAID's delivery of U.S. international food aid in Zambia impacted you personally. Given growing needs across the world, and particularly in areas beset by conflict and food insecurity in Africa, do you agree that it is incumbent upon USAID, in partnership with Congress, to stretch our aid dollars as far as possible so we can reach more people in need, in less time, and at less expense?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to make USAID's programming as effective and efficient as possible in combating rising food insecurity and building the resilience of vulnerable communities. Each of the food assistance modalities—U.S. in-kind food contributions, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming—complements the others in addressing food insecurity efficiently and effectively. Now more than ever, it is critical to maximize USAID's ability to reach more people in need, in less time, and at less expense.

Question. Do you agree that U.S. cargo preference requirements for food aid have outlived their statutory purpose?

Answer. At this time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, USAID's ability to reach hungry people and improve the efficiency of its programs is of utmost importance. Cargo preference requirements increase the cost of programming U.S. in-kind commodities in humanitarian programs. If confirmed, I will work closely with USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance and interagency partners to ensure USAID food assistance most efficiently and effectively reaches those most in need in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to working with Congress to reform U.S. international food aid programs and bolster the Global Food Security Strategy in a manner that saves lives, supports early recovery, stimulates agriculture-led economic growth, and ultimately promotes self-reliance in Africa?

Answer. Yes. The most marginalized populations are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact. The war in Ukraine is also driving up global food prices, which could cause increases in food insecurity and malnutrition. I understand that USAID is leveraging short-term and long-term programs to respond. This includes engaging governments on trade and inclusive economic growth policies; engaging government and private sector partners to increase access to nutritious food; working with small and medium sized enterprises across food systems; transitioning households and communities off of assistance; and supporting governments to create and strengthen their existing social protection systems. If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress to combat food insecurity and malnutrition in Africa.

Branding

Question. Given your experience noted above, how important is the USAID "brand?"

Answer. The USAID brand is critical. I recognize that branding the Agency's work is required by law under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. While recognizing there are limited exceptions to branding to maintain partner safety and security, the USAID brand should be front and center as it drives trust, reputation, and impact. Around the world, it's important that the people who visit the clinics that USAID modernizes, or attend the schools that USAID builds, realize that these facilities have been provided or upgraded with the support of the American people. This recognition not only makes people aware of the good work that the Agency does, but it also helps ensure USAID funding continues, and can help inspire new partnerships. The USAID brand also helps American taxpayers understand where their tax dollars are going. If confirmed, I am committed to maintaining the brand equity that USAID has built over the years.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that United States foreign assistance in Africa is appropriately branded?

Answer. While recognizing there are limited exceptions to branding to maintain partner safety and security, I am committed to USAID branding, and if confirmed, will work to ensure that United States foreign assistance in Africa is appropriately branded in all instances. I believe appropriate branding sends a strong public diplomacy message by conveying that United States assistance is due to the generosity of the American people.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring full and complete compliance with current law, which prohibits the use of U.S. foreign assistance to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, support involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion overseas?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit that the Agency will follow the law and ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including those related to family planning and abortion.

Question. Do you recognize the fungibility of U.S. foreign assistance? If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that U.S. foreign assistance does not enable implementing partners to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning,

perform involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion?

Answer. It is my understanding that USAID does not fund abortion. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to comply with the law, including the Helms and Siljander amendments, in implementing the Agency's programs, including voluntary family planning and reproductive health programs.

Power Africa

Question. In the face of growing Chinese influence and investment, and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there arguably has never been a more important time to advance U.S. strategic programs to reduce energy poverty, support transformative energy development, and stimulate economic recovery in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, the President's FY2022 budget request proposed to reduce by 26 percent funding for one of the most important instruments the USG has in its arsenal to accomplish these goals—Power Africa—while simultaneously imposing carbon caps and renewable energy mandates that inevitably will push developing economies in sub-Saharan Africa closer to China.

- Should reducing energy poverty in sub-Saharan Africa be a priority for USAID?

Answer. Yes. Ending energy poverty remains one of the greatest, if not the greatest, development challenges of our time. Power Africa will continue to increase access to power and the use of clean energy, as well as support investments in regional renewable energy programs in sub-Saharan Africa.

Question. If so, how can that reasonably be accomplished while the administration redirects funding for Power Africa to undefined climate change objectives and abandons the bipartisan, bicameral agreement on an "all-of-the-above" approach under the historic Electrify Africa Act?

Answer. I believe the Agency's work through Power Africa, which leverages investments from U.S. and global partners, including the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, will be able to achieve strong and lasting results. In line with the Electrify Africa Act, Power Africa targets resources to develop and offer the best tools, services, and solutions from the private and public sector, including its 12 U.S. Government agency partners, to promote transparent market-driven energy development in sub-Saharan Africa. Power Africa takes a country by country, project by project approach when evaluating how best to end energy poverty and builds the essential regulatory reforms and procurement practices to support a prosperous and democratic future.

Prosper Africa

Question. Launched by the Trump administration, Prosper Africa is a U.S. Government initiative supported by 17 agencies and departments, led by 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 vital area of Prosper Africa that requires greater emphasis, and where USAID can play a crucial role, is in improving the enabling environment within African partner countries to better-attract U.S. business investment. Improvements in anti-corruption initiatives, human rights, the rule of law, and overall democratic governance would create better conditions for U.S. investment. Such enhancements would also counterbalance efforts by Chinese firms and the Chinese Communist Party to undermine free-market competition in African markets to their advantage.

- What are your views on USAID's role in promoting trade and investment and building stronger ties between the United States and the African continent?

Answer. I understand USAID plays a leading role in Prosper Africa. It does so by developing innovative new programming that drives the initiative's impact and by hosting the initiative's interagency Secretariat, which coordinates the initiative across 17 participating U.S. Government agencies, offers whole-of-government deal facilitation services, and leads private sector outreach. USAID is well-positioned to coordinate Prosper Africa due to the Agency's strong technical expertise in all aspects of trade and investment, extensive field presence, and flexible programs, which span the continent and allow the Agency to fill gaps in interagency resources and capacities.

Question. How should U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives factor into the U.S. global strategy to counter China, particularly in Africa? While the U.S. Government cannot match strategic competitors' state-led approach dollar-for-dollar, Pros-

per Africa works to unlock billions in U.S. private capital flows to promote Africa's economic development, providing governments with high-quality, private financing. The approach contributes to local job creation, greater transparency, local economic development, citizen empowerment, climate-smart solutions, and improved labor and environmental standards. For example, USAID partners with the U.S. and African financial services sectors to strategically deploy blended financing resources to develop cost-effective financing tools that position U.S. and African firms to better compete with firms receiving subsidized loans.

Question. If confirmed as USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa, do you intend to advocate for continuing or modifying the existing Prosper Africa initiative? If so, how?

Answer. Prosper Africa is a critically important initiative, and if confirmed I will advocate to continue it. It is my understanding that businesses have told USAID that they find it difficult to access the U.S. Government's tools and services; they don't have enough information to do business effectively; and, for U.S. businesses and investors, their perceived risk of doing business in Africa is very high. Prosper Africa addresses these constraints by offering a one-stop shop where companies and investors can access the right U.S. Government services to meet their needs; and the initiative brings new resources to modernize the U.S. Government's toolkit to more effectively advance deals, improve enabling environments, promote market opportunities, and deepen financial and capital markets.

Question. How can the U.S. Government, through USAID programs, most effectively support efforts to improve the enabling environment for competitive foreign investment by U.S. firms in Africa? What types of partnerships work best?

Answer. Robust enabling environments are critical for investors who have a difficult time evaluating and taking risk in African markets that often don't have clear regulations or reliable, consistent data on investment performance. Through Prosper Africa, USAID and other participating agencies have ramped up support for the investment ecosystem that gives investors the tools to evaluate risk in African markets, including the global and local credit rating agencies, local and global regulators, and recipient country governments. Holistic partnerships that include investors and donors working collaboratively with developing country governments and global regulators are the best route to comprehensive changes that lead to transparent market capital.

Question. How can the United States best incentivize reforms and other actions necessary to foster economic opportunity and expand two-way trade and investment with the African continent?

Answer. I understand that through Prosper Africa, USAID coordinates across the U.S. Government to identify and advance priority reforms. USAID's support for customs reforms and trade facilitation (e.g., implementation of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement and the African Continental Free Trade Area) also helps countries establish the laws, policies, and practices necessary to facilitate international trade and commerce, and minimize clearance times and costs. This includes reducing barriers to trade and increasing the transparency and predictability of border procedures. This creates regional economies of scale that allow countries to become more integrated into international value chains, thereby promoting inclusive economic growth.

Regional

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. Since 2020, several African ruling parties and incumbent leaders deployed authoritarian tactics that manipulated democratic processes and constitutional frameworks, including in Cameroon, Ethiopia, CAR, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. More recently, the African continent has seen a spate of coups in Mali, Guinea, Sudan, Burkina Faso and Chad. Meanwhile, across multiple administrations, 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. Democracy and robust democratic institutions are necessary for the success of other development efforts. It is a collective effort to improve democratic out-

comes while promoting economic growth and human rights, and contributing to stabilization, global health, and humanitarian efforts. I understand that USAID programming often works across these subject matters, integrating the building and reinforcement of democratic norms, processes, and principles into programs that support health services and other development activities. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these linkages continue and are deepened and that democracy issues receive the attention they deserve as an essential element of USAID's programming in Africa.

Question. In 2018 and 2019 respectively, Ethiopia and Sudan embarked upon unexpected democratic transitions, both of which have experienced catastrophic setbacks and continue to face very uncertain futures. While the United States was, and continues to be, eager to support these transitions, rapidly mobilizing, programming, and now redirecting the necessary resources (enabling policies, funding, and staff) has been a challenge. If confirmed, how would you prepare USAID's Africa Bureau to better respond to rapid democratic changes and seize unexpected opportunities, while also being able to rapidly shift gears if conditions of the ground warrant a change?

Answer. It is critical that USAID has the appropriate tools in its toolbox to respond to evolving dynamics, including new efforts in Africa to undermine democratic gains. It is my understanding that USAID has a range of tools, resources, and programming approaches that are utilized in rapidly changing political and crisis contexts. If confirmed, I will seek to learn more about them, how and when they are deployed, and to enhance their use in sub-Saharan Africa to provide more timely and effective responses. I will ensure that the Africa Bureau continues close partnership and coordination with the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI), the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization (CPS), and other bureaus, to provide the most effective assistance in rapidly changing contexts.

Question. What is your assessment of the efficacy of EWER systems as an effective conflict prevention tool in Africa?

Answer. I believe that EWER (Early Warning and Early Response) systems are an important tool that can bolster national, regional, and local efforts to help identify potential hotspots and respond to deteriorating situations. In Africa, regional organizations and other local entities use EWER systems to better equip decision-makers to take preventive action and address cross-border threats, violence risks, and humanitarian disasters.

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, 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. USAID works in very complex environments, and I understand that the Agency's investments in Africa, particularly in health and food security, are structured to be sensitive to local contexts. 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.

Question. What should U.S. foreign assistance policy be towards countries ruled by authoritarian regimes? How can we most effectively deliver aid such that it reaches the intended beneficiaries without enabling the preservation of repressive regimes?

Answer. U.S. foreign assistance in countries with authoritarian regimes should work to improve the lives of individuals, through health, WASH, humanitarian, and other efforts while working to empower and protect citizen voices to demand greater rights and democracy. This is best accomplished through civil society support, often beginning with capacity building efforts in service provision, while improving the ability of local civil society organizations (CSO) to advocate for citizenry. Work with these groups can also be nimble and quick to react to democratic openings, allowing CSOs to pivot to democratization efforts, building on the trust that already exists between them and the communities they represent. USAID assistance should con-

tinue to take its cues from local partners to ensure it is as effective as possible while managing risk appropriately.

Question. While programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and the initiative's Mandela Washington Fellowship are vital, what can USAID do to expand its reach and effectively engage with Africa's enormous youth population?

Answer. I understand that USAID Missions in Africa engage youth not only through the YALI initiative, but in the co-creation, design and implementation of various sector activities, from civic engagement to preventing climate change, to improving access to healthcare, and increasing skills that can be applied to work, problem-solving, and well-being. Evidence shows that youth-integrated development contributes to greater economic growth, democracy, and stability. Through continued USAID engagement with youth as partners to initiate, lead, and actively participate in activities, African youth will gain improved skills for making positive changes in their lives, gain assets to provide for themselves and their family, and contribute value to their local community. I also see opportunities as USAID Missions in Africa increase requirements for implementers of youth programs to build the capacity of and engage with youth-led organizations as sub-grantees.

Question. Beyond student exchanges, how can the United States best position itself to partner with African nations to engage their young people and build long-term partnerships with Africa's next generation of decision-makers, business partners, and allies?

Answer. I understand that many recent Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS) in Africa support an intentional focus on youth. This strategic direction is the foundation for increasing youth programming that prepares youth for success in civic, political, and social engagements. More broadly, USAID's African Missions are building on experiences working with young people and local communities to create thoughtful and deliberate program designs that ensure the inclusion of youth as leaders and to be directly involved in opportunities that can open the window for a demographic and democratic dividend and catapult long-lasting sustainable economic growth and human development.

Cameroon

Question. The Anglophone conflict in Cameroon is one of the world's most neglected yet intensely brutal conflicts. The United States has employed many diplomatic tools at its disposal, including the suspension of most security assistance and AGOA eligibility, yet the war continues. Simultaneously, USAID's programming is limited in Cameroon on all fronts, with humanitarian aid focused on the complex emergency in the Lake Chad Basin (affecting Cameroon's Far North) and humanitarian impacts of conflict in the Northwest and Southwest. There is a notable shortage in conflict, democracy, and human rights programming to address both the Anglophone Crisis and the significant challenges to democratic reform at the national and local levels.

- What tools does the United States have at its disposal through USAID to encourage a peaceful and enduring resolution to the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon and support democracy and human rights nationwide? If confirmed, what tools do you intend to deploy?

Answer. USAID supports diplomatic efforts deployed by the Department of State and other international actors to reach a peaceful resolution between the Government of Cameroon and Anglophone separatists in the northwest and southwest regions of the country. USAID is addressing immediate humanitarian needs in this region through assistance focused on emergency food, health, and other lifesaving support to vulnerable populations, such as internally displaced persons. I understand USAID issued a new democracy and governance activity to strengthen civil society capacity and empower women's role and agency in the Far North Region.

If confirmed, I will work with my team to explore additional opportunities to advance democracy, human rights, and governance, with thoughtful analysis to ascertain when there is opening space and an enabling environment to deploy more activities in this sector.

Question. How can USAID assistance support other international efforts to bring about peace and greater stability to Cameroon?

Answer. I know from my prior experience that Cameroon is strategically placed in a geographic neighborhood rife with conflict and population displacement, due to an evolving insurgency and internal governance and cohesion shortfalls. As I understand it, donors are supporting Cameroon via interventions to respond to and mitigate the impacts of the various crises exacerbated by the instability in the Lake

Chad Region in the North, the Central African Republic (CAR) refugee situation in the East, and Cameroon's internal civil conflicts in the Northwest and Southwest. I am aware that besides the USG, Cameroon is obtaining support from the European Union, Agence France Development, the World Bank, and the United Nations. I know that USAID humanitarian resources complement efforts by other USG agencies and other donors working towards durable solutions that strengthen community resilience, bolster the role of women and youth, and enhance the capacity of civil society organizations.

If confirmed, I will work to synergize and enhance the impact of assistance interventions to support peace and stability, in close coordination with the USG, international donors, host country partners, and civil society.

Democratic Republic of The Congo

Question. Following controversial 2018 elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the United States publicly and adamantly backed President Tshisekedi. It supported efforts to reform and challenge the status quo established by former President Kabila. While in 2018 USAID invested in programs in DRC to support the electoral process (on a relatively limited basis), including with civil society, media, political parties, domestic and international observers, and the election commission, the hesitancy by the U.S. and our European partners to invest fully in the 2018 elections was understandable. However, given the U.S.' staunch support of President Tshisekedi and the Privileged Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (#PP4PP), it will be even more critical that DRC's next elections are credible.

- In your view, has USAID sufficiently invested in the 2023 electoral process in DRC?

Answer. I understand that USAID is investing \$12.65 million in DRC, subject to the availability of funds, to strengthen transparency and electoral administration, improve civic education, empower communities to participate in elections, and support marginalized communities to understand and access political processes. USAID is also supporting civil society and media to raise awareness and counter misinformation about electoral and political processes. In addition, USAID plans to fund international and domestic observation and conduct public opinion polling to enable greater understanding of the priorities of the broader public, and to inform politicians of their popularity, ahead of the elections. This work will be essential in supporting a credible election process in 2023.

Question. In your view, how can USAID best support democratic reforms in the DRC, including by enhancing prospects for free, fair, and transparent elections in 2023?

Answer. USAID supports democratic reforms by promoting peace and stability in eastern DRC, increasing transparency throughout the country, and working to ensure that elections are free, fair, and credible. It is my understanding that in an effort to strengthen the foundation for durable peace, USAID is mobilizing communities in eastern DRC to prevent and resolve conflicts; improving accountability and effectiveness of service delivery by government institutions; promoting economic growth and inclusion; and reducing drivers of conflict and support for armed groups. At the same time, USAID is strengthening anti-corruption throughout its programming and working with civil society to oversee budgets and expenditures.

Question. In your view, what is the role of USAID in the Privileged Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (#PP4PP)?

Answer. The PP4PP+Protection of the Environment is a platform under which all USG activities operate. For USAID, the focus is to bring an end to the decades-long conflict in eastern DRC, help set the DRC on the path to sustainable and equitable economic and social development, improve the effectiveness, accountability and responsiveness of governance at all levels, and encourage and sustain the DRC Government's decision to make the U.S. its partner of choice in trade; and in foreign policy where there are shared interests. It also provides a platform to put management and utilization of the rich natural resource base of the DRC on a permanent path to sustainability.

Question. How can USAID better support anti-corruption reforms in DRC?

Answer. I understand that USAID is leveraging the Government of DRC's (GDRC) commitments to anti-corruption and rule of law, which are embedded throughout USAID's programs. After a nine-year pause, due to President Kabila's control of the judiciary, USAID is re-engaging with a \$15 million investment to improve the administration of justice and tackle corruption. USAID is also leveraging the GDRC's public financial management strategy, where the International Monetary Fund and

World Bank conditionalities incentivize the GDRC's reform, including strengthening safeguards against corruption. If confirmed, I will work with my USAID colleagues to continue to work with sub-national governments to reduce opportunities for corruption by tracing and managing revenues, including those from the extractive industries, and ensure community and civil society participation in planning and oversight of those resources.

Kenya

Question. Kenya will have elections in 2022. In your opinion, is planned USAID support to Kenya's electoral process adequate?

Answer. As a longtime partner of Kenya and its people, I understand that the United States is implementing a robust strategy to support local stakeholders as they work to improve Kenya's electoral processes. USAID plays a key role in these efforts. Its activities include support to strengthening the institutional capacity of electoral institutions, advocacy around electoral reforms, election violence early warning and prevention, voter education, increasing the participation of women and youth in electoral processes, and local and international elections observers. If confirmed, I am committed to working with my State Department counterparts to support Kenya's efforts to conduct free and fair elections that are credible, peaceful, and reflect the will of the Kenyan people.

Somalia

Question. The United States has emphasized the need for one-person-one-vote direct elections in Somalia and has provided support through USAID and other channels toward that end. However, after significant delay, high tensions, and political games, the country is pursuing an indirect selection process for members of parliament and the office of the president instead of a direct election.

- Do you believe the United States, and subsequently USAID democracy and governance programming in Somalia, held overly ambitious expectations for Somalia's electoral processes since the selection process of 2016/2017, given the circumstances on the ground?

Answer. My understanding is that following the 2016/17 indirect selection process, the Somali Government and international community jointly set a goal for holding universal suffrage, one-person, one-vote elections in 2020. This goal was ambitious given, for example, the fact that certain areas of the country remain inaccessible for the purpose of conducting elections. Nevertheless, following two successive, peaceful transfers of power, it was reasonable to expect a more democratic and inclusive electoral process in 2020.

Question. What is your view of prospects for democratic direct elections in Somalia in the future, particularly given Somalia's persistent security and governance challenges?

Answer. Progress toward universal suffrage, one-person, one-vote elections remains the best path for Somalia to move beyond the current system. Despite the disappointment of the 2020 electoral process, the success of recent pilot direct local elections in three districts in Puntland offer hope that such progress is possible, particularly at the sub-national level. I understand that USAID intends to collaborate with key Somali stakeholders and other donors to build on the recent success in Puntland. That engagement will seek to establish a critical mass of examples of inclusive governance at the sub-national level to demonstrate what democratic governance can deliver, and thereby build a growing constituency for eventual democratic, direct elections at the national level. These efforts will be complemented by support for a national dialogue mechanism to constructively debate and eventually agree upon the precise nature of Somalia's federal model, including power- and resource-sharing.

Question. How will the failure of Somalia's election process impact the direction of USAID development assistance to Somalia under your leadership of the Africa Bureau?

Answer. The 2020 elections exposed the fragility of Somalia's negotiated political settlement. I understand that USAID intends to capitalize on the success of recent pilot direct local elections in three districts in Puntland to build a growing constituency for democratic processes in Somalia. This will be critical to demonstrate the worth and viability of democratic elections to the people of Somalia. I am also aware that USAID investments in Somalia focus on two critical priorities: (1) addressing the structural conditions that allow violent extremist organizations such as al-Shabaab to maintain a foothold in Somali society; and (2) reducing chronic humani-

tarian need. These priorities are highly relevant to the advancement of U.S. interests in Somalia.

Question. As Assistant Administrator for Africa, if confirmed, how will you approach tailoring development assistance to the dramatic variations in capacity across Somalia's regions and federal member states, to include Somaliland?

Answer. I understand that USAID investments in Somalia focus on two critical priorities: (1) addressing the structural conditions that allow violent extremist organizations such as al-Shabaab to maintain a foothold in Somali society; and (2) reducing chronic humanitarian need, which compromises the wellbeing and stability of the Somali people and costs the U.S. taxpayer about \$450 million annually. USAID engages with all regional administrations within the parameters of the U.S. Government's single Somalia policy. Progress should be encouraged, and if confirmed, I will work to ensure USAID remains strongly committed to finding practical ways of leveraging multilateral investments, particularly World Bank resources, to benefit all Somalis, including those in Somaliland.

South Sudan

Question. South Sudan has been a U.S. priority issue for decades. Throughout this troubled history, the United States has provided strong support for the peace process in an attempt to resolve Sudan and then-Southern Sudan's decades-long civil war, preparations for South Sudan's separation and independence from Sudan, and the provision of extensive U.S. humanitarian and development assistance (upwards of \$1 billion per year)—including the years since the outbreak of South Sudan's civil war in 2013.

- What is your assessment of U.S. assistance provided to South Sudan since 2005/2011?

Answer. I understand that the United States, through USAID, has been the largest donor of foreign assistance to the South Sudanese people for decades, including during Sudan's north-south civil war, implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the process that led to South Sudan's independence, and the civil war that erupted in South Sudan in 2013. Since South Sudan's independence in 2011, the United States has provided over \$7 billion in humanitarian and development assistance to support the people of South Sudan. U.S. assistance has been essential to saving lives, recovering livelihoods, providing protection to civilians and basic education and health services, building resilience to shocks, and supporting democracy, human rights, and governance through civil society and independent media.

Question. Has U.S. assistance contributed to or hindered the achievement of U.S. policy goals for South Sudan?

Answer. U.S. assistance contributes to the objectives outlined in the Integrated Country Strategy for South Sudan, including support for the peace process, delivery of humanitarian assistance to meet the needs of communities in crisis and save lives, and sustainable economic and social development to increase resilience to climate- and conflict-driven shocks.

Question. What is your perspective on the U.S. assistance review, announced in 2018, for South Sudan?

Answer. I understand that the goal of the South Sudan assistance review announced in 2018 was to ensure that U.S. foreign assistance does not contribute to or prolong the conflict, nor facilitate predatory or corrupt behavior. These concepts are critical. As part of that, USAID, along with others in the interagency, participated in the collection and analysis of information that was handed over to the interagency for review. If confirmed, I commit to deepening my understanding of the review and its results.

Question. If confirmed, how would you support action on the findings of the assistance review?

Answer. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the interagency on how best to proceed following the assistance review. I share Congress' concerns about the ongoing conflict and corruption in South Sudan, and will work to ensure transparency and oversight of USAID funding and activities.

Question. If confirmed, as USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa, how will you engage with the State Department and other members of the interagency to review the U.S. approach to South Sudan, taking into consideration the extensive humanitarian and development assistance provided over the last two decades?

Answer. I understand there is a long history of positive collaboration between USAID and the interagency on U.S. assistance and the U.S. policy approach to South Sudan. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the State Department and interagency colleagues on assistance and policy priorities, including encouraging the Government of South Sudan to create an enabling environment for safe delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need.

Question. Is a change in humanitarian assistance—to address emergency needs in response to shocks and to address long-term humanitarian challenges—needed for South Sudan?

Answer. I understand that humanitarian need in South Sudan is at its highest level since independence due to ongoing conflict, displacement, and flooding. USAID humanitarian assistance targets the most vulnerable populations, which includes children and pregnant women at risk of malnutrition, internally displaced persons, and returnees. USAID and partners continuously review the effectiveness of its humanitarian operations in South Sudan to ensure the life-saving assistance we provide is reaching the most vulnerable in a principled, conflict-sensitive way. USAID's current strategy seeks to layer humanitarian and development assistance in the highest need pockets of the country. This strategy reflects efforts to increase household and community resilience to shocks and improve social cohesion, with the goal of reducing humanitarian needs.

Sudan

Question. The ouster of longtime President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019 and the installation of a power-sharing government between the Transitional Military Council and the civilian Forces for Freedom and Change served as a historic moment not just for the Sudanese people but also the U.S.-Sudan bilateral relationship. At the end of 2020, the United States reached a bilateral agreement with Sudan due to negotiations over lifting Sudan's State Sponsor of Terror Designation and for Sudan's participation in the Abraham Accords. As part of the bilateral agreement, \$700 million in foreign assistance was committed to South Sudan in the 2020 omnibus spending bill. The coup on October 25, 2021 however, halted the vast majority of U.S. assistance to Sudan's transition, and discussions about a change in approach remain underway.

- How should the United States prioritize its assistance to Sudan, including the \$700 million in aid noted above?

Answer. USAID, as a key implementing agency of this U.S. Government funding, should prioritize its assistance to Sudan, including from the \$700 million assistance package, to focus on programming that will help ensure a return to the democratic transition as the Sudanese people have so strongly called for through ongoing, large-scale protests following the military takeover in October. Specifically, assistance should be prioritized in three key areas: 1) strengthening civilian political leadership; 2) protecting human rights, including freedom of expression and assembly; and 3) supporting the Sudanese people's demand for an end to their military's longstanding domination of politics and the economy. Additionally, if the political transition moves forward and the security context improves, investment in the agricultural sector would set the stage for greater economic expansion and connectivity to markets in urban centers, further improving food security and job creation throughout the country. It is my understanding that conversations are ongoing within the administration on the prioritization of the \$700 million in aid noted above. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress on prioritization of assistance in Africa, including in Sudan.

Question. Will you ensure that a sufficient amount of this assistance will support U.S. democracy and governance strengthening initiatives in Sudan, without providing direct assistance to the current regime in Khartoum or any other government in Khartoum that is not legitimately civilian-led?

Answer. Yes. While a democratic transition will not be linear and success remains uncertain, the U.S. Government must be positioned to adjust the tools at its disposal. Initiatives that strengthen democracy and governance in Sudan are of utmost importance to ensuring that a democratic transition can occur, and I understand this is a key aspect of USAID strategy and programming. Since October 2021, I understand that USAID has worked closely with implementing partners to pivot democracy programming toward non-governmental actors, including an even greater focus on civil society, the media, and others who support democratic governance in Sudan. If I am confirmed, I commit to doing everything in my power to ensure that U.S. assistance does not benefit the current government or any other illegitimate government that is formed without the consent of the Sudanese people.

Zimbabwe

Question. While there was hope that the end of Mugabe's 37-year reign as president of Zimbabwe would usher in democratic and economic reforms, the four years of leadership under President Mnangagwa have demonstrated a continuation, if not worsening, of human rights abuses, financial mismanagement, and kleptocratic behavior of the ZANU-PF regime.

- From your perspective, what tools does the United States have at its disposal that are underutilized to encourage democratic and economic reforms in Zimbabwe?

Answer. It is my understanding that within the last year, the interagency established a working group to examine this exact question. The State Department is bringing new analytical and diplomatic tools to the collective USG effort on Zimbabwe. USAID has identified public interest litigation, specifically on electoral law procedure, as another way the Agency can push for reform. The Zimbabwe Mission has begun implementation of these activities and sees potential for expansion. If confirmed, I commit to monitoring this issue.

Question. An area of considerable debate has been the value of reincorporating political party programming into the portfolio of U.S. democracy assistance to Zimbabwe. Do you commit to reviewing USAID's posture on political party support in Zimbabwe?

Answer. Yes, and I am aware that this has been an ongoing discussion between USAID and the State Department. If confirmed, I commit to USAID's continued review and exploration of this option, recognizing its potential risks and benefits.

Question. If confirmed, would you support the investment of resources into enhancing investigative journalism and research to better understand Zimbabwe's corruption and kleptocratic networks?

Answer. Yes, I understand that USAID awarded a new program focused on enhancing investigative journalism in Zimbabwe in September 2021. It will increase the capacity of the media to hold powerful state and non-state actors accountable for their acts and omissions. The program also aims to strengthen citizen participation in public life and spur demand for accountability by improving citizens' access to timely and reliable information. Further, it is my understanding that USAID is in the process of designing a new anti-corruption activity that will have a focus on enhanced investigative journalism of corruption.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. REBECCA ELIZA CONZALES BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. Do you believe that we should rebalance certain countries' diplomatic presence in our country in the name of reciprocity, given their actions against our diplomats in theirs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will review certain countries' diplomatic presence in the United States and compare it to the U.S. presence overseas. Depending on the results of the analysis, I would then work with all stakeholders, as applicable, to explore any possibilities of leveraging reciprocity to rebalance the diplomatic presence if such rebalancing would be in the interest of the United States.

Question. In your view, where should diplomatic immunity end? What crimes committed by foreign diplomats in the U.S. "cross the line" and should merit prosecution?

Answer. Persons enjoying immunity from the jurisdiction of the host country's laws nonetheless have a duty to respect those laws, which is something I respected in my career as a foreign service officer serving overseas. Immunity is not a license for misconduct. If confirmed, you have my commitment that I will ensure that the Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions' responsibilities under the Foreign Mission Act are met, including protecting the U.S. public from abuses of privileges and immunities by members of the foreign missions in the United States.

Question. Is it acceptable for foreign diplomats to facilitate the departure from the U.S. of their citizens who have been charged with serious crimes, before they go through the American justice system?

Answer. From my perspective, individuals should be held accountable for actions that they take, consistent with any applicable immunity under international law. It is my understanding that the Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) works closely with

other Department offices and law enforcement to ensure appropriate consequences under international law for anyone who enjoys immunity in the U.S. and is alleged to have committed a crime. It is my understanding that OFM pursues appropriate action to protect the U.S. from potential abuses of immunity by members of foreign missions in the United States. If confirmed, you have my commitment to continue to do so.

Question. If you are confirmed for this position and if a similar situation as described above occurs during your tenure, what actions will you take?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that protecting the U.S. public from potential abuses of diplomatic immunity and privileges remains one of OFM's highest priorities and in doing so, I will consider the range of tools under the Foreign Missions Act.

Question. Do you believe that there are any institutions in the United States that have not been designated as "foreign missions" but should be?

Answer. The Foreign Missions Act establishes a broad framework for considering whether particular actions are in the best interests of the United States, including but not limited to considerations of reciprocity, national security, and international legal obligations. If confirmed, I will collaborate with my team in the Office of Foreign Mission, the Department, and any applicable interagency partners to review the possible designation of other entities as needed.

Question. Likewise, do you believe that there are any institutions in the U.S. that have been wrongfully designated as "foreign missions?"

Answer. If I am confirmed, I intend to review the existing designations in consultation with my team and, if warranted, I will take any appropriate steps to update any designations as needed.

Management is a Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission

Question. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I have had the opportunity over my thirty-six-year career to observe various management styles. My management style is based on these observations, my experience, and the situation at hand. Every individual has unique talents and experiences and has something valuable to contribute. I embrace diversity, inclusion, and collaboration. I also recognize that there are times that I must make immediate decisions due to life, safety, or other compelling reasons. I strive to be a decisive, kind, and courageous manager. My interactions are based on courtesy and respect. I began my State Department career as a GS-3 Secretarial Assistant, became an ambassador, and am now being nominated as the Director of the Office of Foreign Missions. I could have not accomplished this without the support of my subordinates, mentors, and supervisors. If confirmed, I will use my experiences and achievements over the last thirty-six years to unify and empower the team. I want the team to thrive, learn and grow. I look forward to learning and working with the Office of Foreign Missions staff as they continue their outstanding work.

Question. How do you believe your management style will translate to the Office of Foreign Missions?

Answer. The Office of Foreign Missions is comprised of staff with diverse backgrounds and a wealth of experience. Staffing currently includes Civil Service Officers, Foreign Service Officers, and contractors. If confirmed, I will use my collaborative management style and experience to empower and draw on each employee's expertise and talent to contribute to the overall mission of the Office and the State Department. I will also collaborate with other stakeholders, to include local and state governments, Congress, and other national security partners. If confirmed, I will use a whole of government approach to execute the responsibilities of the Office of Foreign Missions and to protect our national security/foreign policy interests and the American public.

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

Answer. No. It is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates in any setting. In every instance and interaction every individual needs to be treated with dignity and respect.