

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m., by video conference, Hon. John Barrasso, presiding.

Present: Senators Barrasso [presiding], Gardner, Romney, Young, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, and Booker.

Ex Officio: Senator Risch.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN BARRASSO, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING

Senator BARRASSO. Good afternoon. I would like to call to order this hearing of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe during these unprecedented times. The coronavirus has impacted people across our country in many ways. Americans have lost their loves or become seriously ill. Healthcare workers and essential employees are working diligently around the clock. Businesses and schools are closed. We are learning how to adapt to the ever-evolving situation, including in Congress. So, as a way to ensure the Senate can continue to do our work, we are conducting the first remote hearing in this committee. Due to the current coronavirus pandemic, the hearing today is a little different from the traditional format, but I know we can all rise to the challenge.

Our committee is meeting today to examine the nominations of five individuals to serve their Nation's interests across the globe. These nominees are joining us from all over the country.

I want to welcome all of you and congratulate you on your nomination to these important positions. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to your friends and your family who are watching from home.

Should you serve our Nation in these important positions, it is critical that each of you provides strong stewardship of American taxpayer resources; demonstrate professionalism and good judgment; and vigorously work to advance the priorities of the United States.

During your testimony, I hope that each of you will lay out your vision and goals for the position in—to which you have been nominated, and how you plan to achieve them.

I would now like to take a moment to introduce our nominees to the committee:

Natalie Brown is the nominee to the U.S. to be Ambassador to Uganda. She is a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor. Ms. Brown was previously the Chief of Mission at the United States Embassy in Eritrea, in East Africa. She also previously held the positions of Deputy Permanent Representative and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Rome. During her career, she has also served overseas at U.S. Embassies in Tunisia, Jordan, Kuwait, Ethiopia, and Guinea.

Ramsey Day is the nominee to be the USAID's Assistant Administrator for the African Bureau. Mr. Day is currently the Assistant to the Administrator from the Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Learning. He previously worked as Senior Director at the International Republican Institute, IRI, and the IRI County Director in Jordan. Throughout his career, Mr. Day has held numerous positions within the international development and foreign policy communities in the United States as well as overseas.

Sandra Clark is the nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso. She is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor. Since 2017, Ms. Clark has been the Deputy—the Director of the Office of West African Affairs in the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs. She has also held the position of the Deputy Chief of Mission for the U.S. Embassy in Senegal. During her career, Ms. Clark also served overseas at U.S. Embassies in the United Kingdom, Georgia, France, and Nigeria.

William Grayson has been nominated to be U.S. Ambassador to Estonia. He is currently serving as the National Director of the Family Offices of the Bernstein Private Wealth Management in San Francisco, California. With over 20 years of—two decades of experience, he has valuable knowledge in investment, marketing, and management positions in large global investment firms. Mr. Grayson's public service included appointments under four presidents. President George Herbert Walker Bush appointed him to be Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Army, where he oversaw the Army's 2,700 lawyers. He is the recipient of the Outstanding Civilian Service Award from the Secretary of the Army.

And Henry Wooster is the nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Jordan. He is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor. Mr. Wooster is currently the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Maghreb and—or Egypt in the Bureau of Northeastern Affairs. He has previously worked as the Deputy Chief of Mission and then Chargés d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Jordan. Mr. Wooster has also served as Deputy Chief of Mission in the U.S. Embassy in France.

This is clearly an impressive group of nominees.

And I would like to now turn over the meeting to Ranking Member Booker for his opening comment.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CORY A. BOOKER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

Senator BOOKER. Yeah, Mr. Chairman, can you hear me?

Senator BARRASSO. I can hear you very well, thank you.

Senator BOOKER. Great. I am just going to submit my remarks to the record, with the exception of just saying two things.

One is, I am just really grateful that you are assuming the chairmanship of the subcommittee after Senator Isakson's retirement. We are definitely going to miss him, but I look forward, really, to working with you.

And, obviously, we have severe crises when it comes to COVID. The World Health Organization is talking about a potentially catastrophic impact, and we are already seeing significant infections.

So, I am looking forward to the work we have before us, and to working with many of the nominees. I am looking forward to the questions, but I will submit my formal remarks for the record. I have delayed the meeting long enough with the technical difficulties.

[The prepared statement of Senator Booker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

Thank you to the nominees for your participation in today's hearing and for your willingness to serve your country in these challenging times.

I want to welcome and congratulate Senator Barrasso for assuming the Chairmanship of the subcommittee after Senator Isakson's retirement. We certainly miss Senator Isakson, but look forward to working with you.

The posts to which you have been nominated will certainly demand a great deal from you. Burkina Faso is one of the worst affected countries by the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa, Jordan faces political and economic instability, and the Assistant Administrator at USAID, will be tasked with helping to lead what will be a much needed humanitarian response.

Last week, the World Health Organization said that nearly 200,000 people in Africa could die of coronavirus in the first year of the pandemic and 29 to 44 million be infected during the period. While the virus has been slow to spread in the continent and there are indications that it won't spread as exponentially as it has in the U.S. and Europe, it could linger in transmission hotspots suggesting a more prolonged outbreak over a few years. The WHO further said "COVID-19 could become a fixture in our lives for the next several years unless a proactive approach is taken by many governments in Africa." Meanwhile many governments in Africa look to upend hard fought democratic norms under the cover of COVID-19 pandemic.

I look forward to hearing from our nominees to Uganda, Burkina Faso, and USAID about how they will address the coronavirus's impacts on Day 1 if confirmed to their new posts, and how they will address the secondary effects of the virus—including the upending of democratic norms, the plight of internally displaced people, and potential outbreaks of other diseases such as polio and measles, as vaccination campaigns have been paused.

I also look forward to hearing about how we can bolster the U.S. relationship with two critical allies, Jordan and Estonia, as regional circumstances demand continued U.S. support.

Thank you to the nominees for bearing with us in a non-traditional hearing setting, and to the Chairman for working with us to resume our committee's activities under these new circumstances. Again, I look forward to working with you and your staff in this subcommittee.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you so much, Senator Booker.

And this is our first hearing together as subcommittee leadership, and I do look very much forward to many more opportunities for the two of us to work together in the year ahead.

Now, all of the positions that the committee is discussing today are very important. We look forward to hearing the testimony from each of the five of you.

And I will let you know that your full statements will be entered into the record in its entirety. So, I ask that you summarize your testimony in about 5 minutes in order for members to have an opportunity to ask questions.

The order that we will go in, we will start with Ms. Brown first, and then Mr. Day, then Ms. Clark, then Mr. Grayson, and then Mr. Wooster will be our final one to testify, and then we will go to questions.

So, with that, Ms. Brown, I will welcome you and congratulate you and ask you to start.

STATEMENT OF NATALIE E. BROWN, OF NEBRASKA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Ms. BROWN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda.

I appreciate the confidence and trust the President and Secretary have placed in me by submitting my name for consideration, and I welcome the opportunity to speak with you today in this innovative format.

If confirmed, I pledge to work with you, directly or virtually, to advance our Nation's interest in Uganda.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to acknowledge family members cheering me on from afar, as, without their support, encouragement, and sacrifices, I would not be with you today:

My mother, Betty Brown's love of geography and interest in global events made me curious about the world. And I thank my sister, Daryle Glynn Brown, who is both my staunchest supporter and my toughest critic, for always challenging me to do better. And with me today in spirit are my father, Eugene, whose 27 years as a police officer inspired my career in Foreign Service—in public service; my dear friend, Fay Holl, whom I met on my first diplomatic assignment and who provided a home away from home over the years; and my fiancé, Fikret Yildiz, who passed away recently, most likely a victim of the pandemic that has claimed far too many lives globally, and who was looking forward to joining the State Department family.

Mr. Chairman, Senators, in eight countries across Africa and the Middle East, as well as in Washington, I have had the great privilege of representing the United States and advancing American interests, from assisting American citizens in need, to helping iden-

tify business opportunities for American companies. I supported Kuwaiti women in their first efforts to vote and run for elected office and vote, and time spent at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College was a chance to learn more about my uniformed colleagues and their roles in protecting American interests.

Coupled with this substantive background is experience in directing U.S. foreign policy and mentoring the next generation of American diplomats. Most recently, I served as Chief of Mission in Asmara, Eritrea, where my team worked to revitalize long-strained relations amid political and security change in the Horn of Africa. In Rome, as the Deputy in our Mission to the U.N. Food Agencies, we coordinated across the U.S. Government to build consensus with international partners in alleviating hunger and ensuring the responsible contributions—the responsible use of contributions to the U.N. system. I was also Deputy Chief of Mission in Tunisia, and a high point of my career remains the substantial support from the United States to that country and its people as they transitioned from dictatorship to democracy. I believe these experiences have prepared me well to guide and support our country team in Uganda and its work on some of the world’s most challenging issues.

Mr. Chairman, over the past 25 years, the United States and Uganda have cooperated to counter terrorism and promote stability, particularly in Somalia, to encourage economic growth and prosperity evidenced by increasing private U.S. investment in the country, and to curb the spread of pandemics, such as COVID–19. Here, Uganda’s experience in combating HIV/AIDS, Ebola, and other infectious diseases, bolstered by significant long-term technical and material support from the United States, is helping to set an example. We have made notable progress, and, if confirmed, my team and I will work hard to continue and, hopefully, accelerate this trend.

Regrettably, there are areas tilting the opposite direction. Strengthening Uganda’s multiparty democracy, promoting good governance, combating official corruption, and reinforcing respect for human rights, including for marginalized populations, are key U.S. policy priorities and, if confirmed, areas on which I intend to focus.

Uganda will hold elections in early 2021, and President Museveni is expected to seek a sixth term. If confirmed, I will encourage him to ensure the political space required for an open and vibrant process with free and full participation. Given Uganda’s influence in the region, this is important, not only for the future of the country and its people, but also for its neighbors.

Mr. Chairman, key to much of Uganda’s progress in combating terrorism, growing the economy, and taking care of its people are the significant investments by the United States in security, agriculture, and education. The majority of our assistance targets the health sector, with a historical special focus on achieving HIV epidemic control, and fighting malaria, as a healthier population is essential to Uganda’s continued development. If confirmed, I will work with Uganda to maintain momentum on its achievements in health and to prepare for the day when it assumes full responsibility for the programs now funded by the United States.

On the critical issue of economic growth, with 80 percent of Uganda's population under the age of 30, in order to compete in the global marketplace, it is vital that Uganda encourage and promote job creation, technological advances, and foreign investment. Harnessing the potential of this tremendous youth bulge as a force for economic ingenuity and prosperity will also serve as a counter to violent extremism and despair. Partnering with U.S. firms can help achieve these goals and create jobs in both countries. If confirmed, I will strive to expand trade and commercial ties between the United States and Uganda for the advancement of both of our nations.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.
[The prepared statement of Ms. Brown follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATALIE E. BROWN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda. I appreciate the confidence and trust the President and Secretary have placed in me by submitting my name to this body for consideration, and I welcome the opportunity to speak with you today in this innovative format. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you—directly or virtually—to advance our nation's interests in Uganda.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to acknowledge my family members without whose support, encouragement, and sacrifices, I would not be with you today.

It was my mother, Betty Brown's, love of geography and interest in global events that made me curious about the world, and it has been a delight to travel with her to many of the places we read about in my National Geographic Children's Atlas.

My sister Daryle Glynn Brown has been my staunchest supporter, as well as my toughest critic—like most siblings—and I thank her for always challenging me to do better.

And with me in spirit today are my father Eugene, whose 27 years as a police officer inspired my career in public service; my dear friend Fay Holl, whom I met on my first diplomatic assignment and who provided a home away from home throughout the course of my career; and my fiancé Fikret Yildiz, who passed away recently, most likely a victim of pandemic that has claimed far too many lives globally, and who was looking forward to joining the State Department family.

Mr. Chairman/Senators since 1990, in eight countries, primarily in Africa and the Middle East, as well as in Washington, I have had the great privilege of representing the United States and the American people, of advancing American interests, and of promoting our democratic values. In doing so, I have assisted American citizens in need and adjudicated visa applications of people interested in visiting the United States, I have helped identify overseas business opportunities for American companies and I was proud to support Kuwaiti women in their very first efforts to vote and run for elected office. In what was for me the most "foreign" of my assignments, I even spent a year at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College, getting to better know my uniformed colleagues and their varied roles in protecting American interests.

In addition to this substantive experience, I am grateful for the leadership opportunities afforded to me to in directing U.S. foreign policy and mentoring the next generation of Foreign Service Officers. For example, I recently concluded a three-year assignment as Chief of Mission in Asmara, Eritrea, where my small team and I worked to revitalize long-strained relations against a backdrop of profound political and security change in the Horn of Africa. In Rome, as Deputy Permanent Representative of our Mission to the U.N. Food Agencies, my colleagues and I coordinated with numerous United States agencies in building consensus with a range of partners to alleviate hunger and ensure responsible use of contributions to the U.N. agencies. I was also Deputy Chief of Mission in Tunisia as that country transitioned from dictatorship to democracy. There, the U.S. response to that transformation was swift and substantial, and one of the highlights of my career remains our work with the Tunisian people to instill democratic practices.

I believe the sum of these experiences has prepared me well to work with and guide our country team in Uganda, which is working on some of the world's most

challenging issues, including threats to peace and stability, massive refugee flows, rapid population growth, and corruption. Of course, in the headlines today are efforts to curb the spread of pandemic disease. Here, Uganda's experience in combatting HIV/AIDS, Ebola, and other infectious diseases, bolstered by significant long-term technical and material support from the United States, is helping to set an example for many others.

Mr. Chairman/Senators, the United States and Uganda have enjoyed a solid bilateral relationship over the past 25 years, cooperating to counter terrorism and promote stability, particularly in Somalia; to encourage economic growth and prosperity, evidenced by increasing private U.S. investment in the country; and, as noted, to curb the spread of pandemics. We have made notable progress on all fronts and, if confirmed, my team and I will work hard to continue and hopefully accelerate this trend.

The urgency of the current global health crisis, however, should not detract from other areas warranting continued serious attention and engagement. Strengthening Uganda's multiparty democracy, promoting good governance, combatting corruption, and reinforcing respect for human rights, including for marginalized populations, are key U.S. policy priorities. Regrettably, these are also areas where the trend is not so positive and where there have even been efforts to stifle voices and curb political aspirations. If confirmed, these are areas on which I intend to focus.

Uganda will hold elections in early 2021, during which President Museveni is expected to seek a sixth term. If confirmed, I will urge President Museveni to ensure the political space required for an open and vibrant campaign with the free and full participation of all parties. Given Uganda's influence in the region, this is important not only for the future of the country and its people, but also for its neighbors.

Mr. Chairman/Senators, key to much of Uganda's progress in safeguarding the region, in growing its economy, and in taking care of its people is the significant assistance provided by the United States. We have invested in security and combatting terrorism, and we make contributions to agriculture and education. The vast majority of our assistance, however, targets the health sector, with a historical special focus on achieving HIV epidemic control and fighting malaria as a healthier population is essential to Uganda's continued development. Healthy students learn and perform better, and healthy workers can help the economy grow faster. If confirmed I will work with Uganda to maintain momentum and prepare for the day when it assumes full responsibility for the health programs now funded by the United States.

On the critical issue of economic growth, with 80 percent of Uganda's population under the age of 30, in order to compete in the global marketplace, it is vital that Uganda encourage and promote job creation, technological advances, and foreign investment. Harnessing the potential of this tremendous youth bulge as a force for economic ingenuity and prosperity will also be critical as a counter narrative to violent extremism and despair. Partnering with U.S. firms can help achieve these goals and create jobs in both countries. If confirmed, I will strive to expand trade and commercial ties between the United States and Uganda for the betterment of both our countries.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you so very much for your testimony. We welcome your mom, who is there. We appreciate your father, who is with us in spirit, and his years of service to the law enforcement. And we are very sorry to hear about the loss of your fiancé. But, we are grateful for your service and your testimony. And we are going to return, in a few moments, with questions. Thank you so much for being here, and for your testimony. Congratulations.

And now I would like to turn to Mr. Day.

**STATEMENT OF RAMSEY COATS DAY, OF VIRGINIA, NOMINEE
TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED
STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. DAY. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to be here today as President

Trump's nominee to be Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

I would also like to thank President Trump, Secretary Pompeo, former Administrator Green, and Acting Administrator Barsa for their support and for the confidence they have placed in me to serve in this role.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank Acting Assistant Administrator Chris Maloney, who has led the Africa Bureau since January of this year. I also want to recognize my remarkably talented and dedicated colleagues at USAID, and particularly those in the Africa Bureau, both here in Washington and overseas.

And, of course, a special thank you to my wonderful wife, Charlotte. To say that I "married up" would be quite an understatement, and I am immensely grateful for her love and support.

Lastly, I would also like to thank my mother, Janie, who, along with my late father, Woody, instilled in me the values, principles, and faith that guide me every day.

Mr. Chairman, my love of Africa began nearly 20 years ago, when I landed in Johannesburg, South Africa, as a backpacker, as part of a year-long journey around the world. I spent several months exploring the continent, and I was completely captured by the natural beauty of the landscapes, the richness and diversity of the cultures, and, of course, the awe-inspiring wildlife. But, most importantly, I fell in love with the people, particularly the many young Africans whom I learned from, laughed with, and shared countless stories. It was this experience in Africa, as well as living in New York City on September 11th, that helped shape a vision for a career I never dreamed of as a kid growing up in Mississippi. Africa has truly changed the path of my life and career.

Over the past 15 years, I have been fortunate to serve at USAID multiple times and in multiple administrations, both in Washington and overseas. I have also worked for a USAID implementing partner at the International Republican Institute in Jordan, where I led programs advancing the democratic principles of citizen-responsive government.

For the last 2 years, serving in the Africa Bureau, and, more recently, in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning at USAID, I have seen that Africa is a continent both of immense opportunities and acute challenges. The continent's rapidly expanding demographics means Africa's labor force will soon be bigger than China, bigger than India. And if Africa becomes more integrated into the international economic system, millions of people could be lifted out of poverty, and the U.S. would have expanded market opportunities on a continent with ever-increasing spending power.

But, Africa is also faced with chronic corruption, poor governance, and food insecurity, as well as devastating natural disasters and crushing manmade conflicts that have displaced millions. And the American people have been, and will continue to be, there to support our African partners. USAID, on behalf of the American people, is by far the world's largest health and humanitarian assistance donor responding to these challenges. Programs like the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, and the President's Malaria Initiative have literally saved millions of lives. But, over 70 percent of the African population is under the age of

35. Without opportunities for meaningful work, this young population is vulnerable to recruitment from extremist organizations or other destabilizing influences. American engagement has been, and will continue to be, critical. Never is this more evident than today.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to sweep across the globe, health systems in developing countries, particularly in Africa, need to be strengthened to adequately respond to the crisis. As we have seen in recent months, this virus can spread quickly. We have also learned that what happens overseas can have an immediate and profound impact on our homeland, on our way of life. USAID has been at the front lines in the fight against Ebola, HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and we are also spearheading the global response to COVID-19, as we continue to battle it here at home. If I am confirmed, I intend to work tirelessly on this and other issues critical to our national strategic and security interests.

And, if confirmed, my priorities would be clear. First, as always, and without compromise, will be the health and safety of every USAID staff member and their family. My second priority will be to maintain the highest level of financial integrity. Leaders at USAID are the stewards of hard-earned and precious taxpayer resources. Congress and the American people have entrusted us to ensure those resources are deployed in the most efficient and effective way possible to advance American interests around the world. And lastly, I will concentrate my efforts on ensuring every USAID program is focused on advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives through USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance organizing principle.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed, it would be a tremendous honor to serve and lead the nearly 3,000 Civil Service, Foreign Service, Foreign Service Nationals, and personal services contractors that make up the USAID Africa family. And I commit to you that I will work closely and transparently with Members of Congress and staff to integrate your perspectives, experiences, and priorities into our approaches to the development challenges faced by our African partners. Your viewpoints are absolutely crucial to the work that we do on the ground, and are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Day follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RAMSEY COATS DAY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to be here today as President Trump's nominee to be Assistant Administrator for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). I would like to thank President Trump, former Administrator Green, Acting Administrator Barsa, and Secretary Pompeo for their support, and for the confidence they have placed in me to serve in this role.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank Acting Assistant Administrator Chris Maloney, who has led the Bureau for Africa since January 2020. I also want to recognize my remarkably talented and dedicated colleagues at USAID and in the Africa Bureau, both here in Washington and overseas, with whom I have worked for the last two years.

I am thankful to have with me today—and every day—my wonderful wife, Charlotte. To say I “married up” would be quite an understatement, and I appreciate immensely her love and support.

Mr. Chairman, my love of Africa began nearly twenty years ago when I landed in Johannesburg, South Africa, as part of a year-long backpacking journey around the world. I spent several months exploring the continent, and I was completely captured by the natural beauty of the landscapes, the richness and diversity of the cul-

tures, and, of course, the awe-inspiring wildlife—but most important, I fell in love with the people, particularly the many young Africans from whom I learned, and with whom I laughed and shared countless stories.

It was this experience in Africa, as well as living in New York City on September 11, that helped shape a vision for a career I never dreamed of as a kid growing up in Mississippi. Africa has truly changed the path of my life and career.

Upon my return home, I decided to leave the private sector and move to Washington to pursue a career in international development. I did so because I saw firsthand the impact USAID's work had on the people of the African continent. But I also have since gained a much greater appreciation for the critical nature of development work in advancing our national strategic, security, and commercial interests.

Over the past 15 years, I have been fortunate to serve at USAID multiple times and in multiple administrations, both in Washington and overseas. As the USAID Country Representative in the Republic of Montenegro, I learned how powerful American assistance can be in helping a country integrate into trans-Atlantic alliances and strengthening the Euro-American partnership. I also have worked for a USAID partner, the International Republican Institute (IRI). As the Country Director for IRI in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, I worked on programs to empower women, strengthen citizen-responsive government at the local level, and help Jordanian leaders understand the importance of public opinion when making policy decisions.

For the last two years at USAID, serving in the Africa Bureau and, more recently, in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning, I have had the honor and privilege of working alongside some of the most dedicated public servants I have ever known as we work together to address issues critical to our national interests.

I have learned over my career that what happens overseas can have an immediate and profound impact on our homeland and our way of life. Never is this more evident than today. As the pandemic of COVID-19 caused by the novel coronavirus continues to sweep across the globe, health institutions in developing countries, particularly in Africa, are ill-equipped to respond to the crisis. As we have seen in recent months, this virus can spread quickly. We will beat this outbreak in the United States, but it could well continue its spread as the Southern Hemisphere heads into Winter. USAID has been on the front lines in the fight against Ebola, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and we will continue to lead the global response to the COVID-19—even as we battle the disease at home.

To protect America's strategic and security interests even better, USAID must evolve. And under the leadership of former USAID Administrator Mark Green and current Acting Administrator John Barsa, I believe we are building the USAID of tomorrow by integrating an organizing principle we call the Journey to Self-Reliance into all our work. We believe every program and every partnership into which USAID enters should strengthen the ability of a country's citizens to plan, finance, and implement their own development solutions to the challenges they face. Not because we want to walk away from our friends, but because we believe in them. We want to transform these relationships from ones based on an aid to ones based on trade and investment, shared security and diplomatic interests, and mutual respect. It has been my experience in the Balkans, in the Middle East, and, certainly, in Africa, that our partners want to transform this relationship as well.

At USAID, we believe the goal of foreign assistance should be to end the need for it to exist. If I am confirmed as Assistant Administrator for Africa, I intend to work tirelessly in support of this goal, and my top priorities would be clear.

First, as always, would be the health and safety of all USAID staff members and their families. Many of our teams are working in difficult and even dangerous environments, so my number-one priority would be to ensure we are following every rule, practice, and protocol set forth by the Regional Security Officer at each U.S. Embassy in Africa. However, we will never be able to eliminate risk completely, because development professionals, by nature, want and need to be outside our Embassy walls so they can get to know the people we are helping, evaluate the progress of our programs, and learn how we can do better. This is the only way we can maximize the effectiveness of our programs on behalf of the American people. Balancing this risk versus effectiveness requires constant monitoring.

My second priority would be to maintain the highest level of financial integrity.

Leaders at USAID are the stewards of hard-earned and precious taxpayer dollars. Congress and the American people are entrusting us to ensure we deploy these resources in the most efficient and effective way possible to advance American interests around the world.

Lastly, if confirmed, I also would be hyper-focused on ensuring every USAID program advances U.S. foreign-policy objectives, reflects USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance organizing principle, and represents the best of American values.

Whether responding to natural disasters in the Republic of Mozambique and outbreaks of Ebola in West Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo, or tackling the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, helping brave citizens find their democratic footing in Ethiopia or Sudan, strengthening communities to fight back against savage terrorist networks in the Federal Republic of Somalia or the Sahel, or saving millions of lives from the ravages of chronic food-insecurity, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, or malaria, the women and men of USAID and our interagency partners represent the best of America overseas.

USAID's programs alleviate human suffering, lift up communities that are committed to their own development, champion the cause of democracy, empower women and girls to lead, and respond to some of the most complex natural and man-made disasters that affect millions of people around the world.

If I am confirmed, it would be a tremendous honor to lead the nearly 3,000 Civil Servants, Foreign Service Officers, Foreign Service Nationals, and Personal Service Contractors, and others that make up the USAID Africa family.

And I commit to you that, if confirmed, I will work closely and transparently with Members of Congress and your staff to integrate your perspectives, experiences, and priorities into our approaches to the development challenges faced by our African partners. Your viewpoints are crucial to the work we do on the ground, and I appreciate them greatly.

Thank you for granting me this hearing. I look forward to your questions.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Day. And congratulations, again, on your nomination. We look forward to getting to questions in a few moments.

I would like to now turn to Ms. Clark, nominee to be Ambassador to Burkina Faso. Thank you for joining us today. Congratulations.

STATEMENT OF SANDRA E. CLARK, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BURKINA FASO

Ms. CLARK. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear as the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso. I am grateful to the President and the Secretary of State for the confidence they have shown in nominating me for this position.

I would like to recognize my husband, Alan Tolerton, and thank him for his unfailing love, and my wonderful and intrepid daughter, Emma. I am also grateful to my brothers, Gregory and David, and my sister-in-law, Lisa, for their support. And I am thankful for the gifts that we received from our late parents: our mother, who immigrated to the United States after the second World War, and our father, whose family has long and deep roots in New England. And I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues who have joined us virtually today.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will marshal my 34 years of experience as a Foreign Service Officer to promote and protect U.S. interests in Burkina Faso. I would look forward to working closely with members of this committee and your staffs in that endeavor.

Burkina Faso is at the nexus of U.S. strategic interests in the Sahara and West Africa. This country, with its proud tradition of peaceful coexistence among its diverse communities, remains the bulwark against extremism spreading to its neighbors. If con-

confirmed, I will spearhead our efforts, with our Burkinabe partners and international allies, on the interlinked objectives of advancing regional security; promoting democracy, good governance, and human rights; and encouraging economic opportunity and development.

Burkina Faso and our bilateral partnership cannot flourish if it is plagued by violence. Armed attacks have driven over three-quarters of a million people from their homes. The security and law enforcement services face a daunting challenge and require support to enable them to counter this threat while protecting the population. If confirmed, I will continue our work to develop more capable and professional military and law enforcement services who respect human rights.

Burkina Faso is working with other nations, such as the G5 Sahel members, to solve regional problems. And the United States has like-minded partners there. The Secretary approved a Diplomatic Engagement Framework for the Sahel and appointed a U.S. Special Envoy to maximize our collective impact. And, if confirmed, I will work closely with the Special Envoy to coordinate and leverage these many efforts.

Burkina Faso is a young democracy. President Kabore is the first democratically elected president after the 27-year rule of his predecessor. Burkinabe continue to respect and criticize and shape their democracy. Peaceful elections later this year that accurately reflect the will of the people will be crucial to solidifying that democracy.

Burkina Faso's judicial system has struggled to bring terrorists and human rights violators to justice. If confirmed, I will build on our relationships with government and with the country's vibrant media and civil society organizations to strengthen democratic institutions and practices and advocate for human rights.

Burkinabe are dynamic, creative, and seek a better economic future. The United States is partnering with them through such agencies as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which is working to finalize a second compact for Burkina Faso this year. These programs, coupled with U.S. diplomacy and the ingenuity of the U.S. private sector to help promote economic growth and create jobs for both our countries, especially for the burgeoning youth population.

The United States has provided humanitarian and other assistance to the people of Burkina Faso over the years, including to establish the national public health emergency operations center, which is playing a pivotal role during this COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the epidemiologist leading Burkina Faso's COVID-19 response is a Centers for Disease Control Fellow who just returned to his country.

I am proud of the role the United States has played in helping the Burkinabe respond to the pandemic and of the Embassy's success in assisting more than 150 Americans return home.

It would, indeed, be an honor and a privilege, if confirmed, to lead our talented and committed Embassy staff at this critical juncture in Burkina Faso.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Clark follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SANDRA E. CLARK

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear as the nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso. I am grateful to the President and the Secretary of State for the confidence they have shown in nominating me for this position.

I would like to recognize my husband, Alan Tolerton, and thank him for his un-failing love and his willingness to accompany me on this journey, and my wonderful and intrepid daughter, Emma. I am grateful to my brothers, Gregory and David, and my sister-in-law Lisa, for their support. I am thankful for the gifts we received from our late parents, our mother who immigrated to the United States after the Second World War, and our father whose family has long and deep roots in New England. I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues who are joining us virtually today.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will marshal my 34 years of experience as a Foreign Service Officer to promote and protect U.S. interests and values in Burkina Faso. I would look forward to working closely with members of this committee and your staffs in that endeavor. Burkina Faso is at the nexus of U.S. strategic interests in the Sahel and West Africa. This country, with its proud tradition of peaceful coexistence among its diverse communities, remains the bulwark against extremism expanding to its neighbors. If confirmed, I will spearhead our efforts, with our Burkinabe partners and international allies, on the interlinked objectives of advancing regional security; promoting democracy, good governance, and human rights; and encouraging economic opportunity and development.

Burkina Faso—and our bilateral partnership—cannot truly flourish if it is plagued by violence. Armed attacks have driven over three-quarters of a million people from their homes. The security and law enforcement services face a daunting challenge and require support to enable them to counter this threat while protecting the population. If confirmed, I will continue our work to develop more capable and professional military and law enforcement services which respect human rights.

Burkina Faso is working with other nations, such as G5 Sahel members, to resolve the region's problems. The United States has likeminded partners there. This is why the Secretary approved a Diplomatic Engagement Framework for the Sahel and appointed a U.S. Special Envoy to maximize our collective impact. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Special Envoy to coordinate and leverage these many efforts.

Burkina Faso is a young democracy. President Roch Kabore is the first democratically elected president after the 27-year rule of his predecessor, ousted in October 2014. The Burkinabe continue to respect, criticize, and shape their democracy. Peaceful elections later this year that accurately reflect the will of the people will be crucial to solidifying that democracy. Burkina Faso's judicial system has struggled to bring terrorists and human rights violators to justice. If confirmed, I will build on our relationships with the Government and with the country's vibrant media and civil society organizations to strengthen democratic institutions and practices that advocate for human rights.

The Burkinabe are dynamic and creative and seek a better economic future. The United States is partnering with them through such agencies as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which is working to finalize a second compact with Burkina Faso this year. These programs, coupled with U.S. diplomacy and the ingenuity of the U.S. private sector, should promote economic growth and create jobs in both countries, especially for the burgeoning youth population. The United States has provided humanitarian and other assistance to the people of Burkina Faso over the years, including the establishment of a national public health emergency operations center, which is playing a pivotal role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the epidemiologist leading Burkina Faso's COVID 19 response is a Centers for Disease Control Fellow who just returned to the country. I am proud of the role the United States has played in helping the Burkinabe respond to the pandemic and of the Embassy's success in assisting more than 150 Americans return home.

It would be an honor and a privilege, if confirmed, to lead our talented and committed Embassy staff at this critical juncture in Burkina Faso.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to your questions.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, again, thank you. Congratulations. We look forward to having a chance to ask you questions. There is a woman from my home State of Wyoming who has previously been Ambassador to Burkina Faso, so I am familiar with the challenges that you will be facing. And I also have a wonderful and intrepid daughter, who is also named Emma. So, hopefully, we can get them together at some point in the future.

Ms. CLARK. Yes, that would be great. Thank you, sir.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you. Well, congratulations, again.

Now we would like to hear from Mr. Grayson, the nominee to be the Ambassador to Estonia.

Mr. Grayson, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM ELLISON GRAYSON, OF CALIFORNIA,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLEN-
IPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE
REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA**

Mr. GRAYSON. Great. Great. Thank you very much, Chairman Barrasso, Ranking Member Booker, and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today in this virtual hearing during this unprecedented time and pandemic as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia.

I am deeply grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the trust and confidence that they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working very closely with the committee, your staffs, and other Members of Congress to build upon the robust partnership that exists between the United States and Estonia.

My top priority will be the welfare, security, and health of the U.S. citizens in Estonia and our exceptional Embassy team and talent, also work to strengthen our joint security, our cooperation with NATO, further bilateral trade and economic opportunities, and, of course, counter malign influence in the region.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to introduce my family members. First, my wife—and they are going to appear, if that is okay, Mr. Chairman—first, my wife, Laurie Grayson, who, if I am confirmed, will be an outstanding representative—

Senator BARRASSO. Hi, Laurie.

Mr. GRAYSON [continuing]. For the United States in Estonia.

I am also proud to introduce our three daughters. Two of them are here with us in San Francisco: Elizabeth and Caroline. And I also want to introduce our daughter, Katherine, who is in D.C., working for—working on Capitol Hill. And that is a picture of Katherine, in case you see her running around the Hill.

I also want to take a minute to recognize my great sister, Darby, and our parents, EC and Jean Grayson, who continue to be outstanding role models to us. My dad served as the Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Reagan administration and is a decorated Korean War veteran. He and my mom instilled as—in us our deep love of family, country, and travels around the world.

Senator BARRASSO. Bye.

Mr. GRAYSON. Bye.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRAYSON. Thank you, Senator.

Throughout my private- and public-sector career, I have been honored to serve in four administrations, as you noted. First as the Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Army under George H.W. Bush, then on the President's Commission on White House Fellowships under President George W. Bush, then as a Regional White House Fellows Judge under President Barack Obama, and currently, thanks to President Trump, I am the chairman of the Presidio Trust in San Francisco, where I have the privilege of overseeing one of the National Parks' crown jewels. I am now honored again, of course, to be the President's nominee to be the Ambassador to Estonia.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Estonia have been close friends for over 100 years. A strong NATO ally since 2004, Estonia has shown an unwavering commitment to our shared global security. Estonian troops serve with us in Iraq and contribute to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Estonia has committed 2 percent of its GDP to defense spending for 8 years and serves as a role model to other NATO allies. If confirmed, I will continue to work hard to deepen our defense relationship with Estonia.

Also, this October, Estonia will host the Three Seas Initiative, which is a Central European-led effort to accelerate cross-border commerce through important infrastructure projects in transportation, cyber, and digital. It would also provide an alternative to malign investments from the PRC and other nations that are not aligned with the region or the United States. This year, we also marked the 80th anniversary of the 1940 Wells Declaration, under which the United States refused to recognize the forced annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Estonia showed great courage in overcoming Soviet occupation and has since become a shining example of innovation to the world. The democratic values that the U.S. and Estonia share continue to be the bedrock of our bilateral, regional, and global partnership.

E-Estonia, as it is often called, is one of the most digitally advanced countries in the world. If confirmed, I will use my experience working with talented tech, cyber, AI company founders and innovators in San Francisco, Silicon Valley, and across the country, to expand trade, research, and investment opportunities. Estonia hosts the NATO- accredited Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence in Tallinn, which the United States joined in 2011. Last year, Estonia joined us in signing a 27-country agreement, Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace. Further, our recent Joint Declaration on 5G Security is evidence of our cyber cooperation, which, if confirmed, I look forward to continuing and expanding.

The United States and Estonia are strong partners guided by a century of diplomatic relations and friendships. Given the many global threats and opportunities that exist today, our relationship is as important now as it has ever been. If confirmed, I will be a champion for the United States and its interests in Estonia while strengthening the bilateral economic, defense, and democratic ties that bind us.

Mr. Chairman, I greatly appreciate the honor bestowed upon me by this nomination, and, if confirmed, I will do my best to uphold the trust that you, your fellow members, President Trump, Secretary Pompeo, and the American people are placing in me.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you—

Mr. GRAYSON. Thank you again for this opportunity to appear, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grayson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM ELLISON GRAYSON

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored and privileged to appear before you today, in this virtual hearing during this unprecedented time and pandemic, as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia. I am deeply grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the trust and confidence that they have placed in me with this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the committee, your staffs, and other Members of Congress to build upon the strong and robust partnership between the United States and Estonia. My top priority will be the health, welfare, and security of U.S. citizens in Estonia and our exceptional Embassy team in Tallinn. I will also work to further strengthen our security, NATO cooperation, bilateral trade and entrepreneurial opportunities and to counter malign influence in the region.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to introduce and thank my family members who are with me today. First, my wife Laurie Grayson who, if I'm confirmed, will be an outstanding representative of the United States in Estonia as she's been throughout my career. I am also proud to introduce our accomplished and loving three daughters, Elizabeth and Caroline, here with us in San Francisco and Katherine, who's in DC working on Capitol Hill. I also want to recognize my great sister Darby and my amazing parents, EC and Jean Grayson, who continue to be exceptional role models. My Dad served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy under President Ronald Reagan and is a Korean War veteran. He and my Mom instilled in us our love of family, country and public service.

I am grateful that throughout my private and public sector career, I have had the opportunity to serve in four presidential administrations. First, as the Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Army under President George H. W. Bush. Next, on the President's Commission on White House Fellowships under President George W. Bush, then as a regional White House Fellows panelist under President Barack Obama. I am currently the Chairman of the Presidio Trust in San Francisco, appointed by President Trump, where I have the privilege of overseeing one of the National Park's crown jewels. I am now honored and humbled as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Estonia.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Estonia have been close friends for over 100 years. A strong NATO Ally since 2004, Estonia has shown unwavering support for our shared defense and security around the globe. Estonian troops serve with us in Iraq, and Estonia continues to contribute to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Estonia has committed two percent or more of its GDP to defense spending since 2012, serving as a model for other NATO Allies. If confirmed, I will work to deepen our defense cooperation with Estonia.

This October, Estonia will host the 2020 Three Seas Initiative Summit. The initiative is a Central European-led effort to accelerate cross-border commerce through north-south energy, transportation, cyber and digital infrastructure projects. It should also provide an alternative to malign investments from the PRC and other nations that are not in the long-term interests of the region or the United States.

This year we mark the 80th anniversary of the 1940 Welles Declaration under which the United States refused to recognize the forced annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Estonia showed great strength and determination in overcoming Soviet occupation and emerged as a shining example of innovation to the world. The shared democratic values of the U.S. and Estonia continue to be the bedrock of our bilateral, regional, and global cooperation.

Estonia is a leader in information technology being one of the most digitally advanced countries in the world. If confirmed, I will use my experience working with talented tech, cyber and AI company founders and innovators in San Francisco, Silicon Valley and around the U.S. to expand our trade, research and investment opportunities. Estonia hosts the NATO-accredited Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence in Tallinn, which the United States joined in 2011. We share a vision

of a secure and open cyberspace, in which all countries behave responsibly. Estonia joined us last year for a 27-country joint statement on Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace, and we continue to collaborate on cyber deterrence efforts. Our recent Joint Declaration on 5G security is further evidence of our cyber cooperation which, if confirmed, I look forward to continuing and expanding.

The United States and Estonia are strong partners, grounded by 100 years of diplomatic relations and friendship. Given the many global threats and opportunities that exist today, our relationship is as important now as it has ever been. If confirmed, I will be a champion for the United States and its interests in Estonia while strengthening the bilateral economic, defense and democratic ties that bind us. Mr. Chairman, I recognize and appreciate the honor bestowed upon me by this nomination. If confirmed, I will do my best to uphold the trust that you, your fellow members, President Trump, Secretary Pompeo and the American people are placing in me.

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

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Grayson. We congratulate you. Thank you for including your family. I know Senator Alexander—Lamar Alexander—emailed me last night, and he was hoping so much to be able to introduce you in person in the committee. We did not want to delay your hearing, though, until a time when that might be possible. I know you wanted to be here with your family. But, congratulations again.

Mr. GRAYSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BARRASSO. Now we will turn to our final nominee, Mr. Wooster, who is the nominee to Jordan.

Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF HENRY T. WOOSTER, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Mr. WOOSTER. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today, albeit virtually, as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their confidence in me.

Gratitude is also due to my wife, Laura Dallman, and our four children—Cameron, Claire, Kimberly, and Kristen—who have shared the public-service journey worldwide. Their love, when we were together and when unaccompanied, have sustained me.

I joined the Foreign Service 20 years ago, following 9 years in the Civil Service, 5 of which were overseas; before that, service in the U.S. Army and the Army Reserve. I have served in eight U.S. embassies as diverse as Paris and Baghdad, as well as in numerous Washington positions. I have advocated for U.S. interests across the globe and worked with allies in the international community to pursue joint goals. At present, I am the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Maghreb and Egypt.

As Secretary Pompeo said last year, Jordan is one of the United States' enduring strategic partners. And from my own past service there, I know this to be true. American-Jordanian friendship advances U.S. interests, as does Jordan's path of modernization and its example of moderation.

Over the last decade, Jordan has suffered a series of external shocks: the Syrian civil war, the fight against ISIS, and now, of course, COVID-19. All of these have battered its people and its economy. The U.S. priority is to help the Kingdom's economic recovery—excuse me—economy recover in a way that ensures stability. Jordan's 2020 budget contains concrete, meaningful reforms, and the Government's decisive response to the COVID crisis should enable it to begin reopening its economy very soon. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you, with all the tools the U.S. Government has, with international organizations, like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and with the international community, to help Jordan create a stable and growing economy.

Our partnership with Jordan has long included military collaboration. Jordan has been an invaluable ally in our joint work to counter terrorism, support international peacekeeping, and provide humanitarian assistance throughout the region. Jordan is the third-largest recipient of U.S. foreign military financing, with our support focusing on the Jordanian armed forces' 5-year plan for modernization, readiness, and enhanced interoperability among its own forces, with our forces, and with NATO forces. Our military assistance reinforces Jordan's role in the region as a bastion of stability.

Beyond Jordan's value to the United States as a strategic partner, the Kingdom has proven a generous neighbor. Not only does Jordan promote peace in the region, but throughout its history it has welcomed refugees from neighboring countries, including hundreds of thousands of Syrians. I am proud the United States has contributed nearly one-and-a-half billion dollars of humanitarian aid to refugees in those communities in Jordan since the Syria crisis began. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for assistance in international fora and promote burden-sharing to ensure we collectively provide for those in need.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, I will continue to strengthen our partnership with the Government of Jordan and the Jordanian people. To reflect the face and values of the United States, I will recruit, hire, and maintain a diverse Embassy team. I will prioritize the safety of over 23,000 U.S. citizens residing in Jordan and the over 100,000 American tourists who visit annually. To protect and advance U.S. interests, I will proudly lead the nearly 1,000 American and local staff at our Embassy, and I will have a special duty to ensure the security of the Embassy's 500 American family members.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, if confirmed, I will do my utmost to honorably represent the United States of America to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. To do this and ensure the most informed and effective policy, I look forward to continuing my engagement with you and other Members of Congress.

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

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wooster follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HENRY T. WOOSTER

Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their confidence and trust in me.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank my wife, Laura, and our four children who have shared this public service journey. Their love and care, while we served worldwide, has sustained me. I joined the Foreign Service 20 years ago, following nine years in the civil service, five of which were spent overseas, and before that, served in the U.S. Army and Army Reserve. I have served in eight U.S. embassies—from Paris to Baghdad—as well as in numerous positions in Washington, D.C. I have advocated for U.S. interests across the globe and worked with allies and the international community to pursue joint goals. At present, I am Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Maghreb and Egypt.

As Secretary Pompeo said last year, “Jordan is one of the United States’ enduring strategic partners,” and from my own past service there, I know this to be true. American-Jordanian friendship advances U.S. interests, as does Jordan’s path of modernization and its example of moderation. The Government of Jordan’s choices have brought its people real benefits, as shown by Jordan’s 98 percent literacy rate, 74-year life expectancy, and 1 percent child mortality rate. Yet, despite these successes, Jordan has suffered a series of external shocks over the last decade—such as the Syrian civil war and the fight against ISIS, and more recently, COVID-19—that have battered its economy.

The U.S. priority in Jordan is to help the Kingdom’s economy recover in a way that ensures its stability and security. Economic growth in Jordan slowed from 8 percent in 2007 to about 2 percent in 2011, when the country was hit by regional disruptions caused by the Syrian crisis. It had remained at that level until COVID-19 forced an economic shutdown. Nevertheless, Jordan has stepped up to the challenge. Its 2020 budget contains concrete, meaningful reforms to stimulate the economy, and the Jordanian Government’s decisive response to COVID-19 should enable it to begin safely reopening its economy. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you, with all the tools the U.S. Government has, with international organizations like the IMF and the World Bank, and with the international community, to help Jordan create a stable and growing economy. Thanks to your strong bipartisan support, U.S. economic assistance to Jordan in FY 2019 exceeded \$1 billion, including \$745 million in direct budget support that bolstered the Kingdom’s economy as it implemented reforms and reduced budgetary strains.

Our partnership with Jordan has long included military collaboration. Jordan has been a leading member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and has more broadly been an invaluable ally in our joint work to counter terrorism, support international peacekeeping, and provide humanitarian assistance throughout the region. Jordan is the third largest recipient of Foreign Military Financing, with our support focusing on the implementation of the Jordan Armed Force’s five-year plan for modernization, readiness, and enhanced interoperability among Jordanian, U.S., and NATO forces. Our military assistance furthers Jordan’s place in the region as a bastion of stability.

Beyond Jordan’s value to the United States as a strategic partner, the Kingdom has proven itself a kind and generous neighbor. Not only does Jordan promote peace in the region, but throughout its history it has welcomed millions of refugees from neighboring countries, including hundreds of thousands of Syrians. I am proud the United States has contributed nearly \$1.5 billion dollars of humanitarian aid to refugees and host communities in Jordan since the Syria crisis began, and that the United States has assisted Jordan in hosting refugees from Iraq, Yemen, and scores of countries. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for humanitarian assistance in international fora to promote burden sharing and ensure we collectively provide for those in need.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, I will continue to strengthen our partnership with the Government of Jordan and the Jordanian people, especially as the country works to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. To reflect the face and values of the United States, I will recruit, hire, and maintain a diverse Embassy team. I will prioritize the safety of the over 23,000 U.S. citizens residing in Jordan and the over 100,000 American tourists traveling there yearly. To protect and advance U.S. interests, I will proudly lead the nearly 1,000 American and local staff at our Embassy. And, I will have a special duty to ensure the security of the nearly 500 American family members in our Embassy community.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, if confirmed, I will do my utmost to honorably represent the United States of America to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and its people. To do this and ensure the most informed and effective foreign policy, I look forward to continuing my engagement with you and other Members of Congress.

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

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you very much. We appreciate it. Congratulations, again. And we look forward to the questioning in a few moments.

We have had a total of nine Senators on this to hear your testimony and that of the other nominees, and some of them may not be able to stay through all of the questioning. We will have 5-minute rounds, and I will begin and then turn to Senator Booker. But, in addition, Senator Gardner, from Colorado, and Senator Young, from Indiana, Senator Romney, from Utah, are on, as well as Senator Shaheen, from New Hampshire, Senator Murphy, from Connecticut, Senator Kaine, from Virginia, and Senator Coons, from Delaware. So, there is a lot of interest in this hearing and in the nominations of all of you.

What I would like to do is start with my questions, and specifically with Mr. Ramsey Day. And want to focus right now on Mr. Day on a couple of issues relating to energy development in Africa. Because, worldwide, 840 million people are living without electricity, 573 million of them live in sub-Saharan Africa. And I think about what—the challenges that you are going to be facing, Mr. Day, because energy development can help lift people out of poverty and improve their education, their health, their well-being. And developing countries desperately need access to a steady supply of affordable, reliable electricity to support their economic growth.

Can you tell me about your commitment to helping countries use all energy resources in order to promote economic development and reduce poverty in Africa?

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Senator. And thank you for your leadership on this issue. It is an absolutely critical issue on the African continent.

USAID has been a leader in this field with the launch of the Power Africa Initiative several years ago. The Trump administration has doubled down on Power Africa. We call it Power Africa 2.0. And the initiative has been extremely successful. There have been over 120 transactions that have been supported by Power Africa, and they have connected 13 million homes, and over 60 million people now have electricity that did not have it prior to the initiative. And we are also advancing overall two-way trade between the U.S. and Africa through the Trump administration's Prosper Africa Initiative, which is kind of an all-encompassing and multi-sectoral initiative. But, this is one of the key elements of our approach towards development, is to engage the private sector so that there are benefits both to African development, but also to U.S. businesses. But, we are absolutely committed to the Power Africa Initiative, and it has been successful, and we are going to continue to support it.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you. I would like to add, for all of the members here, that Senator James Risch, from Idaho, who

is the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, has joined me in my office, because he wanted to look at the behind-the-scenes—of how we are working this, and with the staff here doing all of that, as well as the questioning, and see how it would look from sitting there from the position of chairing the subcommittee.

So, Senator Risch, we welcome you as part of this discussion and subcommittee hearing.

I would like to turn now, Mr. Day, to the question of coronavirus in Africa. For more than 50 years, USAID's global health programs have been focused on saving lives, protecting vulnerable populations from disease, promoting stability in nations around the world, and specifically also with Africa, because the United States has worked extensively with African nations to strengthen public health systems in order to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, Ebola, other infectious diseases. The world is now facing a global pandemic due to coronavirus. So, the disease could be, my concern, particularly devastating to Africa because of the fragile health system, the limited resources, some existing insecurity from civil conflict. You know, as the Ambassador in this position, what could be your—what would be your plan for managing and coordinating the COVID-19 resources for Africa?

Mr. DAY. Yeah. Thank you, Senator.

You are absolutely right. The U.S., through USAID, has been a leader in global health and humanitarian assistance. In fact, if you add up two of the donors—two, three, and four—they still do not add up to the commitment of the American taxpayer to supporting global health and humanitarian assistance around the world. And COVID-19 is no different in that respect.

I think what is interesting about COVID-19 in Africa is that I think the impacts are going to be multidimensional, in that there will certainly be a health crisis—that is obvious—but, it is unclear to us exactly what that impact is going to look like. You know, right now, there are about 65,000 confirmed cases across the African continent. We have to assume that there are significantly more cases than that. And so, it is yet to really unfold what the health crisis looks like on the African continent; however, we certainly know there is going to be economic distress, if not economic devastation. So, the second- and third-order impacts of COVID-19 are something that we are watching very, very closely.

We have already committed significant resources, about \$200 million or so, towards supporting COVID-19 response in the—on the African continent, but what we will still ultimately have to do is prioritize our assistance. So, we always are going to look at it from a needs perspective, and root it in the President's National Security Strategy. And then we have to look at: Where can we make the biggest impact? Who is going to be most vulnerable? Where can we save the most lives? Which governments are going to be most committed? And so, we will have to go through a prioritization process, which our USAID COVID-19 Task Force is currently doing now. But, we are absolutely committed to supporting our African partners on this. And, if I am confirmed, I certainly look forward to working with Members of Congress and our African partners, because I—if I am confirmed, this will certainly

be the top programmatic priority for the foreseeable future for USAID.

Senator BARRASSO. And then, as you mentioned, the largest contributor would be the United States compared, I think you said, more than two, three, and four combined. So, of course, you would expect this committee to also be wanting to make sure we had a—adequate accountability and oversight of those funds.

I am going to ask a last question. And it has to be the way target. China has been targeting investments in African countries in order to expand their own political, economic, strategic goals. I mean, every time I am in Africa, I see direct evidence of what China is doing. I hear it when I talk to leaders there. Almost, you could call it, “debt diplomacy,” where they put countries into debt and then want back from them resources, concessions, equity in strategic important assets. Could you address that? And then I want to turn to Senator Booker.

Mr. DAY. Sure. Of course. Thank you, Senator.

This is an incredibly complex and important issue that we are dealing with on the African continent. If you look at the U.S. model versus the Chinese model, it is two completely different models. Ours is based on locally-led solutions, enterprise-driven development based on transparency and accountability, and really focused on citizen-responsive government. The Chinese model is the complete opposite of that. It is opaque, and, in many cases, it rewards corruption and it drives African countries into unsustainable indebtedness. And, in many cases, we have seen where sovereign assets have been used to collateralize many of these loans.

So, unfortunately, I also think that, all too often, African countries, they look to the U.S. for a lot of the social programs, but then they go and do business with China. And I think that is where we really have to look at the balance. Our values and our principles are certainly going to dictate that we are going to continue to support our African partners, from a social-program perspective, all the global health programs that we have, all of the humanitarian assistance, the development programs. But, at the same time, I think there needs to be a balance, because they are looking to China to do business, but they are looking to the U.S. for these social programs. So, this will be something that I think we are going to have to watch very closely, but we have to be very clear, in terms of how we articulate our model versus the Chinese model, and also other malign influences, as well, that are continuing to emerge on the continent.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, I appreciate your focus on this and your keen observations about what is happening there. Thank you.

Senator Booker.

Senator BOOKER. All right. Mr. Chairman, can you hear me?

Senator BARRASSO. Yes. Very well, thank you.

Senator BOOKER. Thank you.

I would like to direct my first question to Ms. Clark. In Burkina Faso, there are 11 ventilators right now for roughly 20 million people, and the country is among the hardest hit by the coronavirus on the entire continent. Meanwhile, there is a surging conflict we see that is targeting the Government and the hundreds of thousands who have fled the violence and squeezing together in very

difficult conditions, although they are supposed to be sheltering apart. I was there in Burkina Faso with some other Senators in early 2018, and we met with President Kabore and—where he was committed to the growing—really, Burkina’s democracy. We left, excited about the hope and the promise within that nascent democracy, and were really grateful that they were eager to continue the partnership with the United States.

And I guess my first question is, What are the implications now, understanding some of the fragility within Burkina Faso—what are the implications of the worsening armed conflict, this internal displacement crisis, combined with the COVID-19 caseload, on Burkina’s nascent democracy?

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

You are right to point out that there are many different forces that are impacting Burkina Faso at this moment. They have been hit by the coronavirus, and, working with USAID and the Centers for Disease Control, we are helping the Burkina Faso Government and helping others to respond to that—to that crisis.

At the same time, the terrorist attacks and the instability caused by that has continued, and the numbers of internally displaced people continues to increase. So far, though, the numbers of coronavirus at least officially reported are—from last week, were approximately 744 cases. And so, I think some of the efforts have perhaps yielded some success so far in containing the virus spread. But, certainly, the impact that it will have on the economy from decreased economic activity and decreased trade will be very important to follow. And we will have to work with all different players, all the different—that we have to—

Senator BOOKER. And, Ms. Clark, if I can interrupt real quickly—I am sorry—what are your thoughts about the likelihood that national elections will actually take place in 2020 at the end of the year?

Ms. CLARK [continuing]. Thank you, Senator. As far—so far, the Government has said that it wishes to continue with having the elections next year and—later this year, rather—and I believe that that would be very important—those elections will be very important to ensure the solidification of the democracy that was started, that is very—still young in Burkina Faso. But, you are right to point out—

Senator BOOKER [continuing]. Thank you, Ms. Clark. I am so sorry. I just have 5 minutes, and I—

Ms. CLARK [continuing]. Oh, sorry, sir.

Senator BOOKER. No, no worries.

I would love to move on to Ms. Brown, real quick. Just given my concerns about Uganda right now, and leaders who are trying to exploit this crisis for political ends, we have seen—their President has been in office for about three decades, and is seeking to—seeking reelection. But, in an earlier interview, he suggested it would be madness to hold elections in 2021. And so, how do you think we should respond, as a country, if the Ugandan Government postpones the elections? And should evidence of state corruption and reports of abuse—torture, the unlawful killings by security forces—draw, you know, real scrutiny of our close, you know, bilateral relationship that we are having with them? And should the

United States security forces respond against, sort of, the opposition politicians and supporters to support them in—as they prepare for elections?

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Senator, for your question.

The issues you have raised are critical for Uganda and a priority for our engagement, and for our—going forward. I am familiar with the press report that you referenced.

Apologies. I have incredible feedback, so I will pause periodically—

About the date of the elections, looking at the full transcript, my understanding and, I think, what a lot of people are saying is that President Museveni is committed to holding the elections in early 2021, but that will be determined on the—on whether or not they are able to continue to curb the spread of COVID-19.

As I mentioned in my remarks, holding the election, making sure that the process is free and fair and transparent, and that all the voices are heard, is extremely important. USAID has already identified fundings to work on democracy programs. I know that the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor has also set aside fundings to work with Ugandans and with civil society in ensuring that the process is smooth, that it is free of coercion, that we do our best and work together with civil society to minimize any violence against individuals.

As Uganda seeks to build the economy to come out of this current pandemic, I think holding elections in a timely fashion, ensuring that there is full participation, that there is no abuse, I think, is extremely important to having—to building confidence among the public in the system. Ultimately, it is up to the Ugandan people to elect their next leader. But, as I said, Uganda has a very, very young population, and whichever leader is elected, I believe that person has to think about the future and what is right for the country, and certainly multiparty democracy, where the rights of all are respected, where anyone who commits a human rights abuse, that that is investigated, that the legal system is used, if necessary, that that is extremely important.

And I will add to that that the United States, in the past, when there has been evidence of human rights abuses, we have sanctioned individuals, and that certainly is a tool that, if confirmed, we will consider that—applying that, if necessary.

Thank you.

Senator BOOKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for indulging me to go a little bit over.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you so much, Senator Booker.

Now I can turn to Senator Young.

Senator Young, are you still on?

I think Senator Gardner has stepped off.

Senator YOUNG. I am. I am here, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BARRASSO. Great.

Senator YOUNG. Thanks so much.

I want to thank all our participants in today's panel.

So, Mr. Day, China's Belt and Road Initiative is forging a web of intertwined economic, political, and security ties between Africa and China, advancing Beijing's geopolitical interests. China's policy of employing Chinese labor for its infrastructure projects in Africa

has resulted in somewhere around 200,000 Chinese citizens working on One Belt, One Road contracts across the continent. Given the strategic nature of those investments, such—investments in ports, in railways, oil and gas pipelines—some African Governments view attacks on Chinese interests as a threat to their own national interests or their own national security. How are you thinking about this challenge of countering Chinese influence on the continent, sir?

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Senator.

Again, it is an incredibly important issue, and something that we spend a lot of time thinking about and are incorporating into our various approaches and strategies. And the—again, similar to my comments before, we have really been seen by African partners as the health and humanitarian assistance partners, and it is incredibly important to me that we broaden that perspective. We really have not been engaged on an economic level. Roughly around 1 percent of our overall trade and investment goes towards Africa. So, we are launching initiatives that can help support American companies in their interests on the African continent—their commercial interests on the African continent.

One thing that I think is incredibly important, though, is that all of this is rooted in democratic principles, meaning it is—we are not going to be very successful in convincing American companies to go to the African continent, which, oh, by the way, has, certainly, benefits on the benevolent side, but also has benefits to American jobs and American businesses, and also counters China's malign influence. But, we are not going to be very successful if we cannot convince these American companies to go. And what they are going to be looking for is the principles of democracy, rule of law. How can they get their money in, how can they get their money out? So, it is one of our key pillars of our overall strategy is to engage our African partners so that we can transform this relationship from an aid-based relationship to one that is really based on economic cooperation, diplomatic cooperation, security, et cetera. So, this is something that—it is going to be one of my top priorities, if I am confirmed.

Senator YOUNG. Is there—and I apologize if the Chairman went down this line of questioning earlier—but, is there anything that we can improve upon as it relates to educating African leaders regarding the threat of debt-trap diplomacy, debt-trap development associated with the Belt and Road Initiative?

Mr. DAY. Yeah, it is an excellent question. I think—

Senator YOUNG. I know transparency is important, and the IMF and other multilaterals have been helpful in providing technical assistance to some of these governments so they do not get themselves into a debt trap. So—

Mr. DAY. That is right.

Senator YOUNG [continuing]. That is one potential solution, but are there other things we might do?

Mr. DAY. Sure, sure. It is an excellent question, and one that we will—if I am confirmed, we will certainly work closely with our State Department colleagues. My personal opinion is that we need to sharpen our other elbows a little bit, and that we need to be very clearly communicating what our model is versus other malign in-

fluence—the models of malign influences. And so, we have engaged in some activities. We have supported the Africa Legal Support Fund, which does some, kind of, deal analysis. And so, we can look at increasing those types of activities, where it—where we do have knowledge of particular deals, we can actually look—do some legal analysis and then be able to communicate some perspectives on whether or not this is a good deal or a bad deal or could be putting you in a situation of unsustainable debt.

But, again, I think our African partners, they want to do business with us, and that has been something that has been clear for quite some time. But, the consistent message that we get is that we are just not there, in a commercial sense. And so, that is what, if I am confirmed, is going to be one of my top priorities in working with our State Department colleagues, and Treasury and Commerce and others, to ensure that we are doing everything that we can to help de-risk some of the opportunities for American businesses.

Senator YOUNG. Sounds like the right approach. Thanks so much.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Senator Young.

Senator Shaheen.

I think you have to unmute.

Senator SHAHEEN. Can you hear me?

Senator BARRASSO. Now we can, yes, thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Okay, great.

My first questions are for Mr. Grayson.

Mr. Grayson, I have had the chance to visit Estonia. I appreciate that it is in a very challenging part of the world. And we have seen increasing signs of Russian aggression in the Baltic region, including a buildup of their military forces in the areas bordering the Baltic states. I wonder if you think that U.S. and NATO forces presence in the Baltic region is enough to deter Russian aggression there.

Mr. GRAYSON. Senator, thank you for that question. It is certainly a critical issue for Estonians. That eastern flank and border is the tripwire for NATO. So, that is very important. The U.K.-led enhanced forward-presence battalion is certainly comforting to the Estonians. And the administration and the President continue to view Article 5 as ironclad, and our involvement in NATO, as such. And so, the United States and the administration will fully support whatever needs that the Estonians have.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. You talked about Estonia's innovation and how wired a country it is. It is also one of—considered one of the most stable democracies in—of the former Soviet Republics, and has had a very strong reputation for forward-looking economy, for really sharing our values when it comes to democracy. And yet, the far-right Conservative People's Party of Estonia has tripled its share of seats in the parliamentary elections last year. And I think that surprised a lot of people—including myself—who were used to Estonia's reputation. I wonder how you assess the rise of populism in Estonia, and whether that threatens their forward-looking towards western Europe and our shared values.

Mr. GRAYSON. Senator, thank you for the question on both those topics.

First, the e-Estonia. It, certainly since its emergence from Soviet occupation in 1991, has been one of the great innovators and leaders in digital technology. And, as you pointed out, you know, some of the economic factors—lowest unemployment, highest GDP, lowest debt-to-GDP, innovation on e-residency, e-taxes, e-health, e-everything—so they have really been a star in that regard. And as—if I am confirmed, the administration and the State Department and everybody who interacts with the leadership in Estonia understands that there are multiple parties, and that the far-right party did emerge with greater numbers in this past election, but it would be my job, if confirmed, to work with all parties to continue to advance our agenda in Estonia.

Senator SHAHEEN. Spoken like a true diplomat, thank you very much.

My next questions are for Mr. Wooster.

Jordan strongly objects to Israeli unilateral annexation of territory in the West Bank, Mr. Wooster, and we have just seen that Prime Minister Netanyahu and his main opponent in the last few elections—Mr. Benny Gantz—has agreed to a power-sharing relationship that includes asking Parliament to vote on annexation of settlements in the West Bank. And I wonder what you think that would do to our relationship with Jordan. Prime Minister Netanyahu has said that he can go forward with that because he has the support of the President and the U.S. administration.

Mr. WOOSTER. Thank you, Senator. Obviously, a germane issue.

The Secretary was in Jerusalem today. In public remarks there, he said, “There remains work yet to do.” So, that captures, really, all of it. I know it is not a very satisfying response, but I do not want to get ahead of him.

That said, in response to your question, yes, Jordan has a stake in any peace effort. The Jordanians have raised some concerns on behalf of themselves and on behalf of Palestinians. The administration has asked the Jordanians to encourage the Palestinians to bring those concerns to the negotiating table.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. And, as you pointed out in your opening statement, Jordan is a very important player in the Middle East, and our relationship with Jordan is very important. But, we are seeing some troubling signs, in terms of concern among the Jordanian population about the institutions in Jordan and about what is happening within the country with the increased number of refugees, and what that means for the average citizen. So, can you talk about how, as Ambassador, you can work to support Jordan as they are dealing with some of these very difficult challenges?

Mr. WOOSTER. Yes, Senator. Since its founding, Jordan has weathered internal and external crises. In fact, the magnitude of the crises, particularly the external ones, that they have weathered has been remarkable. It is not something that any country would want. I am thinking, in particular right now, the ongoing Syrian crisis since 2011. So, as a result of these, we can call them, I think, “exogenous shocks,” because that captures pretty accurately what they are. As a result, the Kingdom’s trade has been disrupted, hun-

dreds of thousands of refugees, perhaps more, have taken sanctuary in Jordan, and economic growth, of course, has suffered. To say that the economy is lackluster as a result is being, maybe, too gracious.

So, Jordan's going to require continued assistance. The good news is, its leaders recognize it needs to continue reforms to reinforce stability and to achieve self-reliance. These are not just in the security realm, or even, for that matter, exclusive to the economic realm, they of course cut across political, security, economic areas. King Abdullah has outlined some of these reforms, including freedom of expression and allowing the emergence of independent and policy-focused political parties.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you very much.

And thank you, to all of the nominees today, for your willingness to be considered for these very important posts at this critical time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I am out of time.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you so much, Senator Shaheen.

And Senator Romney.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Wooster, I am going to continue with the line of questioning that Senator Shaheen began with regards to Jordan.

We have, of course, a very special relationship with Israel. My guess is that all the members of this committee have been there multiple times, and we feel very deeply about a nation which shares our values in many respects, as Israel does.

We also—a very important and—well, a key relationship with Jordan, and I would anticipate that sometimes the—balancing both those relationships could be a particular challenge. Right now, as you point out, a lot of issues are faced by the Jordanian Government and by the King, not only as they relate to Israel, but as they relate to the Syrian refugees, to their own economic challenges, and so forth.

And I guess the question is, Does the administration, as you understand it—and the State Department and you personally—do you feel that our relationship with Jordan is also key and, therefore, that, in fashioning our policy as it relates to the Middle East, and particularly as it relates to Israel and the region, that we need to be very, very careful that we do not put Jordan in a position where they might be inclined to draw away from us in some way? They obviously play a very—a key role. They have with regards to security, with regards to intelligence-sharing, and so forth. And the King would be under pressure, given the fact that the majority of its population is Palestinian. And, of course, with the peace plan that the administration put forward, there was a lot of resistance on the part of the Jordanian Palestinians.

And so, I am concerned about the relationship we are going to try and maintain with Jordan. And I would be interested in your thoughts about how we maintain that and do not in any way signal that we only care about one of the two neighbors, but we care about both in a very substantial way.

Mr. WOOSTER. Thank you, Senator.

As you have made clear in your remarks, this is—you recognize, and I think all observers of this scene do—the relationship between those two countries is interdependent. Israel cannot be secure with-

out the buffer that Jordan provides, and Jordan is not going to be likely very viable in terms of its own stability and economics as well, without a friendly Israel next door. So, I think all of us are awake to that. I cannot speak for Israel, and I cannot speak for Jordan, but, having served out there, I know that people are eyes-wide-open about the realities.

So, Jordan and Israel—I think it is important for us to establish as a baseline—they have been at peace for over 25 years, since they signed an historic peace treaty in 1994. Security cooperation between the two countries remains strong, and it does so because it addresses the concerns of both countries. Politically, no secret, relations have been strained over the last few years, and those tensions carry a cost with them, including in missed economic opportunities—or, to restate that, opportunities for economic cooperation that would benefit both of those countries. So, the U.S. Government, we remain committed to strengthening diplomatic, economic, and people-to-people ties between both Jordan and Israel.

In terms of the treaty, we continue to—the United States—we continue to respect that '94 treaty, and that recognizes the special role of the Hashemite Kingdom in the—overseeing the holy shrines in Jerusalem, and we will continue to work with the Governments of Jordan and Israel to identify areas of cooperation and mutual benefit. And again, because it is not only beneficial for the two of those countries, but, because of the paramount concern for American officials: this is in the interest of the United States.

Senator ROMNEY. And from your perspective, is the King, as he has been in the past, in some respects above politics or—and widely respected by the people in the country, and followed with great passion and care, or is he under increasing pressure, by virtue of the challenges with regards to annexation and with regards to the peace plan that was proposed by the administration?

Mr. WOOSTER. So, the King is a member of the Hashemite royal family. He is carrying on a proud tradition which bears with it enormous credibility and legitimacy, certainly within the Kingdom and also in the region and, of course, here in the United States. And beyond that, like any head of state or head of government, he is going to—he has to contend with the tumult that is attendant to political life anywhere. Things come along, and, you know, are you prepared for them, are you not? In their case, again, the exogenous shocks are overwhelming, but we are confident that they have got the right team, politically and economically, to come through this, and we are going to make sure of that because the imperative here for us is, it is in our interest to see that that happens.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Wooster.

Mr. Chairman, I yield my time.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Senator Romney, appreciate it.

Senator Murphy.

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

Thank you, to all of our nominees. Thank you, to you and your families, for choosing to serve and, for many of you, to continue to serve.

We are going to keep the focus on you, Mr. Wooster, continue along the same line of questioning. But, before I do, let me note

that, though you got your undergraduate degree at a second-rate school—those of you who went to Williams College know how Amherst fails to measure up, year after year—you have made up for it by coming to Connecticut to get your graduate degree in New Haven. So, I would give you points for that.

Mr. WOOSTER. You are gracious, Senator.

[Laughter.]

Senator MURPHY. I do not want to leave this conversation about the effects of annexation with the sense that we have underplayed the level of concern in Jordan. You know, years ago, when there were economic protests in Amman, they would be centered on the Parliament and on the elected leaders. Now those protests show up at the doors of the royal family. And so, there is a real worry these days, from the King and those that serve him, that, you know, there is a real political instability that can increase as the situation in Israel continues to move away from a two-state solution.

So, you said that there are concerns in Jordan about the annexation of the West Bank. What are those concerns? What are the concerns that they have expressed to us and to the Israelis about what would happen in Jordan should Israel move forward with annexation?

Mr. WOOSTER. Thank you, Senator.

In terms of what the concerns are, the concerns are that the Jordanians would not like to see any unilateral annexation. That is a public and repeated and declared position of the Jordanians.

Beyond that, to return to a point I had mentioned with Senator Shaheen, the administration has asked the Jordanians to encourage the Palestinians to bring their concerns to the negotiating table. So, yes, the Jordanians have their own sets of concerns. They have expressed those. They have expressed those of the Palestinians. And again, our plea, repeated again and again, is, “We have a plan that is detailed, it is implementable, it meets the core requirements of both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. Bring your concerns to the negotiating table.” We have called on all members of the international community to consider the plan thoughtfully. The only realistic path all of us know to getting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict resolved is through negotiations.

Senator MURPHY. That is correct, but that is not what this administration is proposing. They are proposing the unilateral annexation, and the endorsement of it by an American administration, should the Palestinians and the Israelis not be able to proceed to that negotiation.

But, let me drill down a little bit more on the concerns that they have raised. They have raised concerns, the Jordanians have, about annexation, as they did about the parameters of a possible peace plan presented by the Trump administration, because, in part, they worry that that will lead to greater instability inside Jordan. With a large Palestinian community, the further that we get away from a potential two-state future, the greater unrest comes amongst that population, creating more of a threat to Jordan’s stability. Is that not right?

Mr. WOOSTER. Well, Senator, obviously there have been tensions. That is without going into each and every one of them. So, clearly this is—you know, there is a lot of uphill sledding here, to keep it

in New England terms, if you will. But, it is an incredibly important relationship, it is built on an historic peace, and we, the United States, will use our good offices—again, because of the imperative I mentioned earlier, it is in our interest—we will use our good offices to strengthen the bonds between these peoples. We do not have any other option.

Senator MURPHY. I just hope that you go into this job with eyes wide open. I understand you are being very diplomatic now, and you are representing an administration that has taken a very different position than prior Republican and Democratic administrations, but there is going to be a fury in Jordan, should this annexation go forward. It is going to make your job much more difficult. And I assume, and hope, you know that.

One final question, Mr. Chairman, for Mr. Day.

I think that you are right in the way that you have approached the questions presented to you regarding how we countenance China's increasing role in the continent. You made one comment I just wanted you to clarify. You certainly remarked that we need to have an alternative. We need to create more opportunities for Africa to invest with the United States, and let them choose between the offers from the United States and the offers from China. But, you also said that you think we need to have "sharper elbows." And I just did not quite understand what you meant by that phrase. What do you mean by "sharper elbows"?

Mr. DAY. Sure. Thank you, Senator.

I think we need to be a bit more aggressive in how we articulate the U.S. model. You know, USAID has done tremendous work on the African continent. But, in some cases, we have not been the best communicators of the work that we have done. And so, I think it will be important, as we move forward, to differentiate our model versus the Chinese model, in this particular case, but also in—with other malign influences. So, we always have been, I think, very, very diplomatic, in terms of our—the way in which we communicate to our African partners, but we are getting to a place where the indebtedness that many of these African countries are seeing is absolutely unsustainable. And so, I think that we need to be much more clear in how we articulate our model versus the Chinese. And, in some cases, we need to be more direct.

Senator MURPHY. I guess I was wondering whether "sharper elbows" meant, sort of, forcing countries to make a choice between the United States and China. There—it is one thing to make our argument better, it is another thing to create a policy in which we ask countries to make a choice between China and the United States. Is that what you are suggesting?

Mr. DAY. Senator, no, it is not a—it is not a binary choice. It is really—when I say "sharper elbows," I mean it is more about how we are articulating how we do business versus how the Chinese do business.

Senator MURPHY. Do business.

Mr. DAY. Yeah, they have multiple choices. And so, what we need to do is present the U.S. model as one of many choices. And so, if we can help American companies do business on the African continent, it will be good for them, good for us.

Senator MURPHY. Sure, that they know what the consequences of doing business with China are. That is—I think that is the right tack.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Senator Murphy.

Senator KAINE.

Senator KAINE. Can you hear me, Mr. Chair?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Senator. Yes, welcome.

Senator KAINE. And am I up on video now, too?

Listen, I want to thank the witnesses. This is a superb panel. And, Mr. Chair, good work trying to manage the technology.

I do want to continue a little bit with Mr. Wooster, also, and then have a couple of questions for Ms. Brown.

So, Mr. Wooster, thank you. We put a couple of issues on the table with Jordan, because I am also very worried about the U.S.-Jordan relationship. The King often visits the Foreign Relations Committee. And year after year, when we meet in the Foreign Relations committee room, he looks us in the face, he talks to us about how important the relationship with the United States is, and then he says, “Please do—please advance the peace process.” The fact that they have come out, the Jordanian leadership, against the peace plan—and one of the reasons they have come out against it is that it was proposed with no meaningful involvement by the Palestinians—so, I get that we are trying to tell the Palestinians to bring their issues to the table, but I think the Palestinians have a threshold question: Why was something proposed without our involvement?

Second, the Jordanian leadership has expressed really serious concerns about potential unilateral annexation, concerns that a number of members on the committee share. But, the—a third element is the U.S. decision, unilaterally, to cease contributions to UNRWA in 2017. My recollection is that the U.S. was the largest contributor to UNRWA before we stopped those contributions. Is that not accurate?

Mr. WOOSTER. Yes, Senator.

Senator KAINE. And, Mr. Wooster, what—you were the Chargés in Amman, is that not correct?

Mr. WOOSTER. Yes, sir.

Senator KAINE. And when was that, that you were the Chargé?

Mr. WOOSTER. For about 18 months, from 2017 through 2018.

Senator KAINE. How many Palestinian refugees, approximately, live in Jordan?

Mr. WOOSTER. The numbers on that differ because of how the count goes. There is also sensitivity to it, for the demographics, for domestic political reasons. But, I think that, Senator, we can say there are an awful lot of them.

Senator KAINE. Well, was UNRWA providing service to those Palestinian refugees in Jordan?

Mr. WOOSTER. So, UNRWA was providing services, yes, in the form of education in schools.

Senator KAINE. And so, the U.S. decision to eliminate, I think it was, about \$500 million a year to UNRWA, that definitely has an effect in life in Jordan, at least insofar as services that are being provided to Palestinian refugees in Jordan are curtailed. And that

makes things more difficult for the Jordanian Government in, sort of, managing a reality where they have not only Palestinian refugees, but Syrian refugees. Is that not accurate?

Mr. WOOSTER. Well, Senator, it remains the prerogative of the United States Government to decide how to appropriate its—not appropriate—excuse me—how to allocate its resources. And—

Senator KAINE. Right.

Mr. WOOSTER [continuing]. We had a lot of differences with UNRWA. It was not unique to this administration. There have been a lot—this had gone on for decades—a lot of spats and disputes with UNRWA and the effectiveness of programming and efficiency. So, I cannot make the pretense of telling you I am an expert on all the details, but this had been a longstanding problem that UNRWA had never resolved.

Senator KAINE. And I do not raise it to debate whether the administration should do that. I would not ask you that question. I have an opinion about it. I am just saying that, with respect to the situation in Jordan, an ally that we deeply want to maintain as an ally, if they are—if they are not supporters of the peace proposal on the table, if they are worried about the potential unilateral annexation and the U.S.'s acceptance of it, and if the U.S. ended funding to an agency that was providing support for refugees in Jordan, that that latter fact, that that is also kind of a potential challenging point right now with Jordan, is it not?

Mr. WOOSTER. Well, Senator, no one knows this better than the Jordanians—no one is a better friend to Jordan than the United States is. And we can say that with integrity. And I can look you in the virtual eye and say it. And that is true by orders of magnitude. It is not simply a debating distinction. It is true if you look at the record. And the record shows, again and again and again, and with orders of magnitude, there is no friend that is better to the Hashemite Kingdom than the United States. So, we do not want these people to be beleaguered, and we do not want them left out in the dark. I mean, these are allies and strategic partners, and we are going to stand by them. We are going to make sure that they are not left with a deal that is bad for Jordan, too.

Senator KAINE. Let me ask Ms. Brown a question.

Ms. Brown—this is a very qualified panel. I intend, absent some big surprise, to support everybody on it—but, Ms. Brown, with respect to Uganda, an issue with Uganda that has been a point of significant concern has been the treatment of LGBT folks in Uganda. We cannot tell another nation how to do their domestic politics. They are going to make their own decision about domestic policy. But, we have a set of norms that, you know, begin with the equality principle; and our institutions, like the Supreme Court, have said that that equality principle extends to LGBT people. How, in your approach to your ambassadorship in Uganda, should you be confirmed, would you try to hold up the banner of the U.S. equality principle, including equality to LGBT people who are beleaguered in that country?

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Senator, very much for your question—a really important issue. If confirmed, I would be guided by the U.S. position, which you just articulated, in which we condemn violence and discrimination targeting vulnerable populations, includ-

ing LGBTI individuals. My understanding is, the U.S. Embassy in Uganda has long maintained a relationship with the LGBTI community—and we have not shied away from speaking out when these—when this groups—well, these groups have been targeted or abused. If confirmed, I would make it a point to continue to engage civil society, this community, as well as government officials, which, you know, my predecessors have done and which the Embassy is doing right now, on the importance of treating everyone equally, with respect, ensuring that they are not abused, and making sure that everyone can take part in and contribute to Uganda's economic and social development.

I will say that—with regard to any engagement with the Government, particularly if—

I am sorry. Can you hear me?

Senator Kaine. Yeah, I can. Thank you.

Ms. Brown. Okay. I would just like to finish, in just saying that any engagement with the Government—of course, we want to do that. In—you know, in consultation with civil society, as these groups currently are more vulnerable, we do not want to do anything that is going to create problems for them. It does not mean not addressing any—an issue if it comes up, but we want to make sure whether or not a public statement is helpful or—want to make sure that that is helpful or if it is best, at times, to engage in private. And I will say that I know that some Ugandan politicians have periodically raised, you know, creating laws against LGBTI individuals, but I have no indication right now that that is a serious consideration by the Government. And we will certainly monitor and make sure that these groups continue to be protected and are free to live their lives as they like.

Thank you.

Senator Kaine. Thank you.

And, Mr. Chair, I will just say, in conclusion, that I have certainly heard from LGBT activists in other countries around the world that, though their government may be cracking down on them when the U.S. Embassy or Consulate treats them with respect, includes them, has them to events, that is enormously powerful and appreciated by LGBT activists. We cannot affect the laws that other countries do, but if we treat people with respect, and countries value the relationship with us, that has an example.

So, thank you, Mr. Chair. I yield back.

Senator Barrasso. Thank you very much, Senator Kaine.

Senator Coons.

Senator Coons. Thank you, Senator Barrasso, Senator Booker, for holding this virtual nominations hearing. It is wonderful to be on with you. When I was the Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee for a number of years, I enjoyed confirmation hearings such as this, and appreciate the chance to connect with all of you.

I have been to and visited the U.S. Embassy, and stationed in literally every one of the countries you are nominated to represent us at in ambassadorial roles, and look forward very much to working with you, and, to Mr. Day, in your USAID role. So, all of you, you know, should you be so fortunate as to be confirmed by the Senate, thank you, to you, to your families, for the willingness you have demonstrated to step up and serve our Nation. And, for those

of you have long careers in the Foreign Service, for the ways in which that sacrifice has continued over many years, I have such deep respect for the work that you do, and am grateful for a chance to briefly question you.

It was not my intention to sit here, but that is literally a “chawarra” that I got in Burkina Faso, over my shoulder, which I just noticed, in looking at it, Ms. Clark.

Mr. Day, if I might, I just had a good phone call yesterday with Acting Administrator Barsa. One of his priorities for USAID is reorienting USAID into a post-COVID world. We talked about a bill, that Senator Graham and I have led and is now law, called the Global Fragility Act. And global fragility requires us to develop a strategy, a long-term strategy to deal with fragile areas, such as the Sahel, in which Burkina Faso certainly sits, among others. I would be interested, if I could, Mr. Day, in your comments on what your priorities are for reorienting USAID response in Africa during and post-COVID—you may have covered this while I was on another call, I apologize—and to hear how you view working with my office and Senator Graham’s office in implementing the Global Fragility Act.

And I note the Chairman is yawning visibly as I was questioning you.

[Laughter.]

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. John, I have that effect on so many of my colleagues.

[Laughter.]

Mr. DAY. Senator, number one, thank you for the—

Senator BARRASSO. I was thinking of some of those long—

Mr. DAY [continuing]. Senator, thank you so much for the—

Senator BARRASSO [continuing]. Flights you and I have had together over Africa.

Senator COONS. Mr. Day. My apologies.

Mr. DAY. That is all right.

Senator, thank you so much, not only for the question, but also for your, just, tremendous leadership on Africa issues. I know that my former boss, Mark Green, enjoyed, immensely, working with you and your team. And I hope to continue working closely with you and your team on all of these important issues.

Perhaps I will start with the Global Fragility Act. We are very excited about this. USAID will take one of the leadership roles within the interagency. We are in the process now of developing the strategy, which due—is due in September, and that is on track.

One of the things that I think is so exciting about the Global Fragility Act is that it really will push us to look at a multifaceted approach to countering violent extremism and fragility on the African continent. One, we have focused a lot on treating many of the violence and conflict areas, what I would call, kind of, symptoms, if you will, meaning the humanitarian assistance and a lot of our health programming. But, it also is going to push us to look at some of the root causes. And that is what is absolutely critical about this issue, is that you cannot just treat the symptoms, you have got to also look at the root causes.

And so, we—when we look at many of the fragile states around Africa—and obviously we are thinking about not only the Sahel, but Somalia and South Sudan—and there are also some that very well may be fragile in the future. I am deeply concerned about countries like Tanzania that have seen pretty significant backsliding on the democracy front. And so, the Global Fragility Act will be an important, kind of, authorizing tool to make us look at not only those—the symptoms of conflict and violence, but also looking at the root causes.

But, we will have to work closely with our African Government partners. And this is where, kind of, some of the analysis that we have done on levels of commitment—for example, in Burkina Faso and Niger, we really see significant levels of commitment. So, those are areas where we can really believe we can get some work done. Much more complex in Mali, which is where a lot of the instability is emanating from. But, one of our strategies, of course, is to do everything that we can to support Burkina Faso and Niger to create as much of a firewall as we can from that—creeping down into the littoral states of Togo, Benin, Ghana, and Cote d'Ivoire. So, this is something that will be, I think, incredibly important for us.

In terms of COVID-19 and our approach towards that, I mentioned, a little bit earlier, that, you know, we are certainly watching closely the health impact of COVID-19, but it is a bit unclear as to how it is going to actually unfold on the African continent. And so, we are watching it very, very closely. But, what we do know is that the economic impact is going to be significant, if not devastating.

The third-order impact that I am deeply concerned about that I made reference to earlier is that we also have a lot of authoritarian leaders around the continent who may be looking to take advantage of this opportunity—

Senator COONS. Absolutely.

Mr. DAY [continuing]. To consolidate their power, to look at ways in which they can repress free media, suppress opposition, look—crack down on civil society. So, that is something that we are going to have to really focus on quite a bit, and it is something that is a real concern of mine and, I know, my colleagues, as well.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you. I look forward to working with you on these important issues. And I agree with you about a number of the countries you mentioned, and your characterizations. I will also add Sudan, if I can, to that list, where a fragile democratic transition, I think, is under real pressure because of the pandemic. I am meeting, I think it is later today, with Governor Beasley, of the World Food Programme, and I have met with several folks from leadership in Sudan, the Prime Minister and others, and am trying to find an appropriate path forward for supporting their stabilization.

I also think Ethiopia is a country of great promise that could really be an anchor of stability in the Horn, and I hope we will stay in regular touch across all these different countries.

If I might, Ms. Clark, I am going to move to you. I had a wonderful and productive delegation. I led a bipartisan delegation to Africa. I think this is almost 2 years ago now. And we visited both Niger and Burkina Faso. I found the Burkinabe to be wonderful

partners and to benefit from a responsive and engaged leadership at a time when they are under enormous pressure. I just thought—I would be interested in hearing how you see our work with the Burkinabe and their governance and leadership and society, what role you think there is for the U.S.-French partnership in the region, and what you think are the major challenges as we try to sustain their progress in the face of rising violence and jihadist attacks.

Ms. CLARK. Thank you, Senator, for that question. And you have rightly identified many of the challenges that Burkina Faso faces today. And I think, should I be confirmed, I would look to use all the tools that we have at our disposal—diplomatic engagement, working with civil society organizations, working with the Government—to promote human rights, to help solidify the democracy there, which I think will be very important for countering a violence narrative—the violent extremist narratives, also working on the economic front with my AID colleagues.

And I just want to say that it would be wonderful to continue to work with Ramsey Day, and I agree with what he just outlined for the—for our assistance efforts, because I think that is really critical. We will have to also work on supporting the law enforcement and security forces so that they can become more effective in responding to terrorism and, at the same time, underscoring the need to respect human rights and to have—develop a good relationship with the people that they protect. I think right now part of the problem is that some of the territory has been ceded, or has been lost, and we need to work with our partners to help strengthen and to return so that there is the vision of government services, et cetera. And I think, working—should I be confirmed, I would work carefully and closely with other partners, such as the French and other countries that are there, to—so that we could jointly—leverage our combined efforts.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I look forward to hearing more about your work in Ouagadougou. It is a very challenging region, and our mission there plays a critical role.

I do not know how much patience you have got for me, Mr. Chairman. I have questions or everybody. But, there is two I would like to make sure I get to, if I might.

Senator BARRASSO. Go right ahead, yes. I know we are supposed to have a rollcall vote in a few moments, but yes.

Senator COONS. Ms. Brown, if I might, I have visited Uganda a number of times, most recently last August. Your predecessor in that post is someone I have followed closely and enjoyed working with when she was Liberia and in Uganda. President Museveni became president, actually, at the same time that I was traversing Uganda as a college student, in an ill-conceived foray into a country in the middle of a civil war. And he is still hanging on, and has recently said it would be wrong to hold a presidential election if the pandemic persists, signaling a likely intention to delay the elections.

How can we work with the Ugandan Government and provide appropriate pressure to make them respect the opposition and minority voices? As Senator Kaine, the question you got—and I hope

Ms. Brown is on—as Senator Kaine questioned you about, I, too, have been engaged in receptions and events at the Embassy, events when I have visited Uganda, I think, three times over the last 8 to—8 or so years—so encourage minority political party members, human rights activists, journalists. I think this is a role that every American post can play around the world.

Ms. Brown, if you are not here—I do not see a video—I may simply ask Mr. Grayson if we can slide over to Estonia and—I will just briefly say—there we are. Ms. Brown, if you have got some—did you get—did you hear my question?

Ms. BROWN. Yes, Senator, I did hear your question.

Senator COONS. How are you going to get our dear friend, Mr. Museveni, the President—

Ms. BROWN. And I will say, if confirmed, I—

Senator COONS [continuing]. To absolutely follow the constitution?

Ms. BROWN [continuing]. Well, first, Senator, again—thank you for your question. And, if confirmed, I certainly hope you make yet another trip to Uganda, when conditions permit such travel.

I would just like to, kind of, restate what was in my statement, in my testimony, and also, Senator Booker had asked a similar question to that end. First, the issue of the date of the elections. Looking at the transcript, President Museveni, as I understood it, said, you know, the plan is to hold elections in early 2021, but a lot of that depends on whether or not they have been successful in—

Senator COONS. Right.

Ms. BROWN [continuing]. Curving the spread of COVID-19. And, so far, they have been very successful in doing this. The reports are that there have been only 122 cases, and no deaths. And so, I think that suggests that, if this trend continues, that the conditions will exist where you can hold elections in early 2021, as scheduled.

The United—you know, the U.S. Embassy and all of our resources, we have been working with civil society, with groups to really ensure that the playing field is level, that groups have an opportunity to participate, to share their positions, so that the electorate is well-informed and can make an informed decision. These are messages that have been—the importance of this is a message that has been conveyed to President Museveni. If confirmed, it is a message that I will repeat often and as strongly as possible about the need to have an open and transparent process, where the voices of Ugandan citizens can be heard and where the electorate can make their decision. As I said, ultimately this is a decision that the Ugandan people have to make, but, if confirmed, I assure you that we will use all of the available resources to make sure that their voices are heard and that their will is respected at the polls.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Brown. I look forward to being an instrument of your will if I can be of any assistance. A previous Ambassador—oh, gosh, many years ago now—surprised me as I was about to walk into a meeting with the President and said, “You need to tell him that, under the Leahy Act, we are going to cut off funding for his”—I think it was his military intelligence unit, because they had failed vetting. And I was happy to do so.

You should always feel free to put visiting Senators to work so we can earn our fare.

Thank you for your willingness to take on this important post.

Mr. GRAYSON, if I might, briefly, I just—I did not know much about Estonia before visiting, a number of years ago, in a bipartisan delegation. And I was so impressed with the ways in which they have innovated. They have, in large ways, recovered from a devastating cyberattack by Russia in 2007, and then shown how you can make cybersecurity a real national resource and priority. I think they contributed in significant ways to our NATO alliance and to our security. And I suspect you, too, may have already addressed this in a previous question. I apologize. Feel free to be concise, if you wish. How do you view Estonia's contributions to our NATO alliance?

Mr. GRAYSON. Well, Senator, thanks for the question. And you have seen it firsthand, so you know how important and how impressive it is. But, the NATO Cyber Center of Excellence is the first part, and the activities between EUCOM and the U.S. Cyber Command, including all the joint exercises and missions between our country and Estonia are quite prolific. And even most recently with COVID-19, they have launched multiple initiatives, in the Global Hack-a-thon, to incentivize Estonians, which they do not need much incentive to do, but to really try to find solutions—e-solutions to this global pandemic that is facing the world. So, I hope, if confirmed, I can further turbocharge this relationship that we have with them on cyber issues, e-issues, everything possible that e-Estonia has become so famous for.

Senator COONS. And thank you, Mr. Grayson. And I hope you will stay in touch. And feel free to update me on their developments. I really found it an inspiring country. I had a—we—a bipartisan delegation, we had a meeting with the head of the Estonian armed forces in a long briefing that left an enduring impression on me of the role that they are taking on and playing in NATO.

Henry, last, but far from least, if I might. Please give my best to Laura. It is wonderful to see a college classmate ascend to the position of Ambassador. And you are taking on, in Amman, a critical strategic post, one where our relationship with the Kingdom, as you said in your opening statement, is critical, both in terms of their values, the way in which the Hashemite Kingdom continues to welcome and support refugees, the ways in which the King, the keeper of the holy sites of Jerusalem and a real leader in the Muslim world, continues to be an absolutely critical partner for us. So, I would be interested—you did speak to Jordan's economic stability. Not to be too pointed about it, I am concerned that there is a budget request that would significantly reduce aid to Jordan. What sort of an impact do you think there would be on Jordan's stability and on the U.S.-Jordan relationship if we were to sharply reduce U.S. support for Jordan?

Mr. WOOSTER. Senator, sharply reduced support would not be celebrated, of course, in Amman. But, for understandable reasons, if you are referring to the President's budget request for FY 21—is that what you are pointing to?

Senator COONS. I am. The FY 2021 budget reduces aid to Jordan by 250 million, if I am not mistaken.

Mr. WOOSTER. Okay. So, Senator, Jordan's stability is premised on its economic stability. And the stability of the Hashemite Kingdom is a U.S. priority. The budget, or this FY 2021 budget, it seeks 475 million in direct support, sometimes referred to as budget support. That is consistent with our FY 2020 request. The President's FY 2021 request strikes a balance between supporting, on the one hand, Jordan's economic development, and then ensuring, on the other hand, a modern, interoperable military that is capable of continued support to U.S. forces and to coalition forces. So, within the parameters of the memorandum of understanding, we routinely assess the assistance mix to ensure that the request that we have is aligned with what we anticipate the future needs are going to be. Senator, if confirmed, I pledge to work with you and the rest of the members to ensure we have the mix right.

Senator COONS. How sustainable is the number of refugees that Jordan has taken in, you know, on a per-capita basis, given the very limited natural resources they have, given the dramatic number of refugees who have been in Jordan for decades? I have really been struck at their ability to sustain and endure—as have several other countries in the region, admittedly, but Jordan is an exceptional ally, I think, and their ability and willingness to really sustain a significant Syrian population, now over many years, has impressed me. How sustainable do you think it is, both economically and politically? And given that my next meeting is with the head of the World Food Programme, how do you see our support for refugees within Jordan?

Mr. WOOSTER. Well, Senator, the sustainability aspect of the question is dependent directly upon the willingness of countries to be supportive. So, in our—in the case of the United States, that is not really a question. This is a priority for us. It is an anchor for us in the Middle East. It is a strategic partner. And we also need the international community to be on board with us to share this burden—that has a pejorative term that I do not mean, but I cannot think of something more elegant at the moment.

Senator COONS. "Blessed opportunity."

Mr. WOOSTER. Blessed opportunity. Thank you, Senator. The United States has provided about one- and-a-half billion in humanitarian aid to the organizations that are assisting the Syrian refugees in Jordan. And that includes the Jordanian host communities. Because you may recall, Senator—I know you have visited Jordan before—but over 80 percent of the Syrian refugee population are not in refugee camps, they are in Jordanian local communities. So, we are very awake to that, and we tailored that assistance so that it hits those communities, as well. And our assistance supports not just the Syrian refugees, but the non-Syrian refugee populations in Jordan from over 50 different countries. So, we are going to continue to work with the international community to support Jordan in giving refugees a dignified life, access to services, and opportunities. Again, the imperative here—we always come back to this, we anchor in this—it is in the U.S. interest.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I have visited the Bidi Bidi refugee camp in Uganda twice, last August and 2 years before that, one of the fastest-growing, open refugee camps in the world, where refugees are given an opportunity to own land, to farm, to fully inte-

grate into Ugandan society. One of the most memorable refugee camp visits I will ever make was with Senator McCain and a bipartisan delegation to Zaatari, in Jordan, where—it was in the early days of the Syrian civil war, and just heartbreaking.

So, to everyone on the call who has got anything to do with our refugee support, as Mr. Day certainly will, and as Ms. Clark also will, please just know that is an area of passion and interest for me, and please know how much I appreciate the work of our Foreign Service and development career professionals in remote and difficult and dangerous places. Many of you are going to be going to places that are challenging. Estonia is—you know, might be challenging, should the Russians make a strategic decision, but it is literally one of the loveliest countries I have ever been to, absent the Russian threat.

Let me just say, in closing—my apologies—that I am so grateful to all of you for your years of dedicated service to our Nation, and to your families. And I appreciate the chance to question you.

Thank you for your patience, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to supporting all of today's nominees.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, thank you so very much, Senator Coons.

And Senator Booker, do you have any closing comments before I wrap it up?

Senator BOOKER. They have called the vote. Why don't we wrap up?

Senator BARRASSO. Okay. Well, thank you.

I want to thank all of you for your testimony, for your patience in navigating the new process, and willingness to serve our Nation. It is my hope that each of you will be dedicated to ensuring the safety of Americans, to advancing U.S. interests all across the world.

And, members of this committee, we have had ten members on board during the hearing today. members of the committee are going to have until 5 p.m. on Friday, May 14th—sorry—May 15th to submit questions for the record. We ask the nominees to respond promptly in writing to the committee in order for your nomination to be considered in a timely manner.

Thank you again. Congratulations to each and every one of you. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:23 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. NATALIE E. BROWN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

Question. President Museveni publicly stated this week that it would be wrong to hold presidential elections next year if the coronavirus persists. If confirmed, what tools do you have at your disposal to help ensure that the Government does not subvert the rule of law and the will of the Ugandan people related to the 2021 elections?

Answer. In considering whether to postpone elections, there should be a consensus between political parties, electoral experts, and public health officials, and any action should be consistent with Ugandan law and Uganda's constitution. The U.S.

Mission in Uganda is already applying extensive advocacy and diplomatic pressure in coordination with other international donors to ensure that the Government does not subvert the rule of law. In the past, the Mission has successfully leveraged joint diplomatic pressure with allies such as the United Kingdom and the European Union to hold the Ugandan Government accountable on human rights issues. If the Ugandan Government announces intentions to postpone the elections, the U.S. Embassy should engage directly and frequently with the Ugandan Government to stress the importance of holding the elections in a timely manner and in conformity with the constitution. If confirmed, I would look to work with like-minded partners, international organizations, and domestic civil society organizations to offer technical assistance to help create the conditions for safe elections as quickly as possible.

Question. What U.S. pre-elections and elections support programs and activities are currently underway in Uganda? How have they been impacted by COVID-19? If confirmed, what additional programs and activities will you bring on line to help ensure a credible poll next year? What elections related actions will you recommend be taken to ensure the participation of youth?

Answer. The United States is committed to supporting democracy, human rights, and good governance in Uganda. These principles are enshrined within Uganda's constitution and remain central to the aspirations of the Ugandan people.

The U.S. Mission to Uganda utilizes an interagency approach to support the 2021 election process. Through USAID's Strengthening Citizens Engagement in Elections (SCENE) activity, the Mission is currently supporting a network of 43 Ugandan organizations to generate grassroots engagement in the elections. Activities included efforts to promote voter registration and electoral reform. The State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) funds two active programs in Uganda. One, a two-year program begun in 2018, is focused on protecting freedom of expression and access to information in Uganda. The second supports Ugandan women and youth in engaging local-level government officials to promote free, fair, and transparent political processes and good governance. Additionally, DRL and USAID are in the final stages of establishing complimentary election-specific programming focused on voter education, voter mobilization, and citizen-led efforts to ensure violence-free elections.

Question. Freedom House downgraded Uganda from "Partly Free" to "Not Free" in its Freedom in the World 2019 index, citing government efforts to restrict free expression, including through surveillance of electronic communications and its social media tax. What tools exist for the United States to help ensure internet freedom? What U.S. assistance programs will you use to if confirmed will you use to help ensure Ugandans are able to exercise free speech through social media? How will internet restrictions impact dissemination of information and the ability of candidates to campaign in advance of elections?

Answer. Freedom of expression is not only a human right, but also essential to the democratic process. The Embassy is currently supporting multiple DRL programs aimed at protecting freedom of expression and access to information, promoting rule of law, and enhancing access to justice in Uganda. In addition to encouraging assistance programs such as these, if confirmed, I will engage openly and regularly with the Government of Uganda and civil society to promote the freedom of expression, including by using social media platforms administered by the Embassy.

In addition to elections-specific programming led by USAID and DRL, the Department will continue to press for a level playing field for opposition candidates, including respect for the fundamental freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly. If confirmed, I will ensure our Embassy in Kampala continues to advocate against efforts to unduly restrict, interfere with, and intimidate journalists, civil society organizations (including LGBTI groups), and political opposition members. I will lead the call for a more open operating environment for journalists, political opposition, and members of civil society, and ensure that U.S. Government messaging highlights our serious concern with Uganda's shrinking political space. Finally, I will support the establishment of credible electoral institutions and encourage citizens' participation in the democratic process, particularly by women, youth, and other marginalized groups.

Question. During your testimony, Senator Kaine alluded to LGBT issues in Uganda. What plans do you have to augment/reinvigorate existing embassy programs or re-invent, reinvigorate the dialogue with the Ugandans regarding LGBT concerns? During your hearing the issue of torture and extrajudicial killings in Uganda was raised. Opposition politicians have been arrested, harassed and tortured. What spe-

cific steps will you take if confirmed to champion and advance human rights and political freedoms in Uganda?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy in Kampala has a long history of engaging on matters of human rights, democracy, and good governance through various programs. These include recent efforts to combat societal discrimination and strengthening LGBTI organizations and supporting Ugandan youth to defend their rights, as well as programs to promote freedom of expression, rule of law, and access to justice and efforts to protect freedom of expression and access to information in Uganda.

If confirmed, I am committed to continuing our outreach to LGBTI individuals and organizations as well as working with the Ugandan Government, like-minded diplomatic missions, civil society, and international organization to advance these important issues.

With regard to reports of torture and extrajudicial killings, if confirmed, the Embassy team and I will continue to engage government officials and work with our partners on human rights protections and advocate for the rule of law. As appropriate, and in consultation with the Department, we will consider the use of tools such as financial sanctions and visa restrictions for human rights violations and abuses or corruption.

Question. Uganda has one of the most significant youth bulges in Africa. What specific actions will you take if confirmed to address the issues of economic and educational opportunity, political inclusion, and other concerns identified by youth?

Answer. The U.S. Mission to Uganda currently has in place a strategy formulated to address the needs of the “average” Ugandan, symbolized by the 14 year-old girl, whose needs must be addressed if Uganda is to achieve sustainable, broad-based prosperity and long-term stability. Through its programming, the Mission implements positive youth development approaches across sectors to enable youth to lead safe, healthy, and productive lives and to be dynamic agents of change in Uganda’s development trajectory, including by increasing youth engagement and participation in the democratic process. If confirmed, I will place my full support behind existing youth-oriented programming and seek to expand on this programming with additional efforts to promote the health, well-being, education, and economic development of Uganda’s youth.

Question. Only 10% of Uganda’s gold exports are mined in the country, however, gold surpassed coffee as Uganda’s biggest earner of foreign currency in 2018, growing from \$10 million to over \$500 million in the past decade. Shipments of more than 7 tons of gold were reportedly transferred from Venezuela on a Russian charter aircraft to a refinery in Uganda in March 2019, processed at a refinery that some have alleged appears to be operated with the knowledge of President Museveni. Was this an effort to circumvent U.S. sanctions on Venezuela’s central bank and gold industry? What actions has the State Department taken to corroborate such claims? If confirmed, what actions will you recommend be taken in response to sanctions violations by the Museveni regime?

Answer. The Department was highly concerned by the shipment of Venezuelan gold that passed through Uganda. Leadership at the U.S. Embassy in Uganda reached out to the highest levels of the Ugandan Government to express our concern and to dissuade the Government from permitting Venezuelan gold to be processed in Uganda again. President Museveni stated publicly that no additional Venezuelan gold would be permitted to pass through Uganda again. The Embassy remains highly engaged on the issue of gold refined in Uganda, and has facilitated interagency analysis and examination of Uganda’s gold industry. If confirmed, I would support the stringent application of appropriate measures, to include financial sanctions and visa restrictions, as may be applicable, to any Ugandan Government official found to have been involved in the circumvention of U.S. sanctions targeting Venezuela.

Question. What is the status of Uganda’s ties with North Korea? Are reports of military ties accurate? If so, how should this impact our military to military relationship and our security assistance programs and activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take if Uganda is found to be violating U.N. sanctions against North Korea?

Answer. The Government of Uganda maintains diplomatic relations with North Korea. The U.S. Embassy in Uganda has engaged often and in detail with the Ugandan Government to remind it of the obligations of all U.N. member countries to uphold U.N. Security Council resolutions related to North Korea. The Ugandan Government has repeatedly assured the Mission of its efforts to comply with these resolutions. If confirmed, I would ensure the Embassy continues to make clear to Uganda its obligations with regard to North Korea.

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

Answer. I have great respect for and place high value on the importance of the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government. If confirmed, during my tenure as Ambassador to Uganda, I commit to briefing Members of Congress and/or their staff when I am in Washington for visits and consultations, as organized through the Department of State's Bureau of Legislative Affairs. Congressional delegations are also valuable in highlighting for host governments U.S. viewpoints or policies, and if confirmed, I would welcome the continuation of such visits.

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

Answer. I spent most of my career as a political officer, meaning democracy and human rights work were at the core of my overseas and domestic assignments. I observed elections in Ethiopia, managed the redesign of U.S. activities in Niger after a coup ousted a democratically-elected government, and advocated for new assistance programs and greater engagement in Tunisia as the country transitioned from dictatorship to democracy.

For me personally, however, my most meaningful work to promote human rights and democracy occurred during my assignment to Kuwait from 2004-2006. Kuwaiti women had long sought the right to vote and run for office and the United States was a powerful supporter and advocate in their struggle, regularly raising the issue with Kuwaiti leaders. As the Embassy's Political Chief, I had access to the country's political leaders and legislators, where I could make the case for full civil and political rights for women. My gender, however, in a country where gender segregation was not official but common, gave me direct access to the women leading the fight for equal rights. Spending time with them helped me to understand the legal and cultural barriers they faced and as a result, I was able to tailor U.S. interventions accordingly. I proposed movie nights for legislators, academics, and activists, which the Ambassador hosted, where documentaries and other films showcased American women in politics or other fields dominated by men. The resulting debates were lively and the educators asked for, and the Embassy procured, copies of the films for them to show to their students. When parliament was dissolved and elections, with the full participation of women, were scheduled with little over one month to prepare, my knowledge of what Kuwaiti women wanted and needed allowed the Embassy to adjust its programming and deliver. With experts from the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, and other organizations, we held workshops on how to develop a platform, how to build a base, and how to run a campaign. Although no women were elected in that first election, participants in the seminars credited the Embassy for helping them on messaging and changing Kuwait's political landscape. In the next election, women did join parliament for the first time.

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

Answer. The most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Uganda include violence and intimidation against journalists and some political opponents of the ruling National Resistance Movement party and President Museveni, substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, certain restrictions on political participation, and corruption.

If confirmed, I will frankly, forcefully, and repeatedly raise U.S. Government concerns about these governance and human rights issues with leading Ugandan Government officials, including the President. I will meet with leadership from domestic and international human rights organizations, political opposition groups and their leaders, and civil society organizations working on issues of democracy and governance. Additionally, I will use public platforms to voice support for democracy and good governance.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will use my leadership and voice to make clear that respect for human rights is essential for Uganda's future growth, prosperity, and security. The steady decline of civic and political space has been a source of critical concern inside and outside of the country. I will engage Ugandan authorities, international partners, civil society organizations, and business leaders to work together toward these goals.

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

Answer. U.S. assistance to Uganda advances democracy and governance, both through funds dedicated specifically for those issues and through sector-specific programming, such as health, which depend on a reliable, evidence-based, technocratic government. Through our development assistance, the United States improves the resilience of civil society organizations in the face of diminishing democratic space, supports Ugandan partners to advance their advocacy priorities related to human rights, enhances the professionalism of independent media, and seeks to improve the inclusivity and transparency of democratic processes. Additionally, the United States supports the introduction and expansion of good governance within service delivery systems (health, education, etc.), which bolsters transparency, citizen participation, and accountability within planning and financial management processes. To complement and expand these efforts, I will continue to engage within the Department and with USAID to ensure appropriate resources are available to advance U.S. interests in Uganda.

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

Answer. Human rights, civil society organizations, and other non-governmental organizations, regardless of where they are registered or operate, play an important role in advancing democratic governance, and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights. If confirmed, I am committed to engaging with individuals and organizations that support U.S. values, and will do all I can to support and promote their good work. Throughout my career, I have always viewed the Leahy Law and similar requirements as important mechanisms by which the U.S. Government can ensure that security assistance and security cooperation activities are used to reinforce human rights.

I understand that, consistent with the Leahy Law, the U.S. Embassy in Kampala discontinued training certain elements of the Ugandan security apparatus that were credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights and made clear to the Ugandan Government our reasons for this action. If confirmed, I will reinforce this decision and ensure the Ugandan Government remains aware of U.S. law, policies, and priorities as they relate to security assistance and cooperation activities.

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

Answer. If confirmed, under my leadership the Embassy will continue to engage with representatives from across the political spectrum, including the ruling party and opposition parties. I will advocate for democratic values and extend support through existing instruments to organizations that promote the active participation of women, youth, and other marginalized populations in political activities. Furthermore, I will fully support all Mission programs and activities that support voter mobilization campaigns and citizen engagement in the democratic process. At the local government level, the U.S. Embassy has had great success training and partnering with youth and women local councilors and mayors, and if confirmed, I will seek to continue these efforts in future programs.

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

Answer. Freedom of expression, including for members of the press, is fundamental to an open, just, and democratic society. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will actively engage with Uganda on press freedom. I will speak openly and hon-

estly with the Ugandan Government and civil society about any efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom, and will meet with independent and local press in Uganda.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will direct my Embassy team to actively engage with civil society and government counterparts, as well as with local media, to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors. I will strongly support actions I understand the Embassy is already taking in this regard through weekly interagency messaging meetings aimed at doing this in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, supplementing existing monthly strategic messaging meetings.

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

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador to Uganda, I will proudly engage on matters of labor rights with leadership in government and civil society.

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

Answer. The LGBTI community in Uganda faces numerous economic, social, health, security, and educational challenges. LGBTI Ugandans face discrimination in employment, access to medical care and housing, and harassment and lack of protection by local law enforcement agencies. They are regularly threatened and face physical violence from both private citizens and government actors.

As a result of the profound protection needs this community faces, future human rights activities should have legal aid and protection components, as well as a rapid response mechanism to allow the Embassy to provide timely support to LGBTI individuals facing harassment. Existing U.S. Government human rights programming has made important progress on LGBTI issues, and Embassy programming is established to continue these efforts. If confirmed, I commit to use existing programs and, where appropriate, new initiatives to promote the rights of marginalized groups, including the LGBTI community.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. NATALIE E. BROWN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

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

Answer. I spent most of my career as a political officer, meaning democracy and human rights work were at the core of my overseas and domestic assignments. I observed elections in Ethiopia, managed the redesign of U.S. activities in Niger after a coup ousted a democratically-elected government, and advocated for new assistance programs and greater engagement in Tunisia as the country transitioned from dictatorship to democracy.

For me personally, however, my most meaningful work to promote human rights and democracy occurred during my assignment to Kuwait from 2004-2006. Kuwaiti women had long sought the right to vote and run for office and the United States was a powerful supporter and advocate in their struggle, regularly raising the issue with Kuwaiti leaders. As the Embassy's Political Chief, I had access to the country's political leaders and legislators, where I could make the case for full civil and political rights for women. My gender, however, in a country where gender segregation was not official but common, gave me direct access to the women leading the fight for equal rights. Spending time with them helped me to understand the legal and cultural barriers they faced and as a result, I was able to tailor U.S. interventions accordingly. I proposed movie nights for legislators, academics, and activists, which the Ambassador hosted, where documentaries and other films showcased American women in politics or other fields dominated by men. The resulting debates were lively and the educators asked for, and the Embassy procured, copies of the films for them to show to their students. When parliament was dissolved and elections, with

the full participation of women, were scheduled with little over one month to prepare, my knowledge of what Kuwaiti women wanted and needed allowed the Embassy to adjust its programming and deliver. With experts from the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, and other organizations, we held workshops on how to develop a platform, how to build a base, and how to run a campaign. Although no women were elected in that first election, participants in the seminars credited the Embassy for helping them on messaging and changing Kuwait's political landscape. In the next election, women did join parliament for the first time.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Uganda? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Uganda? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Uganda include torture, arbitrary detention, violence and intimidation against journalists and some political opponents of the ruling National Resistance Movement party and President Museveni, substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, certain restrictions on political participation, corruption, criminalization of same-sex consensual sexual conduct, and security force harassment and detention of LGBTI individuals.

If confirmed, I will frankly, forcefully, and repeatedly raise U.S. Government concerns about these human rights issues with leading Ugandan Government officials, including the President. I will meet with leadership from domestic and international human rights organizations, and use public platforms to voice support for human rights defenders. Additionally, I will not hesitate to use the tools available to me, including financial sanctions and visa restrictions, to promote accountability for human rights violators and abusers.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Uganda in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Living conditions in Uganda have improved notably under President Museveni over the past three decades, to include enhanced security and greater economic growth and stability, but democratization in Uganda remains incomplete. Political opposition and civil society groups are pushing for democratic reforms, including to the electoral process, but these reforms have been stalled by Museveni and the ruling National Resistance Movement party. Newspapers and radio stations have, on occasion in the past, been pressured and even shut down for political reasons. When human rights abuses are severe enough to force an official response, the Government may hold low-level officials accountable but rarely, if ever, punishes higher-ranking officials.

If confirmed, my challenge will be to draw attention to serious human rights violations and abuses and call on the Government to hold all officials to account, while maintaining the cooperative and productive relationship the United States enjoys with Uganda on issues such as regional security, promoting global health, and addressing regional refugee issues.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Uganda? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. I consider meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-government organizations as a core responsibility of an ambassador. If confirmed, I am absolutely committed to engaging with Ugandan and international organizations, and will do all I can to support and promote their good work. Throughout my career, I have always viewed the Leahy Law and similar requirements as important mechanisms by which the U.S. Government can ensure that security assistance and security cooperation activities are used to reinforce human rights.

I understand that, consistent with the Leahy Law, the U.S. Embassy in Kampala discontinued training certain elements of the Ugandan security apparatus that were credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights and made clear to the Ugandan Government our reasons for this action. If confirmed, I will reinforce this decision and ensure the Ugandan Government remains aware of U.S. law, policies, and priorities as they relate to security assistance and cooperation activities.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Uganda to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Uganda?

Answer. Repression of political opposition and vocal critics of President Museveni and his inner circle are serious concerns in Uganda. If confirmed, I will actively engage with the Ugandan Government to ensure it respects its own constitution and does not single out critical voices for undue punishment.

Question. Will you engage with Uganda on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Respect for human rights is a fundamental value for the United States. If confirmed as Ambassador to Uganda, I will proudly engage on matters of human rights, including civil rights, and good governance with leadership in government and civil society.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

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

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

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

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

Answer. My investment portfolio includes a security interest in a global company that may have a presence in Uganda. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and remaining vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I joined the Department of State in 1990, shortly after the Palmer federal class action lawsuit where the court found that female Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) were discriminated against in assignments, awards, and promotions, and while another class action, the Thomas case alleging discrimination against African Americans, was being processed and eventually settled. My entry class was the first class to be 50 percent female and "State Magazine," in reporting on my class, noted the gender breakdown as well as one Black FSO and one Hispanic in the group. At that time, I was regularly told I was a "twofer," and the only reason I made it into the Foreign Service was because of my race and gender. Times have changed, but the State Department is not yet as diverse as it could be. If confirmed, I would do what I have done since I assumed managerial positions: mentor individuals from underrepresented groups and advocate for their inclusion, seek out a diverse pool of candidates when hiring or filling vacant positions, and call out and seek to change policies that discriminate. For example, at a previous post, I successfully advocated for the Ambassador to take the female subject matter expert with him to meetings on political-military affairs. As a hiring official, I reacted when the short lists of candidates for positions lacked diversity and fought for inclusion. I was not always successful in changing the lists, but hope that the more junior staff who saw my messages took note and learned something. I served for seven years as an EEO Counselor and I do not hesitate to address discrimination.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I would strive to lead by example, building a capable and as diverse a team as possible. I would encourage my subordinates to do the same and make clear that I have zero tolerance for discrimination. In addition to setting clear policies, I would meet regularly with section and agency heads to reaffirm these messages. I would also foster diversity on guest lists for Embassy events and

make sure, as appropriate, that nominees for cultural and exchange events, both Americans and Ugandans, come from a diverse pool of candidates.

Question. How does political corruption impact democratic governance and the rule of law?

Answer. Political corruption is endemic in Uganda, affecting all aspects of life. In addition to the enormous financial waste that corruption engenders, it also leads to losses of time, stifles ingenuity, and disrupts social cohesion. Corruption hampers development, restrains economic growth, and deters foreign investment. Furthermore, the unequal application of the law leads to distrust of government and disinterest in civic duty.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Uganda and efforts to address and reduce them by the Government of Uganda?

Answer. According to Transparency International, Uganda ranks 137 out of 180 countries surveyed in the Corruption Perceptions index, leaving much room for improvement. President Museveni has made numerous public announcements addressing corruption in Uganda, and has stated his intentions to hold public officials accountable for corrupt practices. Additionally, the Government of Uganda has created several task forces and various bodies to address political corruption. Unfortunately, many of these efforts are used to target Museveni's political or economic rivals while people in his inner circle, including his family members, are not held to account. In other cases, the Government may make headlines for arresting lower level officials while more senior leaders remain free. Furthermore, attempts to combat corruption often stop with the arrests and flashy headlines, with less emphasis on the successful prosecution of corrupt actors.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Uganda?

Answer. U.S. Government programming administered by offices in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor or by partners in USAID strengthen good governance and combat corruption in countries around the globe. Investments in good governance and efforts to curb corruption pay significant dividends down the road, and reduce the future need for U.S. development assistance. If confirmed, I will press State Department offices and other government agencies to include good governance and anti-corruption programming for Uganda as part of their regular annual program planning.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO HON. NATALIE E. BROWN BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

Question. How should the United States respond if the Ugandan Government postpones elections next year?

Answer. In considering whether to postpone elections, there should be a consensus between political parties, electoral experts, and public health officials, and any action should be consistent with Ugandan law. If the Ugandan Government announces intentions to postpone the elections, the U.S. Embassy should engage directly and frequently with the Ugandan Government to stress the importance of holding the elections in a timely manner and in conformity with the constitution. If confirmed, I would look to work with like-minded partners, international organizations, and domestic civil society organizations to offer technical assistance to help create the conditions for safe elections as quickly as possible.

Question. Should evidence of state corruption and reports of abuse, torture, and unlawful killings by security forces draw scrutiny of our close bilateral relationship with Uganda?

Answer. American values drive U.S. foreign policy and must always do so. While the United States has enjoyed a close and productive relationship with Uganda for a number of years, the U.S. Government should not and cannot tolerate human rights violations and abuses or corruption.

The vast majority of U.S. assistance to Uganda goes directly to the Ugandan people in the form of health assistance. The United States also maintains a close security relationship with Uganda in support of shared regional counter terrorism efforts. Any efforts by the U.S. Government to re-examine our relationship with the Ugandan Government should ensure that the Ugandan people, our true partners in the country, are not negatively affected. In accordance with the Leahy Law, the De-

partment of State does not provide security assistance to security forces credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights. The Secretary also has designated high-ranking current and former government officials under Section 7031(c) of the Department of State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act for involvement in gross violations of human rights, and supported Treasury Department efforts to apply Global Magnitsky sanctions against a former high-ranking Ugandan official. If confirmed, I will use the tools at my disposal to address concerns about human rights violations and abuses and corruption, including financial sanctions and assistance and visa restrictions, to communicate to the Ugandan Government that the U.S. will not tolerate human rights violations and abuses or corruption.

Question. How should the United States respond if security forces use force against opposition politicians and supporters, as they have in previous elections?

Answer. Any evidence of electoral violence must be taken seriously. The United States must be clear and transparent with the Ugandan Government and the Ugandan people about our concerns if abuses occur. If confirmed, I would lead the embassy in pressing the Government to hold any human rights violators and abusers accountable, support the imposition of sanctions and implementation of visa restrictions on such individuals as applicable, and be prepared to reevaluate certain elements of our bilateral relationship if the Ugandan Government demonstrates that it does not adhere to democratic values and norms.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RAMSEY COATS DAY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

COVID-19

Question. You mentioned that if you are confirmed COVID-19 assistance will be a top program for USAID. What has the U.S. response to the spread of COVID-19 been in Africa to date?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is investing more than \$215 million in 42 countries in sub-Saharan Africa to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, with more assistance on the way.

Health-specific response programs in Africa include support for risk-communications and community engagement, behavior change related to hygiene, the prevention and control of infections in health facilities, the management of cases of COVID-19, case-finding, contact-tracing, water, sanitation, hygiene, disease-surveillance, laboratory diagnostics, procurement and logistics, the training and education of healthcare workers, and overall national readiness and response.

The U.S. Government's response to the pandemic also includes significant funding for humanitarian assistance in fragile and conflict-ridden states to protect those who are most vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19, including in the Republic of South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. We are aware that food-insecurity related to COVID-19 is increasing, compounded by the swarms of desert locusts in East Africa. We are looking at increasing our funding for food aid to address these growing issues.

Furthermore, USAID also has committed assistance to support communities in the Republic of Sudan, the DRC, Ethiopia, and the Sahel region to prepare for, mitigate, and address the second-order economic, civilian-security, stabilization, democratic-governance and multi-sector impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding provides social and economic support, protection, and assistance to vulnerable populations, and helps small-and-medium-sized enterprises to withstand the economic disruptions caused by the disease. USAID also will finance programs to promote peace and stability in conflict-ridden regions, improve education and distance-learning, combat gender-based violence, bolster civil society and citizen-responsive governance, and improve public confidence and involvement in government.

Question. How has the suspension of U.S. funding for the World Health Organization impacted the response? What programs and activities in Africa have been halted due to the response? Have alternative implementing partners been identified for any activities that have been impacted?

Answer. The World Health Organization (WHO) supports national surveillance for COVID-19, as well as for other infectious diseases such as polio and measles, in affected countries in Africa. Specific activities by the WHO to support government's response to the pandemic of COVID-19 include the following: strengthening labora-

tories to test for the virus that causes COVID-19; providing assistance for screening at points of entry; conducting case-finding and event-based surveillance; training rapid-response teams to investigate cases of the disease and perform contact-tracing; and procuring and deploying essential health commodities. In addition, the WHO helps develop standard operating procedures, provide advice on monitoring and evaluation, and undertakes other coordination-related activities.

During the pause the President announced, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has identified alternative partners around the world to fight the pandemic of COVID-19. My understanding is that the pause has affected USAID's programs related to COVID-19 in five sub-Saharan African countries—the Republics of Cameroon, Djibouti, Mauritius and Sudan; and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In these countries, USAID has found other international organizations and non-governmental organizations that can handle activities for which the Agency would have engaged the WHO.

For example, in Ethiopia and Djibouti the United Nations Children's Fund will promote accurate risk-communications and services to prevent and control infections in health facilities. In Mauritius, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will provide COVID 19 support, with a focus on community engagement, through the national chapter of the Red Cross

Question. If confirmed, how will you alter or adjust current activities? What would that program look like?

Answer. While much remains unknown about the epidemiology of the disease, COVID-19 could have catastrophic effects in Africa. The pandemic already has caused more than 40,000 reported cases and over 1,000 deaths, and the fragile health-care institutions in the region might not be able to absorb more stress. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is funding a response COVID-19 response in over 43 countries in Africa, and we are continuing to implement our core investments in public health, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Global Health Security Agenda, and our programs in maternal and child health, all of which have provided a foundation for interventions against COVID-19. USAID is committed to supporting African countries to continue these existing, life-saving programs in addition to bolstering efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to ongoing and future infectious-disease threats.

We also anticipate the pandemic will have wide-ranging second- and third-order impacts on sub-Saharan Africa. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID adapts our strategic approach as needed to address them. For example, as a result of COVID-19, within the next year, more than 140 million people in sub-Saharan Africa could reach crisis-level food insecurity. East Africa is already grappling with an infestation of locusts that could harm staple crops in a serious way. The combined pandemic and oil-price shock are likely to tip Africa into an economic contraction in 2020, in the absence of major fiscal stimulus. Economic growth across the continent is projected to decline from 2.4 percent before COVID-19 to between (2.1 percent) and (5.1 percent), with widening fiscal deficits.

I also am concerned about democratic backsliding, and how some African regimes could use COVID-19 to restrict democratic space and constrain free media even further. Some governments using COVID-19 to commit human-rights abuses, restrict civil society, suppress political opposition, and delay democratic processes. Disturbing trends include the cancellation or postponement of elections, widespread misinformation or disinformation, targeted crackdowns on key population groups, and increased criminal violence, among others. I am also concerned about the increase in the number of incidents of gender-based violence, particularly intimate-partner violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic across the world, as reported by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and others.

USAID has geared much of our response to the pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa to date toward protecting long-term development gains. Our investment of supplemental resources from the Economic Support Fund has focused heavily on fragile states such as the Republic of Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Across the continent, stability hard-won through years of partnership and investment is at risk of being compromised without immediate relief. This is especially true in West Africa and the Sahel, and in urban areas in many nations where pandemic-related lockdowns have disrupted the livelihoods of large numbers of informal workers.

USAID is adapting our existing programs to respond to the new context of COVID-19. The Agency has helped large manufacturers affected by a collapse in global demand for their products shift their operations to the production of personal

protective equipment, which not only supports the health response but protects jobs and years of investment in local industry.

USAID continues our core work of supporting sustainable health and food systems that help communities in our partner countries manage crises such as this one. The Agency also is focused on facilitating trade and mobilizing private investment to help increase capacity, reduce future debt burdens, and achieve lasting development results.

USAID is revitalizing previously-funded radio and television education programs, and providing support to Ministries of Education to develop distance-learning curricula. The Agency sees this as an opportunity to strengthen the resilience of local educational institutions, help governments and private providers develop lasting capacity for remote learning, and maintain basic skills while children are out of school.

Additionally, USAID continues to fund health programs begun long before the COVID-19 pandemic, to sustain the gains in essential life-saving activities in maternal and child health, malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV. USAID also is contributing to the whole-of-government “SAFER” framework for the international response to the COVID 19 pandemic, which builds upon long-standing and substantial global health and humanitarian assistance by the American people and the U.S. Government’s commitment to the Global Health Security Agenda.

Additionally, USAID is using supplemental resources to provide social and economic support, protection, and assistance to vulnerable populations and supporting small-and-medium-sized enterprises to withstand the economic effects of COVID-19 in Sudan, the DRC, Ethiopia and across the Sahel. We are also financing programs to improve peace and stability in conflict-ridden regions, improve education and distance-learning, strengthen civil society and citizen-responsive governance, and improve public confidence and involvement in government. USAID’s programs are also adapting and mobilizing to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls through social-assistance programs, economic support to women-owned small and medium-sized businesses, and social services in heavily affected communities.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we continue to fund immediate response needs and support our partners in the region to adapt to the long-range impacts of COVID-19.

Question. What guidance has been issued to implementing partners related to the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE)? Have any health care workers working to implement any U.S. funded programs and activities been infected by COVID-19? Have any of them died? Were they working to implement U.S. funded programs without PPE?

Answer. Given the short supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the United States, since March 2020 the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been unable to fund the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) for our programs abroad. USAID is working within the U.S. Government and with international partners on this critical issue. We understand the urgency of the domestic requirements here in the United States while we continue to remain sensitive to the needs of our neighbors and friends around the world.

Acting Administrator John Barsa issued guidance that USAID partners may use Program funds to finance the local production of medical-grade PPE and non-medical-grade PPE products. This includes, but is not limited to, masks, gowns, face shields, protective eyewear, boot covers, linens, and gloves. In addition, on May 15, 2020, the Agency clarified to our partners that the policy restrictions on the procurement of PPE do not extend to the procurement of cloth masks. Similarly, the clause on PPE that is currently in awards financed by supplementary funding for COVID-19 in the International Disaster Assistance account does not preclude the procurement of such items.

As of May 16, 2020, no partner of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has reported to our COVID-19 Task Force that any health-care workers that are implementing U.S.-funded programs have tested positive for COVID-19. No USAID implementing partner has reported any COVID-19-related deaths to our COVID-19 Task Force.

China in Africa

Question. You mentioned that Africans turn to China for business and to the U.S. for social programs. Why is that a problem, and what specific actions will you take if confirmed to change and or impact that dynamic?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is particularly concerned about Chinese business practices in Africa that are undermining development gains. State-owned enterprises conduct many Chinese business transactions

and deals, often at the behest of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Unfortunately, many of these business transactions are to the detriment of African nations and their people, and only benefit the PRC. Especially in questionable infrastructure and resource-extraction projects, many Chinese businesses engage in improper behavior, such as paying bribes and supporting or enabling authoritarian regimes.

If confirmed, I will ensure USAID takes steps to combat this negative influence. I will continue to support the Prosper Africa Initiative to increase two-way trade between the United States and Africa. The U.S. private sector offers a superior value proposition that supports African communities on their respective Journeys to Self-Reliance. American companies bring significant capital, innovation, and proven solutions. U.S. business practices also adhere to the highest standards of transparency, competitiveness, quality, responsible and sustainable conduct, and efficiency. The American private-sector model stands in stark contrast to the predatory, state-led models of doing business employed by the PRC and others that saddle African nations with unsustainable debt.

I am also committed to continuing the Agency's projects that foster economic growth. By showing the American model of development will improve the lives of citizens, help establish a robust economy and raise living standards, we will demonstrate why the U.S. model of development is superior in the long run. Finally, if confirmed, the Bureau for Africa will continue to work with our interagency colleagues at the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation and the U.S. Departments of State, Commerce and the Treasury on this important issue.

Question. During your testimony, you alluded to China's "debt trap diplomacy." What is debt trap diplomacy and what specific programmatic programs or activities do you plan to offer to African countries as alternatives.

Answer. As noted during my testimony, unsustainable indebtedness, often called "debt-trap diplomacy," is the concept that malign actors, such as the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), are forcing unsustainable debt on governments to use as leverage at a later date. The PRC often does so by offering to drop debt or significantly restructure payment terms or dates, in return for certain actions. Using this leverage, the PRC pressures governments for votes in elections at international organizations and to support Chinese candidates who seek to lead them, gain preferential trade deals, and secure exclusive access for Chinese companies.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is in a strong position to counter corrosive Chinese practices regarding debt. First, USAID's development programs have an end goal of self-reliance, which means governments, civil society, and the private sector will have the capacity to plan, finance, and implement solutions to their own challenges and maintain strong, robust institutions that can discern between reasonable and rational debt and predatory loans. The Agency's initiatives, such as Prosper Africa and Power Africa, along with its technical assistance in areas such as health, education, and economic development, are debt-free and intended to move communities towards self-reliance. Second, USAID and the U.S. Departments of State and the Treasury are working actively to build institutional capacity in governments and civil society to understand the terms and conditions of loans. USAID, through Power Africa, works with the African Legal-Support Facility (ALSF) housed at African Development Bank, dedicated to providing legal advice and technical assistance to African Governments in the negotiation of complex commercial transactions, litigation with creditors, and other related sovereign transactions. USAID and other U.S. Government actors are committed to providing sustainable development projects that do not leave countries with unsustainable debt.

If confirmed, I will continue to support the vital work in which USAID and the broader United States Government are engaging to combat predatory Chinese loans and debt-trap diplomacy.

Question. You mentioned during the hearing that America is missing "in a commercial sense" from Africa. Please expand on your plan to increase America's commercial footprint on the continent if confirmed? Are there conversations ongoing with U.S. Commercial Services for expanded outreach/interest in Africa? What would a plan for an expanded U.S. Commercial Service in Africa look like, and how would such an expansion be coordinated with USAID programs and activities?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to bolster the capacity of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support U.S. commercial interests in Africa by advancing the goals of Prosper Africa, a key administration initiative that aims to increase two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa significantly. I would prioritize targeted policy reforms in key markets and sectors; focus

existing trade and investment resources, programs, and platforms on expanding financing and investment links between the U.S. and the African continent; and develop new public-private partnerships with United States companies and investors to leverage the American private sector.

USAID is actively working with the U.S. Department of Commerce (DoC), and 14 additional participating Federal Agencies and Departments, to establish a coordinated strategic approach to advancing U.S. commercial competition in Africa. In support of Prosper Africa, the DoC will provide resources to support the Prosper Africa Executive Secretariat and other implementation activities, including by posting personnel from the Foreign Commercial Service at U.S. Embassies in Africa.

To support effective interagency collaboration in pursuit of these goals, if confirmed, I will build on the work of USAID's Trade and Investment Hubs in Africa, including efforts related to the African Growth and Opportunity Act. USAID will develop a continental platform that supports interagency collaboration to facilitate free, fair, and reciprocal bilateral trade, as well as offer increased support to interagency Deal Teams already established at U.S. Embassies across Africa.

Democracy and Governance

Question. We are watching authoritarian leaders on the continent use the COVID-19 pandemic to close political space, clamp down on media, and entrench and consolidate power. What specific actions will you take if confirmed to address COVID-19's impact on democracy/rule of law in Africa?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is tracking the evolution of the spread of COVID-19 closely, including its impact on citizen-responsive governance, civil and political rights and stability. As I noted in my testimony, I am concerned about democratic backsliding, and how some African regimes are using the justification of COVID-19 to restrict democratic space and constrain free media even further. Governments are employing COVID-19 as a pretext to commit human-rights abuses, restrict civil society, suppress political opposition, and delay democratic processes. Disturbing trends include the cancellation or postponement of elections, widespread misinformation or disinformation, targeted crackdowns on key population groups, and increased gender-based and criminal violence, among others. Several parliaments have passed legislation that will inhibit democratic processes and would otherwise spark protests. Other governments are downplaying the threat of COVID-19 and arresting and detaining individuals who speak out.

USAID is already adapting our programming; identifying innovative solutions; and continuing our programs in democracy, governance and elections. For example, in the Republic of Mali USAID worked with the National Electoral Commission to promote accurate health messaging and proper practices in coordination with the Ministry of Health in advance of nationwide legislative elections. This included ensuring voter-registration and polling centers had adequate hygiene safeguards and procedures in place, which reduced the risk to voters and election workers. USAID also funded a citizen election-observation group to adapt its methodology to monitor public-health measures during the elections. In the Republic of Senegal, USAID's civil-society partners are providing critical oversight of the Government's humanitarian assistance, and have called out potential fraud and waste at the national level.

In an effort to prevent further closure of space for civil society during the pandemic of COVID-19, USAID should increase its support for civil society, independent media, journalists, and citizen-responsive governance. Maintaining and bolstering the ability of citizens to exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms will lead to greater long-term stability. Additionally, anti-corruption efforts will take on renewed importance, so we can ensure our COVID-19-related assistance and resources are used for their intended purposes. If confirmed, I will continue to counter democratic backsliding, which began before the COVID-19 pandemic, and now has the potential to become worse.

Question. How much funding has been allocated for Democracy and Governance in Africa over the last three fiscal years? Has that funding been adequate to address needs created by transitions in Ethiopia and Sudan? What specific actions will you take if confirmed to provide robust support for the political transitions in those two countries?

Answer. In Fiscal Years (FY) 2017, 2018, and 2019, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) allocated nearly \$862 million for programming in democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) in sub-Saharan Africa. In FY 2017, the amount of funding the Agency invested in DRG programming on the African continent was \$302.367 million; in FY 2018, the total was \$290.51 million, and in FY 2019, \$268.862 million.

USAID is supporting the transition in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia from a closed autocracy to a politically and economically open model. USAID will provide technical assistance to the newly constituted National Elections Board for the organization of the upcoming voting. USAID will also provide funding for civic and voter education; domestic and international observation; capacity-building of political parties; and training for media in gender, conflict-sensitive reporting, and countering disinformation. USAID continues to provide technical assistance to governmental institutions in Ethiopia, including the following:

- To the Attorney General's Office, to draft key pieces of legislation essential to democratic and economic reforms;
- To the Civil-Society Agency, to implement the new law that has enabled non-governmental organizations to re-emerge after more than a decade of autocratic repression; and
- To the Supreme Court, to bolster the capacity of the judiciary to provide impartial justice.

Since the revolution in the Republic of Sudan last year that ended the Bashir regime, USAID has expanded our development assistance to improve the prospects for a successful hand-over to a civilian-led, democratic government at the end of the transitional period in 2022. This includes expanding support for civil society and peacebuilding; providing technical support to help the civilian-led government deliver on Sudanese citizens' goals for the revolution, including the responsiveness and accountability of government institutions; and exploring other ways our expertise can support a positive transition in Sudan, in coordination with other donors.

If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues at the U.S. Department of State and our field-based Missions in both Ethiopia and Sudan to determine how USAID can best support the respective governments as they work to meet the high expectations and needs of their citizens in challenging transitional contexts. I will also ensure proper fiduciary and technical oversight of our taxpayer dollars as we expand these critical programs. In addition to working with national governments, I will also ensure USAID is working with civil-society organizations, other independent institutions, and the media to enhance their capacity to engage with their governments and hold them accountable.

Youth Bulge

Question. What specific initiatives will you develop and implement if confirmed to address the social and economic impact of the youth bulge in Africa?

Answer. Sixty-nine percent of sub-Saharan Africans are under the age of 30. This massive youth bulge will continue to grow at least through 2050. These young people have the potential to create a new workforce and economy or fuel the instability that comes from dissatisfaction and exclusion. The Youth in Development Policy of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) positions the Agency and its partners to capitalize on favorable global population trends by investing in programs and approaches by, with, and for youth that seize opportunity and lead to sustainable growth and human development, including through the realization of what is often referred to as a "demographic dividend."

If confirmed, under my leadership, USAID will continue to fund the Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI), specifically the Regional Leadership Centers (RLCs), which are USAID's main investment in YALI. The RLCs have emerged as incubators of talent and innovation, and as a space for youth from 48 countries collaboratively to tackle the challenges they face in their home countries. In addition to funding from the U.S. Government, YALI has also leveraged resources from private-sector companies, civil-society organizations, and the public sector.

Highly-quality education creates pathways for greater economic growth, improved health outcomes, sustained democratic governance, and more peaceful and resilient societies. USAID's educational investments support governments and private providers in our partner countries to strengthen their capacity to achieve sustainable, high-quality learning and educational outcomes. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of all educational institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 243 million children are out of school. These closures will have long-term negative economic and human capital effects in African countries. The pandemic's impact on education is likely to be most devastating in countries with low learning outcomes and high dropout rates.

During the pandemic, USAID-funded education programs in sub-Saharan Africa largely have had to pivot to distance-learning. As a result, the Agency is revitalizing previously-funded radio and television education programs, and providing support to Ministries of Education to develop distance-learning curricula. The Agency sees this as an opportunity to strengthen the resilience of local educational institutions, help

governments and private providers develop lasting capacity for remote learning, and maintain basic skills while children are out of school.

Jobs for youth are another critical component to address the growing youth bulge, since formal work provide greater opportunities. USAID's market-driven workforce-development programs help connect youth to jobs; this greater economic opportunity, in turn, helps to mitigate the root causes of migration, crime, instability and violent extremism. USAID works with local businesses to ensure youth learn the technical, entrepreneurial and other critical skills they need to obtain good local jobs to support themselves and their families, and prepare them for a successful, life-long career.

Congressional Consultations

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff as requested?

Answer. During my tenure at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), it has been a pleasure and honor to meet, consult with, and brief Members of Congress and their staff regularly. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to do so, in accordance with law and the rules and regulations of USAID.

Support for Democracy

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

Answer. I have dedicated the majority of my professional career to advancing the cause of democracy and human rights. If confirmed, democracy and human rights will remain at the core of my approach to steering the strategic and programmatic priorities of the Bureau for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Starting as a USAID Desk Officer in the mid-2000's, I worked to support programs focused on combatting human trafficking, cultivating and empowering young democratic leaders, and ensuring citizens had a voice in the democratic process through elections and civic engagement in Eastern Europe.

More recently, I led the International Republican Institute's program in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, based in Amman, where my sole mission was to advance democratic principles in a key U.S. ally in the Middle East. I focused the Institute's programs on empowering women leaders at the community level, helping political parties build platforms based on the needs of citizens, and assisting persons with disabilities become more integrated into the political process in their communities. As a result, more women ran for public office at all levels in Jordan, political parties increasingly based their platforms on sound policy ideas, and more persons with disabilities had a voice in their communities.

As a leader within USAID over the last two-and-half years, I have prioritized development activities and approaches that have protected and supported the most vulnerable in conflict zones, worked closely with interagency colleagues to develop U.S. policy positions on critical issues related to human rights and democracy, and highlighted the importance of democratic principles to foreign-government counterparts in Africa and around the world.

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

Answer. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, two-thirds of the countries that are experiencing fragility or extreme fragility are in sub-Saharan Africa. This instability is driving most global humanitarian needs, and incubating and exporting a range of threats, from conflict and terrorism to displacement and infectious disease. The governance dysfunctions that define fragility are evident in Africa in the persistence and further entrenchment of autocratic states; in democratic backsliding; the spread of violent extremism; persistently poor development outcomes; and the inability to weather shocks, such as recurrent droughts, floods, and locusts, without outside donor assistance.

The continued entrenchment of authoritarian governance, propelled by dominant parties and leaders, poses a clear threat to African's aspirations for democracy and improved economic and social outcomes. In countries like the United Republic of Tanzania; the Republics of Uganda, Guinea, and Benin; and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, governments are working actively to close political space, stifle competition long before elections take place, curtail public participation, and suppress crit-

ics. As Africans find innovative ways to organize and express themselves, autocratic governments have found new ways to restrict these voices, and suppress and falsify information, often by labelling critics as “foreign agents” or a “security threat.” This can sometimes lead to restrictive legislation that limits the advocacy efforts of civil society and constrains access to resources by non-governmental organizations.

I am very concerned that some African regimes are using COVID-19 as a pretext to restrict democratic space and constrain free media further. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is tracking the spread of COVID-19 closely, along with its impact on citizen-responsive governance, overall state fragility, civil and political rights, and stability. Disturbing trends include the cancellation or postponement of elections, targeted crackdowns on key population groups, and increased gender-based and criminal violence, among others. A clear example occurred in March in Guinea, where the incumbent government pushed through a constitutional referendum to extend presidential term limits with very low participation, just as the first COVID-19 infections were being reported in the country.

Persistently high levels of corruption, weak judiciaries, and limits on access to justice diminish the efficacy of the rule of law to counterbalance executive dominance. From manipulation of constitutions to evade or change term, such as in Guinea, to the undermining of judicial offices in Benin, respect for, and adherence to, the rule of law continues to be a major challenge in Africa.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Africa? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to promoting democracy, human rights, and citizen-responsive governance in sub-Saharan Africa, and will emphasize strengthening democratic systems, countering and mitigating the risks of democratic backsliding, and creating an enabling environment for development and economic growth to succeed. Inclusive, citizen-centered, democratic governance and respect for human rights reflect U.S. values. Well-functioning democracies ultimately advance U.S. influence, prosperity, and security. In support of this approach, and with the long-term goal of ending the need for foreign assistance through the Journey to Self-Reliance, if confirmed, I will work to support national efforts to build commitment for reforms, build the capacity to manage democratic transitions, and promote the accountability of governments to their citizens.

Assistance provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has had a positive impact over time on the quality of election processes, as in the Republics of Malawi and Liberia. As 2020 continues, the Republics of Burundi, Guinea, Cote d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Ghana; the Central African Republic; and the United Republic of Tanzania are all scheduled to hold general elections. If confirmed, I will work to continue USAID’s engagement on election processes in sub-Saharan Africa. I will also continue to provide robust funding to track the civil society and media environment in African countries and implement programming to ensure these groups have the appropriate support and resources to operate.

If confirmed, I will work to refine USAID’s approaches to reducing the drivers of fragility in sub-Saharan Africa, not only in the interest of preventing violence and promoting stabilization, which are the focus of the Global Fragility Act, but also in recognition that inclusive, accountable, citizen-responsive governance is associated with more equitable development, greater prosperity, and improved self-reliance.

Question. What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. The resurgence of involvement by the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation in sub-Saharan Africa to prop up authoritarian regimes, push for non-democratic systems, fuel corruption, and limit citizens’ participation in government and access to information is concerning. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), alongside other like-minded donor partners, engages actively in combating malign influence globally through its planning and programming.

Authoritarian regimes can repurpose the same technologies that offer opportunities for strengthening democracy as impediments to democracy. They are developing and sharing tools to spread disinformation, manipulate elections, and discredit democratic institutions. If confirmed, I will continue USAID’s efforts to understand the scope and scale of this effort, and to adapt our programming as appropriate.

The arrival of COVID-19 on the African continent, and the longer-term uncertainty over the disease’s trajectory and its ultimate impact on democratic space and development will shape USAID’s investments for years to come. COVID-19 did not create fragility in Africa, but it has the potential to exacerbate symptoms that already exist, including poor governance, authoritarian retrenchment, and a host of

other issues. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID looks at shocks like COVID-19 in the context of the continent's wider democratic development and governance patterns. Specifically, this means ensuring continued support for democracy, human rights and citizen-responsive governance—whether institutional development, robust accountability mechanisms, or support for political transitions—over the long term.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Africa?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with civil-society and human-rights organizations, both in Washington, D.C., and during my travels abroad.

Question. What steps will you take to proactively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. I understand the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has funded programs to improve the legal environment and preserve and expand civic space around the world, including to help African civil society respond to growing restrictions on freedoms of association, assembly and expression. This assistance includes analyses to forecast closing space, rapid-response assistance to address restrictive laws and regulations, and interventions to boost the resilience of civil society. USAID's investments complement those by the U.S. Department of State and multinational diplomatic efforts to promote and defend democratic principles and freedoms.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties?

Answer. Yes. I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political figures and parties, both in Washington, D.C., and during my travels abroad.

Question. What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition?

Answer. I believe political competition is an essential element of democratic governance. I have extensive professional experience in working with non-governmental organizations that the U.S. Agency for International Development has funded through its programming to foster genuine political competition in a number of countries. If confirmed, I commit to funding critical programs that strengthen political parties, improve the administration of electoral and dispute-resolution institutions, provide the credible and impartial domestic and international observation of elections, conduct civic and voter education, and prevent and mitigate election-related violence.

Question. Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will be a staunch advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties. Diversity of all sorts, particularly the diversity in viewpoints offered by these and other population segments, are critical voices to be heard as communities continue on the Journey to Self-Reliance.

Question. Will you and your team actively engage on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, supporting freedom of press will remain one of my priorities. The U.S. Agency for International Development historically has recognized the important role the independent media plays in citizen-responsive governance and is one of the largest donors to the development of pluralistic, diverse, independent media systems.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press if and when you travel on the continent?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you ensure that USAID Missions are actively engaging with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in Africa?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to continuing engagement with civil society to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in Africa.

Question. Will Missions actively engage on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. If confirmed as Assistant Administrator for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development, I will proudly support our Missions as they engage on matters of labor rights with governments and civil society in their respective countries.

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

Answer. Yes. Former Administrator Green and Acting Administrator Barsa have been clear that inclusion is one of the core values of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and that non-discrimination toward beneficiaries is a basic principle of our work. I wholly agree. If confirmed, I commit that I will defend the lives, human rights, and dignity of all people across the globe, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

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

Answer. In many African countries, discrimination, stigmatization, violence, marginalization, and exclusionary laws have a negative impact on the lives of many marginalized groups, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) communities, which contributes to poverty and increasing inequality. LGBTI people and other marginalized groups in many African nations face harassment, physical attacks, and arbitrary arrests. Unfortunately, this violence is often life-threatening. Access to basic education, health, housing, economic opportunities, and other social services is essential for all citizens, including LGBTI persons, but governments often deny them this access. The participation by LGBTI people in democratic processes and government in sub-Saharan Africa is very limited. Archaic laws are indicative of larger concerns USAID has in countries where government are abusing human rights in general, and where basic freedoms, such as free assembly and association, are under assault.

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

Answer. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons—like all persons—must be free to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, without fear of reprisal. LGBTI persons must be free to enjoy lives free of violence or discrimination. As Americans, we place a high value on these rights and freedoms, which all persons deserve to enjoy fully and equally. When we protect all persons on the basis of equality and with dignity, we strengthen global stability.

If confirmed, I will continue to implement the comprehensive, inclusive non-discrimination policies of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for the beneficiaries of our contracts and grants. To carry out USAID's mission, our programs will continue to reach out to the most-marginalized and vulnerable members of society, including LGBTI people. I will continue to elevate the importance of inclusive development approaches to help ensure all people can participate in, contribute to, and benefit from USAID's development efforts.

If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of USAID's Missions across Africa to engage civil society, including LGBTI organizations, and host governments to protect the lives, human rights, and dignity of all people. Furthermore, as Assistant Administrator I will continue to draw on the skills and contributions of all people. I deeply value the contributions of our staff to ensure our programs and policies are inclusive of all people.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RAMSEY COATS DAY BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Lebanon

Question. Lebanon's Government is controlled by Hezbollah, an Iran-backed terrorist group. Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs David Schenker recently said that Lebanon's Health Ministry is "run by Hezbollah" and that the U.S. therefore withholds aid that would go to that Ministry. The policy is justified: because money is fungible, comingling U.S. assistance with Hezbollah infrastructure allows them to move resources into malign activities, including terrorism. Moreover Hezbollah's control over the Health Ministry provides it with granular control over many aspects of life in Lebanon, including at the municipal level, where health care services

provided by municipalities is tightly integrated with the Health Ministry, including in government-run hospitals.

Nevertheless, in late April, USAID transferred \$5,300,000 in assistance to Lebanon, part of a package announced by the U.S. embassy in Beirut that totaled \$13.3 million in new assistance.

- What steps did the State Department take to ensure that the new U.S. assistance would not either directly or indirectly come in contact with Hezbollah-controlled health care infrastructure?

Answer. Senator, I respectfully direct you to my colleagues at the U.S. Department of State to respond to your inquiry.

Question. What steps did USAID take to ensure that the new U.S. assistance would not either directly or indirectly come in contact with Hezbollah-controlled health care infrastructure?

Answer. If confirmed as Assistant Administrator for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), I will not have oversight over USAID's assistance in Lebanon. However, I have consulted with my colleagues in USAID's Bureau for the Middle East. I understand that the funding announcement in late April was for the response to the pandemic of COVID-19. I further understand that USAID is not working with the Lebanese Ministry of Health on COVID-19, but instead is collaborating with International non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private hospitals to avoid the possibility of co-mingling with Hizballah-controlled health-care infrastructure.

Furthermore, USAID implements a rigorous, three-stage process to mitigate the risk that U.S. Government resources inadvertently could benefit a designated terrorist or sanctioned groups. Under Stage One, implementing partners are contractually obligated to conduct due diligence against open-source reporting and publicly available databases. Stage Two requires that USAID's staff and implementing partners conduct a pre-award survey and assess through local sources the likelihood that an organization could be affiliated with a sanctioned group. Stage Three involves applying USAID's partner-vetting requirements, which requires the pre-award vetting of the implementers of awards/subawards that exceed \$25,000.

Question. As Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, can you commit to ensuring that no more USAID health care assistance—a full cut-off—will go to Lebanon if that assistance might come in contact with Hezbollah funds or Hezbollah-controlled infrastructure?

Answer. Although I am not as familiar with these issues since I am the nominee to be Assistant Administrator for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), I commit to relaying your concerns to the Assistant Administrator for the Middle East, Mike Harvey. In addition, I understand that it continues to be the express position of USAID that we will not provide any assistance whatsoever to Hizballah or Hizballah-controlled entities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO RAMSEY COATS DAY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

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

Answer. I have dedicated the majority of my professional career to advancing the cause of democracy and human rights. If confirmed, democracy and human rights will remain at the core of my approach to steering the strategic and programmatic priorities of the Bureau for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Starting as a USAID Desk Officer in the mid-2000's, I worked to support programs focused on combatting human trafficking, cultivating and empowering young democratic leaders, and ensuring citizens had a voice in the democratic process through elections and civic engagement in Eastern Europe.

More recently, I led the International Republican Institute's program in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, based in Amman, where my sole mission was to advance democratic principles in a key U.S. ally in the Middle East. I focused the Institute's programs on empowering women leaders at the community level, helping political parties build platforms based on the needs of citizens, and assisting persons

with disabilities become more integrated into the political process in their communities. As a result, more women ran for public office at all levels in Jordan, political parties increasingly based their platforms on sound policy ideas, and more persons with disabilities had a voice in their communities.

As a leader within USAID over the last two-and-half years, I have prioritized development activities and approaches that have protected and supported the most vulnerable in conflict zones, worked closely with interagency colleagues to develop U.S. policy positions on critical issues related to human rights and democracy, and highlighted the importance of democratic principles to foreign-government counterparts in Africa and around the world.

Diversity

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

- What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in your Bureau at USAID are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) works to support communities in our partner countries as they address some of the most challenging and complex issues faced in the world today. To be successful, Agency leaders must draw upon a diverse range of perspectives to ensure proposed programmatic interventions consider the broadest range of factors possible. This diversity of thought is the strength that drives the most creative and innovative solutions to the challenges faced in our partner countries.

Valuing diversity and ensuring every member of our team has a voice in the decisions that guide the Africa Bureau is critical to our success, and will continue to be a core tenet of my leadership approach. If confirmed, I will set the example by instilling this principle in the senior leadership team, but also empower and hold accountable other supervisors and team leaders to embrace the same approach as a foundational value.

This approach is also consistent with broader USAID principles, as championed by former Administrator Mark Green, Acting Administrator John Barsa, and Deputy Administrator Bonnie Glick. If confirmed, I will ensure the Africa Bureau not only complies with the Agency's regulations, practices, and norms, but also is a leader within USAID on diversity and inclusion because this is the best way to ensure we are developing the most effective programs on behalf of the American people.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the USAID Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

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

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

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

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

Answer. No, not to my knowledge.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO RAMSEY COATS DAY BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

World Health Organization

Question. On April 14, President Trump announced a suspension of further funding to the World Health Organization while the administration conducts a review of United States funding to the organization. The President's decision to suspend funding to the World Health Organization in the midst of global pandemic risks not

only the very global coordination that is currently needed, it has interrupted life-saving activities such as measles and polio vaccinations, HIV testing, newborn and maternal support, and various other global health and research activities.

- As you know, WHO is often the provider of last resort. Can you describe the impact of WHO's activities in Africa?

Answer. The World Health Organization (WHO) supports national surveillance for COVID-19, as well as for other infectious diseases such as polio and measles, in affected countries in Africa. Specific activities by the WHO to support government's response to the pandemic of COVID-19 include the following: strengthening laboratories to test for the virus that causes COVID-19; providing assistance for screening at points of entry; conducting case-finding and event-based surveillance; training rapid-response teams to investigate cases of the disease and perform contact-tracing; and procuring and deploying essential health commodities. In addition, the WHO helps develop standard operating procedures, provide advice on monitoring and evaluation, and undertakes other coordination-related activities.

- Are there other partners ready to go to replace WHO's life saving activities?

Answer. During the pause the President announced, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has identified alternative partners around the world to fight the pandemic of COVID-19. My understanding is that the pause has affected USAID's programs related to COVID-19 in five sub-Saharan African countries—the Republics of Cameroon, Djibouti, Mauritius and Sudan; and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In these countries, USAID has found other international organizations and non-governmental organizations that can handle activities for which the Agency would have engaged the WHO.

For example, in Ethiopia and Djibouti the United Nations Children's Fund will promote accurate risk-communications and services to prevent and control infections in health facilities. In Mauritius, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will provide COVID 19 support, with a focus on community engagement, through the national chapter of the Red Cross

Question. What is the timeline for the completion of the review of WHO?

Answer. Funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development to the World Health Organization (WHO) will be on pause for 60-90 days, pending a full review of the WHO's performance.

Protective Equipment Protocols

Question. Do USAID missions and offices in Africa have sufficient protective equipment and protocols in place to safely maintain operations?

Answer. All of the Missions and Offices of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Africa are coordinating with the field-based medical personnel of the U.S. Department of State to establish appropriate protocols and ensure the availability of protective equipment. Under USAID's Roadmap to Return, and the Department of State's return plan (Diplomacy Strong), U.S. Chiefs of Mission will take into consideration local health, medical, security, policy, and operational conditions when making decisions about initiating a phased approach for employees to return to the workplace. USAID's Mission Directors are working with their respective Chiefs of Mission as part of each post's inter-agency Emergency Action Committee to ensure all staff, including U.S. Direct-Hires, contractors, and Foreign Service Nationals, have the proper protections when they return to work on site. I understand that all USAID's staff in Africa are safe and have access to sufficient protective equipment at the moment.

As I noted in my opening statement, if confirmed, the safety and security of my staff will be my number-one priority. This commitment includes ensuring USAID's Missions and Offices have sufficient protective equipment and protocols in place to safely maintain operations.

Question. How can Congress support the Africa Bureau's COVID-19 response efforts?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) deeply appreciates the generous support of Congress and the American taxpayer. USAID is investing more than \$200 million in sub-Saharan Africa to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, with more assistance on the way. If confirmed, I commit that USAID will invest, monitor, and evaluate funding for COVID-19 in Africa in accordance with our Agency-wide guidelines and Congressional requirements.

Armed Conflict

Question. Absent inclusive economic and social development and vastly improved governance, recent trends in armed conflict in North and sub-Saharan Africa reveal a troubled future for the continent. There are bright spots showing progress in inclusion of youth, security sector reform, dismantling of elite capture of the state, basic infrastructure, access to markets, and more.

Question. In your new role, how do you plan to work to address main drivers of violence across Africa?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) employs a range of activities to prevent conflict, counter violent extremism, and promote stabilization in sub-Saharan Africa.

USAID works with communities, civil society, and governments to support the peaceful resolution of conflict; build resilience; promote social cohesion and reconciliation; and reduce vulnerability to non-state armed groups, including violent extremists. For example, in the Central African Republic and the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, USAID funds community-based protection programming, and reconciliation, reintegration, and psychosocial support services for communities affected by the Lord's Resistance Army and other non-state armed groups. In the Federal Republic of Somalia, USAID's partners engage with vulnerable communities and nascent local governments to reduce opportunities for extremists to manipulate grievances.

USAID also seeks opportunities to support African-led regional programs to prevent and mediate conflict. The Agency operates from the premise that women and other marginalized groups play a critical role in mediating and resolving conflict at both the national and local levels. For instance, in the Lake Chad Basin Region, USAID's Partnership for Peace supports traditional women leaders to defuse tensions across ethnic, generational, and religious lines.

USAID and the U.S. Departments of Defense and State strive to coordinate stabilization activities with military and diplomatic objectives and employ the precepts highlighted in the interagency Stabilization Assistance Review (<https://www.state.gov/reports/stabilization-assistance-review-a-framework-for-maximizing-the-effectiveness-of-u-s-government-efforts-to-stabilize-conflict-affected-areas-2018/>). For example, in the Sahel, USAID's activities combine aspects of traditional development work in areas such as health and education with investments in stabilization and countering violent extremism to strengthen communities' resilience and reduce opportunities for violent extremist groups to gain traction.

As the Global Fragility Act makes clear, development assistance is a vital tool for addressing fragility, but effective action will require a whole-of-government approach. USAID, alongside the Department of State and other interagency partners, intends to take a lead role in implementing foreign assistance to support the forthcoming Global Fragility Strategy and the subsequent implementation plans for priority countries and/or regions, which are currently under development through a collaborative, consultative, evidence-based interagency process.

Climate Change

Question. Twenty percent of the Earth has already warmed by 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to temperatures in the 19th century—the point at which the IPCC and scientific community warn of irreparable damage to billions of people and the planet. Africa is already experiencing devastating effects of climate change; as one example, Mozambique has been hit by the second and third largest back-to-back cyclones ever to touch ground on the continent in human history.

- How do you anticipate USAID's work needing to adapt in order to fulfill U.S. development and foreign policy goals?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is adapting our programs continuously to help Africans on the Journey to Self-Reliance. Climate variability and change are important factors that can prevent nations from achieving their development goals. USAID uses an adaptive-management approach to help communities in Africa address climate shocks and stressors to improve their current and future resilience.

USAID requires all of our programs to identify and address significant current and future climate risks. For example, increased temperatures could lead to more outbreaks of infectious diseases. A focus on managing climate risk allows programs to adapt by developing better early-warning systems for infectious diseases that include temperature forecasts. In addition, prolonged droughts can decrease crop yields. USAID-funded agriculture programs conduct research on, and use, more drought-tolerant seeds to improve the productivity of crops during droughts. Anal-

yses of climate risk occurs early in the design of programs in all of the sectors in which USAID works, and our partners make adjustments to adapt to changing circumstances.

For example, under the President's Malaria Initiative USAID has been helping the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia reduce the risk of malaria for over a decade as warmer temperatures cause the disease to expand to higher-elevation regions that previously did not have it. USAID works with the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health to understand how varying temperatures change the occurrence of malaria, and to develop an early-warning system that incorporates data on climate and weather. The Ministry can use this information to decide which interventions to use to keep communities safe from malaria in different parts of the country.

Question. How will USAID do its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions known to cause climate change?

Answer. Sub-Saharan Africa is responsible for about only seven percent of the world's emissions of greenhouse gases. About two-thirds of all of Africa's greenhouse-gas emissions comes from the inefficient use of land, particularly deforestation and degradation. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) helps governments, the private sector, and local communities in our partner countries worldwide protect, manage, and restore forests and other lands to reduce emissions, store carbon, protect biodiversity, improve livelihoods, and enhance climate resilience.

Understanding how much greenhouse gas is emitted into the atmosphere, and from what sources, is essential for societies to make decisions about how to reduce their emissions. In Africa, USAID has worked with governments and civil society to monitor and manage their forests better through programs such as SilvaCarbon (<https://www.silvacarbon.org>), which is an interagency U.S. Government technical-cooperation program to enhance the capacity in selected tropical countries to measure and report on carbon in their forests and other lands. Through a partnership with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), called SERVIR (<https://www.nasa.gov/mission—pages/servir/africa.html>), USAID provides governments and other partners with access to satellite imagery and information on climate and weather to enable wiser decisions about development, including to improve the monitoring of, and reporting on, forests.

The most-useful tools to prevent the emission of greenhouse gases in Africa are the conservation of forests and the prevention of degradation, especially in the face of population increases and agricultural encroachment. In central Africa's Congo Basin, the second-largest tropical rainforest in the world and a globally important carbon sink, USAID's Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) promotes the sustainable management of forests and improves livelihoods for the people who live in and around them. CARPE helps conserve and restore forests so they can continue to act as carbon sinks instead of releasing their stored carbon into the atmosphere.

Programming impacted by COVID-19

Question. As USAID prioritizes COVID-19 response and existing programming is also impacted by the pandemic, what adaptations are being made to ongoing programs?

- What impact do you see this pandemic having on USAID's strategic approach to the region?

Answer. While much remains unknown about the epidemiology of the disease, COVID-19 could have catastrophic effects in Africa. The pandemic already has caused more than 40,000 reported cases and over 1,000 deaths, and the fragile health-care institutions in the region might not be able to absorb more stress. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is funding a response COVID-19 response in over 43 countries in Africa, and we are continuing to implement our core investments in public health, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Global Health Security Agenda, and our programs in maternal and child health, all of which have provided a foundation for interventions against COVID-19. USAID is committed to supporting African countries to continue these existing, life-saving programs in addition to bolstering efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to ongoing and future infectious-disease threats.

We also anticipate the pandemic will have wide-ranging second- and third-order impacts on sub-Saharan Africa. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID adapts our strategic approach as needed to address them.

For example, as a result of COVID-19, within the next year, more than 140 million people in sub-Saharan Africa could reach crisis-level food insecurity. East Africa is already grappling with an infestation of locusts that could harm staple crops in a serious way. The combined pandemic and oil-price shock are likely to tip Africa into an economic contraction in 2020, in the absence of major fiscal stimulus. Economic growth across the continent is projected to decline from 2.4 percent before COVID-19 to between (2.1 percent) and (5.1 percent), with widening fiscal deficits.

I also am concerned about democratic backsliding, and how some African regimes could use COVID-19 to restrict democratic space and constrain free media even further. Some governments using COVID-19 to commit human-rights abuses, restrict civil society, suppress political opposition, and delay democratic processes. Disturbing trends include the cancellation or postponement of elections, widespread misinformation or disinformation, targeted crackdowns on key population groups, and increased criminal violence, among others. I am also concerned about the increase in the number of incidents of gender-based violence, particularly intimate-partner violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic across the world, as reported by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and others.

USAID is using supplemental resources to address these issues in the Republic of Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the Sahel region. This funding is providing social and economic support, protection, and assistance to vulnerable populations and supporting small-and-medium-sized enterprises to withstand the economic effects of COVID-19. We are also financing programs to improve peace and stability in conflict-ridden regions, improve education and distance-learning, strengthen civil society and citizen-responsive governance, and improve public confidence and involvement in government. USAID's programs are also adapting and mobilizing to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls through social-assistance programs, economic support to women-owned small and medium-sized businesses, and social services in heavily affected communities.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we continue to fund immediate response needs and support our partners in the region to adapt to the long-range impacts of COVID-19.

Question. What's being done to assure that long-term development gains are not lost?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has geared much of our response to the pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa to date toward protecting long-term development gains. Our investment of supplemental resources from the Economic Support Fund has focused heavily on fragile states such as the Republic of Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Across the continent, stability hard-won through years of partnership and investment is at risk of being compromised without immediate relief. This is especially true in West Africa and the Sahel, and in urban areas in many nations where pandemic-related lockdowns have disrupted the livelihoods of large numbers of informal workers.

USAID is adapting our existing programs to respond to the new context of COVID-19. The Agency has helped large manufacturers affected by a collapse in global demand for their products shift their operations to the production of personal protective equipment, which not only supports the health response but protects jobs and years of investment in local industry.

USAID continues our core work of supporting sustainable health and food systems that help communities in our partner countries manage crises such as this one. The Agency also is focused on facilitating trade and mobilizing private investment to help increase capacity, reduce future debt burdens, and achieve lasting development results.

USAID is revitalizing previously-funded radio and television education programs, and providing support to Ministries of Education to develop distance-learning curricula. The Agency sees this as an opportunity to strengthen the resilience of local educational institutions, help governments and private providers develop lasting capacity for remote learning, and maintain basic skills while children are out of school.

Additionally, USAID continues to fund health programs begun long before the COVID-19 pandemic, to sustain the gains in essential life-saving activities in maternal and child health, malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV. USAID also is contributing to the whole-of-government "SAFER" framework for the international response to the COVID 19 pandemic, which builds upon long-standing and substantial global

health and humanitarian assistance by the American people and the U.S. Government's commitment to the Global Health Security Agenda.

Free and Fair Elections in Africa

Question. U.S. assistance supports fair and free elections throughout Africa which is a challenge despite COVID-19 impacts on programming.

- How do you envision support for Democracy, Rights, and Governance, especially making sure elections are held and done so freely but also safely?

Answer. National elections are scheduled in 12 African countries during the remainder of 2020. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) currently plans election-related support and programming for nine of them. Along with the U.S. Department of State, USAID is tracking each election closely at the country level.

Conducting free and fair elections in the midst of the pandemic of COVID-19 will be very challenging. Physical distancing, quarantine measures, and travel restrictions make many election-related activities difficult. In-person political events, rallies, the registration of voters, voting, and observation all risk the transmission of COVID-19. Some governments have postponed elections until they can mitigate these challenges more effectively, while others are using COVID-19 as an excuse to restrict fundamental freedoms or the ability of opposition parties to compete fairly. Women and marginalized populations face even greater challenges to participating in elections because of the effects of COVID-19.

Despite the pandemic, I understand that USAID is adapting our approaches, identifying innovative solutions, and continuing our election-related programming in sub-Saharan Africa. For example in the Republic of Mali, USAID worked with the National Electoral Commission to disseminate proper health messaging and promote safe practices in coordination with the Ministry of Health in advance of national legislative elections. This included ensuring voter-registration and polling centers had adequate hygiene safeguards and procedures in place, to reduce the risk to voters and election workers. USAID also funded a citizen election-observation group to adapt its methodology to monitor public-health measures during the elections.

If confirmed, I will make supporting USAID's investments in democracy, rights and governance, including to promote free and fair elections, a top priority.

Question. COVID-19 presents a governance crisis. In your view, how can USAID better respond to rising authoritarian opportunism in the region; and encourage nascent democracies to develop inclusive responses?

Answer. In an effort to prevent further closure of space for civil society to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) should bolster our support for local civic organizations, independent media, journalists, and citizen-responsive governance. Maintaining and improving the ability of citizens to exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms will lead to greater long-term stability.

Anti-corruption efforts will take on renewed importance, because we need to ensure our assistance and resources related to COVID-19 are used for their intended purposes. In the Republic of Senegal, USAID's civil-society partners are providing critical oversight of the Government's humanitarian assistance, and have called out potential fraud and waste at the national level.

Several parliaments have passed legislation that will inhibit democratic processes and would otherwise spark protests. Some regimes are downplaying the threat of COVID-19, and are arresting and detaining individuals who speak out. If confirmed, I will emphasize the imperative of preventing democratic backsliding, which began before the COVID-19 pandemic, and now has the potential to become worse.

Migratory Pests

Question. FEWS Net anticipates that desert locusts are expected to contribute to an increase the number of people in food security crisis and requiring food assistance across areas of East Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda) through at least September 2020.

- How is USAID responding to desert locusts? What issues are you facing?

Answer. To date, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided nearly \$19.6 million to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to scale up surveillance and pest-control activities through direct interventions and local capacity-building. This funding is helping the Governments and farmers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Federal Republic of Somalia, and the Republics of Kenya and Sudan control infestations within their bor-

ders, as well as guard against additional invasions. USAID also provides other long-term funding to protect food security and livelihoods for the people of this region, as well as strengthen institutional capacity for detecting, monitoring, reporting on, and controlling desert locusts.

USAID's funding has enabled response teams to obtain critical equipment in recent weeks, including aircraft and vehicles for surveillance and control. In addition, USAID's programs are training community members, local officials, and scouts on the early detection, surveillance, and monitoring of, and reporting on, locusts. To detect and track the pests, USAID is also providing equipment like Global Positioning System equipment, radios, and eLocust3 tablets-specialized systems that gather field data and transmit them in real time to government officials and the staff of the FAO. This information allows decision-makers to assess the current situation, forecast the movement and impact of the locusts, provide early warnings to communities, and take necessary actions to help control infestations.

USAID also has disaster experts in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and the republic of South Sudan who are assessing humanitarian needs and coordinating response efforts with local governments and humanitarian organizations.

I understand that, as of mid-May, limited surveillance capacity and heavy rainfall across the region were hindering efforts to scale up response interventions and preventing the optimal use of available aircraft. Additional field monitors are needed throughout the region to survey vast territories infested by locusts; staff are also needed to direct aerial spraying in Kenya. Coordination gaps between governmental authorities and pest-control teams have also hampered surveillance and control activities in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia in recent weeks. As a result, the FAO continues to report a shortage of surveillance data across the region, including in heavy breeding areas.

In response, USAID is mobilizing humanitarian and development partners to participate in locust-monitoring by using the eLocust3M mobile application, which collects and transmits data on the locations and stages of locust swarms in real time via satellite from the field to national locust centers. USAID is also engaging with other donors and host-country governments to promote the use of eLocust3M, including by encouraging officials to identify key staff from each country's Ministry of Agriculture and related pest-control departments to participate in FAO-led training-of-trainers sessions on the use of the application. Access to robust real-time monitoring data is critical for informing daily control operations, because it enables teams to determine the location of the locusts accurately, adjust the application of pesticides to local conditions, and compile precise flight plans that maximize the use of aircraft and other resources.

- How is COVID-19 impacting desert locust response efforts?

Answer. I understand that locust-surveillance and pest-control operations have continued largely uninterrupted in most countries. However, travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic have affected the supply-chain and delayed deliveries of critical equipment and supplies, including vehicles and aircraft for surveillance and biopesticides, which has challenged efforts to scale up this large-scale regional response. Both the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and affected governments in the region are adapting their procurement plans for key commodities continuously, including by sourcing some materials locally. The FAO has also addressed anticipated shortfalls of pesticides by finding local suppliers or resolving earlier disruptions to the supply-chain; as of mid-May, pesticide supplies were sufficient to support control operations in most countries at least through June.

Travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to continue posing challenges and could delay planned interventions in the coming weeks. COVID-19-related confinement measures-which require travelers to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine period upon entering target countries-could affect the FAO's plans to deploy skilled logisticians to affected areas and postpone the arrival of additional surveillance aircraft and flying crews. This would further limit the flexible use of air assets within the region.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is continuously monitoring the situation and engaging with the FAO, as well as with host-country governments and other key stakeholders, to develop timely solutions in response to these COVID-related interruptions. USAID is meeting weekly with the FAO to track the agency's progress, identify operational obstacles, and explore solutions to outstanding constraints. USAID is also assisting host governments to prioritize the response to desert locusts by facilitating the importation of essential supplies.

If confirmed, I will make ensuring USAID can continue to respond to the desert locusts in the midst of COVID-19 a top priority.

Gender Equality

Question. Gender inequality in African countries is a present and persistent issue that stands in the way of women's and girls' rights, health, and development. This inequality will also continue to hamper the development and security of their communities and nations.

- As Assistant Administrator, how will you prioritize advancing gender equality and stemming the harmful practices/outcomes that result?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) follows the basic principle that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential to achieving peace, democracy, prosperity, and security across Africa.

We cannot solve the major economic, security, governance, health, and educational challenges of our time without the contribution of women and girls at all levels of society. Investing in women and girls is one of the most powerful ways to improve standards of living and develop vibrant civil societies and private sectors.

If confirmed, I will ensure gender equality and women's empowerment remain top priorities for me and the Africa Bureau. Under my leadership as Assistant Administrator, USAID will continue to help women and girls reach their full potential by prioritizing their political and economic participation; promoting their equal access to high-quality education, health care, property rights, jobs, and financial resources; and protecting their physical and emotional safety.

If confirmed, I will prioritize the implementation of the White House-led Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative; the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act; and the Women, Peace, and Security Act.

Question. How do you plan to work with local actors, particularly African women themselves, to address these challenges?

Answer. As part of the Journey to Self-Reliance, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is elevating women's local leadership under our New Partnerships Initiative. USAID engages the ingenuity and knowledge of women's organizations that are connected to the people and the communities we serve. In doing so, the Agency ensures women have an opportunity to be agents of their communities' growth and prosperity for generations to come.

USAID also emphasizes a comprehensive approach; ensuring adolescent girls are educated, healthy, economically and socially empowered, and free from violence and discrimination, further promoting global development, security, and prosperity. If confirmed, I will ensure the Africa Bureau will continue to partner with a variety of organizations and empower women and girls with information, skills, and opportunities.

Nigeria

Question. In recent months, the Government and security forces of Nigeria have restricted the humanitarian operating environment in the country's northeast, where more than seven million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. In September 2019, the Nigerian military temporarily suspended the relief agencies Mercy Corps and Action against Hunger and investigated several others through an extra-legal process, sending a chilling effect throughout the humanitarian community. In addition, passage of the Law to Establish Borno State Agency for Sustainable Development and Humanitarian Response (BASH) last month poses a significant threat to organizations providing lifesaving assistance in the northeast. Among its most problematic components, this law imposes a one percent tax on humanitarian assistance, including U.S. Government contributions; mandates bureaucratic governmental approval of all assistance projects; and penalizes those accused of non-compliance with heavy fines and imprisonment.

- Does USAID have a plan of action for addressing these challenges with the Government of Nigeria, including Nigerian security forces and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, to improve its coordination with humanitarian organizations, prevent the suspension of or restrictions on humanitarian organizations, and to ensure that the Government of Nigeria upholds International Humanitarian Law?

Answer. I understand the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has received assurances from the Borno State Government that Agency funding will not be subject to the fee imposed on humanitarian assistance. The Borno State Agency for Sustainable Development and Humanitarian Response has relaxed several other measures of law following concerted engagement by the international community with Borno State authorities.

Additionally, I understand USAID will continue to engage on specific issues with Nigerian officials, including State and Federal civil authorities and military leader-

ship. For example, USAID/Nigeria Mission Director Stephen Haykin recently spoke with Borno State authorities, including Governor Zulum, to improve coordination between the State government and humanitarian organizations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

USAID is a regular participant at meetings convened by the U.S. Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission with Nigerian Government officials, such as the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, to discuss challenges with humanitarian assistance. USAID plans to use the Government of Nigeria's newly-created National Humanitarian Coordination Council as a conduit to address our concerns with Nigerian restrictions on humanitarian assistance.

USAID liaises closely with the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Abuja and uses the Humanitarian Country Team to address challenges faced by the international-aid community. Finally, USAID's support to the Nigeria International Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Forum has created a strong advocacy platform and improved the coordination of humanitarian NGOs.

If confirmed, I will take this issue seriously and do all I can to ensure the life-saving assistance from the American people reaches those who need it most in Northeast Nigeria. For example, if confirmed, I will continue to press the Government of Nigeria to follow international humanitarian law, improve its coordination with humanitarian organizations, and remove restrictions on NGOs.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO SANDRA E. CLARK BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

COVID-19

Question. Recent reports on COVID-19 incidents indicate that Burkina Faso has had 750 cases and 52 deaths. How accurate are these figures? Senator Booker noted during your testimony that there are 11 ventilators in Burkina Faso, yet Burkina Faso is not on the list of countries slated to receive ventilators from the U.S.? Why? You mentioned during your testimony that if confirmed you intend to work with CDC and USAID to address COVID. Through what specific programs and actions?

Answer. As is the case with many African countries, testing rates in Burkina Faso are low. However, we are encouraged that Burkina Faso recently expanded its testing policy and now tests contacts of patients, and not just symptomatic patients. Through close coordination with international donors, Burkina Faso has reportedly received additional ventilators.

The United States is providing \$4.6 million in COVID-19 related assistance to Burkina Faso. These funds are intended to support technical assistance and coordination, including point of entry, surveillance, supplies, and workforce training, and other crucial needs relating to the pandemic. Since 2018, U.S. Global Health Security Agenda funding has helped Burkina Faso establish a national public health emergency operations center (CORUS), which is playing a pivotal leadership and coordination role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I will lead the U.S. Mission to continue working closely with CORUS and other international donors as we address the COVID-19 challenge.

Question. Authoritarian leaders on the continent appear to be using COVID to justify crackdowns and limit freedoms, and further entrench and consolidate power. Is Burkina Faso at risk for the same? Why or why not? What specific actions will you take if confirmed to counter actions that limit civic freedoms and close democratic space?

Answer. There have been isolated reports of violent incidents involving police responding to civilians' refusals to abide by COVID-related curfews and travel restrictions, but these do not appear to be part of any systematic effort to leverage COVID as a means of justifying limits to freedom. If confirmed, I will continue our open dialogue with the Government of Burkina Faso on the importance of governing democratically and respecting fundamental freedoms and human rights.

Democracy and Governance / Human Rights

Question. Burkina Faso is due to hold national elections in November. What in your view are the challenges facing Burkina Faso as we draw closer to elections? What U.S. programs and activities are currently underway to support elections and how have they been impacted?

Answer. The Burkinabe leadership and the independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) have reiterated their commitment to holding presidential and legis-

lative elections as scheduled in November 2020. Nevertheless, the Government faces steep challenges including: facilitating the vote of nearly 850,000 internally displaced people, delayed voter registration because of COVID-19 related shutdowns, and a complicated security environment that limits movement election officials attempting to prepare and voters wishing to cast their ballot.

The United States is providing support for peaceful, transparent, and inclusive national and local elections in Burkina Faso. USAID is devoting \$2 million for a 24-month program to strengthen election administration, including planning for electoral security and enable civil society organizations to fulfill their role of increasing citizen awareness of and participation in the electoral process. State Department's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization (CSO) will fund a \$500,000 "Relief and Recovery Program" to help prevent election violence. If confirmed, I will work closely with all stakeholders to support elections that are free and fair and viewed by the majority of the population as credible.

Question. A local prosecutor in the east of Burkina Faso indicated an inquiry has been opened after 12 people detained on suspicion of terrorism were found dead in their police cells. How do you plan to engage with the Burkinabe on human rights/rule of law concerns if confirmed? How will the U.S.-Burkinabe security assistance relationship be impacted if the investigation is not credible and there is no accountability for what may turn out to have been extrajudicial killings

Answer. Human rights abuses and violations by security forces, armed civilian militias, as well as terrorist groups remain a pressing issue in Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso has created a National Commission for Human Rights to address human rights concerns and USAID just started implementation of a three-year project to strengthen the capacity of the National Human Rights Commission to carry out its mandate. If confirmed, I will continue support for this important initiative. I will also push the Government to investigate all allegations of human rights abuses and violations, prosecute those responsible for such crimes, and implement an aggressive diplomatic strategy to advocate for the respect of human rights by Burkinabe security forces. I will continue, if confirmed, the Embassy's efforts to engage the Government to investigate and prosecute terrorists while respecting their human rights, including fair trial guarantees. Under my leadership, if I am confirmed, the Embassy will continue to vet all potential candidates for U.S. security assistance to ensure that no U.S. security assistance is provided to any security forces unit where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights, as required under the Leahy Law. U.S. foreign assistance should be used to assist the Burkinabe in developing the capacity to promote human rights through-out its various security sectors.

Partnerships

Question. During your testimony, you mentioned the U.S. French partnership as a focus areas. What is the status of the Pentagon's review of troop deployment in Africa and how is that impacting our relationship with the French?

Answer. Cooperation with partners and allies such as France is an integral part of U.S. Government engagement in Burkina Faso and the wider Sahel. Absent U.S. support, Burkina Faso and the region could experience serious setbacks. The rapid increase in insecurity over the past year, which continues to move south towards the West African littoral states, indicates that Burkina now faces a persistent fight for stability and peace. Success in Burkina Faso will determine whether this country is a firewall against or a gateway to the expansion of violent extremism in West Africa.

Much of the State Department's security assistance does not depend on the U.S. military for implementation and oversight, and I am committed, if confirmed, to maintaining engagement in line with U.S. objectives. I would refer you to the Defense Department for additional information.

Congressional Consultations

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

Answer. If confirmed and during my tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso, I would look forward to briefing Members of Congress and/or their staff when I am in Washington, as organized through the Department of State's Bureau of Legislative Affairs.

Support for Democracy

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

Answer. I consider the promotion of human rights and of democracy as intrinsic to U.S. diplomacy. Respect for human rights and a democratic process that respects the will of the people are integral to progress on development and security. Throughout my career, for example from serving as an election observer to push for free and fair elections in The Philippines and Georgia, to working on programming and strategies to strengthen democracy as Deputy Coordinator for Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, to advocating for reform in Guinea-Bissau when Deputy Chief of Mission in Dakar, Senegal, I have been an advocate for these core values. I have also advocated for reforms and anti-corruption measures to strengthen the rule of law, and met with civil society leaders, helping to support their work on human rights. I have made sure to include diverse representation in embassy activities and programming, such as nominations for U.S. Government exchanges. I look forward, should I be confirmed, to doing all I can to strengthen the young democracy that is Burkina Faso, to advocate for human rights, and incorporate these values in all my work as Ambassador and in that of our mission.

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

Answer. Our efforts to advance good governance and democracy are facilitated by a population that already strongly values fundamental freedoms, as well as a vibrant civil society that advances good governance and anti-corruption efforts. This political culture makes the Burkinabe natural partners for the United States.

Answer. As a young democracy in an unstable region, Burkina Faso faces severe challenges, foremost among them, violent extremists' organizations who seek to destroy the gains Burkina Faso has made to date. The Government of Burkina Faso's challenges with respect to projecting its presence in ungoverned areas and its tenuous relationship with certain communities, as well as a lack of economic opportunity are among the drivers of insecurity in Burkina Faso. Strong democratic institutions that provide marginalized communities with a voice and way to resolve their grievances are critical to prevent further terrorist recruitment. The provision by the Government of basic services to its citizens will offer an alternative to terrorist groups.

Answer. Insecurity stemming from terrorist attacks has driven Burkina Faso's leaders, for example, to adopt revisions to its penal code to prohibit media outlets from publishing news relating to terrorist attacks or military counterterrorism operations, and this has prompted self-censorship among journalists and civil society activists. If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Burkina Faso to engage with its citizens in a way that strengthens its legitimacy.

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

Answer. The United States plays a critical role in advocating for democracy in Burkina Faso through diplomatic engagement, which I will ensure continues if confirmed as Ambassador. I will continue the Embassy's advocacy of press freedom in Burkina Faso and seek to avoid any backsliding on press freedom. I commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Burkina Faso and to following and addressing obstacles to governance, rule of law, and threats to human rights and press freedom.

Additionally, our efforts through cross-cutting programs aim to strengthen the capacity of national and local governments to address nuanced underlying grievances, societal cleavages, and economic drivers that can contribute to insecurity. I will be a strong advocate of these programs should I be confirmed.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead the U.S. Government in its efforts to strengthen the capacity of national and local governments to address the nuanced underlying grievances and economic drivers that can lead to insecurity using every tool avail-

able. For instance, the Public Affairs Small Grants program supports training of women and youth to participate in elections. Public Diplomacy programs launch campaigns to inspire civic engagement in local communities. USAID programs continue to build the legislative capacities, oversight, and accountability of the National Assembly. USAID works to support Burkina Faso's vibrant civil society organizations to play a fundamental role by advocating on behalf of marginalized populations and promoting active and responsible participation. Over 100 members of the independent electoral commission (CENI) at the central, provincial, and municipal levels have benefited from USAID training.

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

Answer. Burkina Faso has a vibrant civil society. I commit, if confirmed, to meet with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights non-governmental organizations in Burkina Faso. I will continue to engage civil society actors that seek to hold government institutions accountable for improved governance and rule of law and discourage the Government from restricting or penalizing NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures.

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

Answer. There is broad support in Burkina Faso for the democratic electoral process; upcoming elections are critical to rooting Burkina Faso's nascent democracy. I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties, should I be confirmed. Increasing the participation of women and youth in the election process in Burkina Faso is a central tenet of the United States' election assistance. Embassy Ouagadougou has sent dozens of young leaders including directors of the CENI on democracy-focused International Visitor Leadership Programs (IVLP) in the United States. In addition to political and civil society leaders, the Embassy has supported journalists and security directors on IVLP programs focusing on elections coverage and elections security. If confirmed, I plan to engage these alumni upon their return and empower them to organize programs around the country promoting civic engagement, democracy, and good governance.

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

Answer. Burkina Faso ranks 36 out of 180 according to the 2019 World Press Freedom Index. Regrettably, rising insecurity has led to revisions of Burkina Faso's penal code that prohibits media outlets from publishing any news related to terrorist attacks or military counterterrorism operations, prompting a growing climate of self-censorship among journalists. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure this trend does not develop into a backsliding of press freedom, continuing the Embassy's advocacy of press freedom. I commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Burkina Faso and to using public opportunities to defend and protect these core values.

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

Answer. Disinformation and propaganda disseminated by violent extremist organizations and governments such as Russia and China are a concern in Burkina Faso and across the region. If confirmed, I will lead my team in countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country.

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

Answer. Protecting workers' rights, especially the freedoms of association and collective bargaining, is essential to building durable democracies as well as achieving sustainable growth for prosperity. If confirmed, I will commit to engaging with the Government and the people of Burkina Faso on these important rights.

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

Answer. While there are no laws criminalizing LGBTI status or conduct, these individuals are often victims of discrimination. If confirmed, I will meet with representatives of the LGBTI community and advocacy groups and include them in Embassy outreach and programming. I will encourage the Government of Burkina Faso to proactively protect members of the LGBTQ community from harmful societal stigmas.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO SANDRA E. CLARK BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

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

Answer. I consider the promotion of human rights and of democracy as intrinsic to U.S. diplomacy. Respect for human rights and a democratic process that respects the will of the people are integral to progress on development and security. Throughout my career, for example from serving as an election observer to push for free and fair elections in The Philippines and Georgia to working on programming and strategies to strengthen democracy as Deputy Coordinator for Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, to advocating for reform in Guinea-Bissau when Deputy Chief of Mission in Dakar, Senegal, I have sought to be an advocate for these core values. I have also advocated for reforms and anti-corruption measures to strengthen the rule of law, and met with civil society leaders, helping to support their work on human rights. I have made sure to include diverse representation in embassy activities and programming, such as nominations for U.S. Government exchanges. I look forward, should I be confirmed, to doing all I can to strengthen the young democracy that is Burkina Faso, to advocate for human rights, and incorporate these values in all my work as Ambassador and in that of our mission.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Burkina Faso? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Burkina Faso? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Human rights abuses and violations by security forces, armed civilian militias, as well as terrorist groups remain the most pressing human rights issues in Burkina Faso. If confirmed, I will continue to push the Government to investigate allegations of human rights abuses and violations, prosecute those found guilty of such crimes, and implement an aggressive diplomatic strategy to advocate for the respect of human rights by Burkinabe security forces. I will also continue to push the Government to investigate and prosecute terrorists.

If confirmed, I will draw on all existing USG resources to assist the Government in reducing the potential violence and harm by community based armed groups that were recently created to supplement the military. I will work with the Government to establish a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program that engages entire communities, responds to local drivers of terrorism, and provides alternative options for support and recovery assistance to women and youth subjected to violence by terrorists. If confirmed, I will work with all actors in country to ensure free and fair presidential and legislative elections scheduled for November 2020 and municipal elections the following Spring.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Burkina Faso in advancing human rights, civil society, and democracy in general?

Answer. Burkina Faso's justice system is overburdened and understaffed, creating a case backlog and a prolonged timeline for holding perpetrators accountable for human rights abuses. Widespread insecurity throughout the country has limited investigators' access to crime scenes as well as the availability of witnesses and evidence. Rising insecurity has also led to revisions of Burkina Faso's penal code that prohibits media outlets from publishing any news related to terrorist attacks or military counterterrorism operations, prompting a growing climate of self-censorship

among journalists and civil society activists. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure press freedom is strong and does not lead to a closing space for civil society. I will also work closely with the Burkinabe Government and its independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), as well as other parties to ensure that despite steep challenges the upcoming elections are viewed as credible by the majority of the population.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Burkina Faso? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. I commit, if confirmed, to meet with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights non-governmental organizations in Burkina Faso. I also will ensure that the Embassy continues to vet all potential candidates for U.S. assistance to ensure that no U.S. security assistance is provided to any foreign security forces unit where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights, as required under the Leahy Law. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure training on rule of law and armed conflict and human rights are provided in conjunction with as much of our security training as possible in the future. Such training is consistent with shared values and failure to abide by human rights makes our work more difficult.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Burkina Faso to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Burkina Faso?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with the Government, should there be cases of people who have been unlawfully or arbitrarily detained. Burkina Faso's justice department is currently investigating multiple allegations of human rights abuses toward civilians and refugees by its armed forces during counterterrorism operations. If confirmed, I will urge the Government to complete these investigations and hold perpetrators accountable.

Question. Will you engage with Burkina Faso on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will engage on these issues with the Government and other stakeholders. I will ensure, if confirmed, that embassy personnel and U.S. Government programming address and promote these issues as well. The Burkinabe seek cooperation with U.S. personnel across a broad spectrum, to include the sectors of security, military, human rights, justice, and health, among others. The United States plays a critical role in advocating for democracy and human rights in Burkina Faso through diplomatic and other engagement. U.S. Government programs build legislative capacities, oversight, and accountability of the National Assembly, and support Burkina Faso's vibrant civil society organizations to play a fundamental role by advocating on behalf of marginalized populations and promoting active and responsible participation. I will continue to support these programs if confirmed as Ambassador.

Diversity

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

Answer. I value a workplace where each individual is treated with respect and dignity and would make clear my expectation that the mission in Burkina Faso is such a workplace, should I be confirmed. I have endeavored throughout my career to be a colleague, mentor and leader in support of these principles and would continue to do so, setting a strong example. I would ensure that everyone understands the importance of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles, that we abide by them on a daily basis, and that there are well-trained and proactive EEO counselors who conduct trainings and other activities to underscore the importance of promoting diversity and inclusion for both American and local employees. I would endeavor to recruit staff who reflect the diversity of the United States. I would look for ways to solicit feedback from all members of the embassy community on the work environment and take measures as appropriate to address concerns, and would encourage cross-cultural understanding between American and local staff. I

would ensure that embassy staff are aware of and can tap into all the resources the Department of State has available, should I be confirmed.?

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy in Burkina Faso are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I would set an example as a leader who values and fosters a diverse and inclusive environment and make clear my expectations that each supervisor does the same. I would encourage supervisors to take advantage of training and provide more informal ways to further their skills as supervisors. I would ask supervisors to pay attention to the professional development of each person they supervise, stressing that EEO principles are an integral part of their work requirements, and encourage them to be proactive in fostering a diverse and inclusive environment.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

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

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

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

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

Answer. My investment portfolio includes funds that may have or acquire investments in companies with a presence in Burkina Faso; however, all but three of these funds are exempt from the conflicts of interest rules. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Corruption

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Burkina Faso specifically?

Answer. Political corruption erodes state legitimacy and ultimately degrades the rule of law. Corruption can also undermine support for democracy, especially in a fragile democracy like Burkina Faso. Corruption must be addressed in order to root Burkina Faso's nascent democracy, attract additional U.S. investment to Burkina Faso, and encourage economic growth. If confirmed, I would encourage the Government of Burkina Faso to invigorate its anti-corruption efforts.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Burkina Faso and efforts to address and reduce it by that Government?

Answer. Corruption continues to be a problem in Burkina Faso and throughout the region. Burkinabe law provides criminal penalties for official corruption and the Government has created official entities responsible for addressing corruption. Prosecutors recently pressed charges against members of the Government for their involvement in the illegal export of gold. In 2019, Burkina Faso met the Department of State's minimum requirements for fiscal transparency. If confirmed, I would encourage the Government of Burkina Faso to invigorate its anti-corruption efforts.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Burkina Faso?

Answer. In keeping with U.S. strategic interests, the U.S. Embassy in Burkina Faso is committed to a partnership with the Government of Burkina Faso, and other technical and financial partners, for positive security, governance, and socio-economic outcomes for the Burkinabe people. These desired outcomes include helping the Government bolster security and stability, strengthen the country's social compact, and reduce the population's vulnerability to violent extremist recruitment and attacks. Our efforts to advance good governance and democracy are facilitated by a population that strongly values freedom of expression and freedom of religion, as well as a vibrant civil society that advances good governance and anti-corruption efforts. This political culture makes the Burkinabe natural partners for the United

States. If confirmed, I would strongly support anti-corruption programming, and advocate for the completion of investigations related to corruption, which will promote confidence in state authorities and counter violent extremism. I would continue to engage civil society actors that seek to hold government institutions accountable for improved governance and rule of law.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO WILLIAM ELLISON GRAYSON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

U.S.-Estonia Security Relations

Question. I was pleased to see that in your opening statement you committed to working to “deepen our defense cooperation with Estonia.” However, last October President Trump did the opposite when he diverted nearly \$16 million in European Deterrence Initiative funding from Estonia to fund his border wall. I understand that the administration did not inform the Government of Estonia that it was making this cut prior to the public announcement.

- If the administration sought to redirect EDI Estonia funds in the future to the President’s border wall, would you support such a decision?

Answer. Last year, the U.S. Department of Defense deferred a number of military construction projects to provide funding for military construction projects determined necessary in connection with the national emergency declared by the President on February 15, 2019, and continued in effect on February 13, 2020. I will support the administration’s decisions on allocation of EDI funds while working to clearly convey to the Government of Estonia that the administration remains committed to EDI. The administration’s request for an additional \$4.5 billion in FY 2021 funds to support a more robust U.S. military rotational presence throughout the European theater shows our commitment to Europe’s, and Estonia’s, security. These funds will go toward increasing training and exercises, continuing placement of prepositioned equipment to support the rapid deployment of forces to Europe if required, improving infrastructure, and expanding engagements to strengthen the capacity of our Allies and partners to defend themselves. The U.S. is strongly committed to the security of Estonia as a NATO Ally and strong partner. If confirmed as Ambassador, I would push for investment to increase Estonia’s readiness, enhance its deterrence and defense capabilities, and meet new challenges.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to inform and consult with the Government of Estonia on decisions relevant to its security?

Answer. The United States and Estonia have been close friends for nearly a century. This was exemplified most clearly in the 1940 Sumner Welles Declaration, which forcefully stated the United States’ refusal to recognize the forced annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania by the Soviet Union. The Welles Declaration made clear America’s steadfast commitment to the Baltic nations’ freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. We work closely with Estonia as a NATO Ally to counter terrorism on a global scale. We partner to address state-sponsored threats posed by Russia and the People’s Republic of China to subversively attack America’s commitment to Europe, undermine transatlantic unity, and weaken European institutions and governments. If confirmed, I commit to continue this close cooperation and inform and consult with the Government of Estonia on decisions relevant to its security.

Question. I understand that the State Department is considering adding Estonia to the European Recapitalization Incentive Program (ERIP).

- What is the status of discussions with Estonia regarding ERIP, particularly regarding any bidding laws that could preclude it from purchasing American equipment?

Answer. The State Department and Defense Department work closely with the Estonian Ministry of Defense to allocate U.S. security assistance, including Foreign Military Financing (FMF) which funds ERIP (European Recapitalization Incentive Program). A partner must have Russian-origin or Soviet-legacy equipment to divest in return for an ERIP grant to acquire U.S. equipment. According to Estonian officials, Estonia divested almost all Soviet-legacy equipment prior to ERIP’s establishment in 2018. U.S. company Lewis Machine & Tool won an \$81 million contract with Estonia in 2019 to supply the Estonian Defense Forces with automatic firearms and auxiliary equipment over a seven-year period, showing U.S. competitiveness in Estonia’s arms sales market.

Domestic Issues in Estonia

Question. As you said in your opening statement, Estonia's leadership in cyber and information technology presents many opportunities to increase U.S.-Estonia relations.

- What are the biggest barriers to increased U.S. investment in Estonia's tech sector, and if confirmed how will you work to address them?

Answer. The United States and Estonia work closely together to drive technological innovation. The U.S.-Estonian trade relationship has great growth potential. If confirmed, I will work to expand our economic ties, promote U.S. exports, and attract additional Estonian investment in the United States to support U.S. jobs. Estonia's membership in the EU means investors and U.S. firms wanting to do business in Estonia face limited barriers to entry, particularly if they are already operating in other EU member countries. This, coupled with a high level of government transparency, means U.S. firms face few regulatory challenges in Estonia. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will work with the Government and the private sector to strengthen our trade and economic ties. I will actively engage AmCham Estonia and monitor policy challenges that affect U.S. companies. I will promote global U.S. economic policy priorities, including intellectual property protections. In addition, I will actively promote the SelectUSA program to encourage Estonian firms to invest in U.S. expansion and create jobs in the United States.

Question. Given Estonia's leadership on cybersecurity, how can the U.S. increase collaboration and best practice sharing with Estonia to help address our own cybersecurity challenges?

Answer. The United States and Estonia cooperate closely on cybersecurity and share a common vision of an open, interoperable, reliable and secure cyberspace. We are committed to developing a common approach to network security and ensuring a vibrant 5G ecosystem based on free and fair competition, transparency, and the rule of law. The United States and Estonia issued a joint declaration on 5G telecommunications security last year and we engage in joint exercises and conferences on cyber cooperation. If confirmed as Ambassador, I commit to working to realize our common vision of an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure cyberspace based on a framework of responsible state behavior in cyberspace which includes the affirmation of the applicability of international law to state behavior in cyberspace, the promotion of voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible state behavior during peacetime, and the development and implementation of cyber confidence building measures to reduce the risk of conflict and escalation in cyberspace. I will seek increased collaboration and future cooperation with Estonia to include cyber incident response, personnel exchanges, and increased exercise participation and information sharing.

Question. The Conservative People's Party of Estonia (EKRE) is a member of the ruling coalition and leads the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Information Technology, among others.

- What is your view of the disturbing ideas reportedly espoused by members of this party, such as suggesting top Estonian politicians are "secret Jews"; saying Estonia's President "becomes so emotionally upset as a woman that she makes a decision right away"; and calling for a "white Estonia"?

Answer. The March 2019 Parliamentary elections resulted in a new ruling coalition that includes the far-right Conservative People's Party of Estonia (EKRE). I agree with the many Estonian officials and political leaders who have condemned those divisive statements. If confirmed, I will listen to and engage with people representing the full spectrum of responsible political viewpoints, but will make clear that hateful and divisive rhetoric has no place in democratic society. The Estonian people are among the most pro-American populations in Europe and if confirmed, I will work tirelessly to maintain close and productive relations with the Government of Estonia.

Question. In your interactions with EKRE officials who support such views, do you commit to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Estonia?

Answer. Estonia has consistently ranked near the top of various international indices that measure democratic protections, media freedoms, and government transparency. The country is a founding member of the U.S.-led International Religious Freedom Alliance and has made the promotion of human rights one of the centerpieces of its ongoing U.N. Security Council term. If confirmed, I commit to defend human rights and dignity of all people in Estonia and will work to foster dialogue between the Government and civil society and to connect Estonian civil society with U.S. experts and practitioners to share best practices and experience.

Question. How will you specifically support efforts to increase integration of Russian-speakers in Estonia and help the Government of Estonia counter Russian disinformation targeting this population?

Answer. The social and linguistic divide between Estonia's ethnic Estonian majority and Russian-speaking minority presents opportunities for foreign disinformation campaigns. These campaigns target the 25-30 percent of Estonia's population that speak Russian. If confirmed, I will work with the Estonian Government to implement outreach efforts that promote understanding between the two linguistic groups to strengthen social cohesion.

Question. If confirmed, how will you directly engage with Estonia's Russian-speakers?

Answer. Our U.S. Embassy in Tallinn uses a wide range of public diplomacy tools and resources to advance shared security policy objectives, promote transatlantic partnerships, and support Estonian efforts to advance social cohesion as part of a broader U.S. effort to reach Russian-speaking audiences in Estonia. If confirmed as Ambassador, I would emphasize English language, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs as vital tools to engage young Russian speakers and strengthen their connections to Estonia and Europe. In addition to direct engagement with targeted youth audiences, I will continue our collaboration with Estonian institutions and organizations to expand activities in key communities, and will leverage social media. I will prioritize cultural programming and academic and cultural exchanges to invest in our long-term partnership with the younger generation and promote accurate information about U.S. policy. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the embassy's active engagement to strengthen our close friendship with the Estonian people.

Democracy and Human Rights

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

Answer. I have made the promotion of democracy and human rights a priority in my private sector and public sector roles. I am proud to have helped select over 100 White House Fellows, as a Commissioner and a regional judge, who were committed to human rights and democracy. I have also served on non-profit boards (including colleges and universities) where I prioritized these issues. If confirmed, I will ensure that the promotion of human rights and respect for individual human dignity remain central in the work of the United States Embassy in Estonia.

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

Answer. Estonia is a vibrant democracy with resilient institutions, established respect for rule of law, and a free press. Estonia is also a strong partner sharing our values and principles on human rights—there are no reported cases of political prisoners or people unjustly targeted by Estonia. Around the world, corruption saps economic growth, hinders development, destabilizes governments, undermines democracy, and provides openings for dangerous transnational criminal organizations and malign actors. The Government of Estonia has passed and adheres to laws aimed at controlling corruption. Estonia consistently receives high scores in international rankings for being one of the least corrupt countries in the world. A 2019 Transparency International report ranked Estonia as the 18th least corrupt country, earning Estonia a score higher than France, its Baltic neighbors, and Poland.

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

Answer. Estonia is a vibrant democracy with strong institutions, and through organizations such as the Estonian e-Governance academy, shares its best practices on transparency and accountability with other countries. If confirmed, I will engage with Estonian officials on promoting democracy, good governance, and anticorruption reforms, measures, and programs. Through relevant U.S. programs and engagement, I will also deepen and expand our cooperation with Estonia on ways to promote transparency and respect for rule of law. I will leverage available U.S. assistance programs to promote good governance, democracy, and human rights in Estonia. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about how Estonia has

made the promotion of digital governance innovations the centerpiece of its international assistance programs, and discussing with the Government how the U.S. and Estonia can work together to increase anti-corruption capacities in third countries.

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

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will leverage available U.S. assistance programs to promote good governance, democracy, and human rights in Estonia. I will also seek opportunities for the U.S. and Estonia to partner to increase anti-corruption capacities in third countries. Estonia has drawn on its transition experiences and cyber expertise to provide specialized development assistance in cybersecurity and the use of information technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in the public sector. In addition to partnering with the U.S. Government to support development projects in Moldova and Georgia through the Department of State's Emerging Donor Challenge Fund, Estonia mentors Eastern Partnership countries and other emerging democracies through the Tallinn-based e-Governance Center.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Estonia? 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 engage with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations across the United States and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Estonia on a wide array of human rights. While there are no reports of efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs or civil society at present in Estonia, and the Government generally takes steps to investigate and punish abuses, if confirmed I will continue to monitor for possible efforts to restrict NGOs or civil society and ensure vetting procedures for U.S. assistance to Estonia are implemented consistent with U.S. law.

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

Answer. Estonia is a vibrant, multi-party, parliamentary democracy with resilient institutions, established respect for rule of law, and a free press. If confirmed, I will advocate for the continued participation of women, minorities and youth within political parties in Estonia.

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

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, my embassy team and I will actively engage with Estonia on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures. Estonia consistently rates very highly on indices of press and internet freedom, ranking 11th in the 2019 World Press Freedom Index. Estonia has a well-developed and professional media industry. The editors-in-chief of each publication/outlet set their own editorial agendas and there has been a lively debate about editorial decisions and political preferences since the March 2019 parliamentary elections. If confirmed, I commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Estonia.

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

Answer. The U.S. supports the Estonian Government's initiatives to continue integration efforts between the majority ethnic Estonian population and the country's Russian-speaking minority. This outreach protects social cohesion, builds civic identity and trust in the national government, and encourages resiliency against disinformation campaigns by malicious foreign actors. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country. We will work to foster dialogue between the Government

and civil society and to connect Estonian civil society with U.S. experts and practitioners to share best practices and experience.

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

Answer. Estonian law, related regulations, and statutory instruments provide workers with the right to form and join independent unions of their choice, bargain collectively, and conduct legal strikes. The law allows unions to conduct their activities without interference and prohibits antiunion discrimination. According to the U.S. Department of State's 2019 Human Rights Report, parties in Estonia freely engaged in collective bargaining, and there were no reports that the Government or parties interfered in the functioning of workers' organizations. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will actively engage with the Estonian Government on the continued protection of these rights for labor groups, including independent trade unions.

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

Answer. Estonian law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. While the law is not specific regarding the forms of sexual orientation and gender identity covered, the general understanding is that it encompasses lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals. According to the U.S. Department of State's 2019 Human Rights Report, police registered one case that included hatred against LGBTI persons in 2018. Advocacy groups reported that, while societal harassment and discrimination against LGBTI persons remained common, they also noted improving attitudes towards LGBTI persons. U.S. Embassy Tallinn is active in promoting a tolerant Estonia, free from institutional homophobia and transphobia, and safe for the LGBTI community. If confirmed, I commit to using my position to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Estonia, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Responsiveness

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by members of this committee?

Answer. Yes, with the understanding that any such response would be organized through the Department of State's Bureau of Legislative Affairs and conducted in accordance with long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes, with the understanding that any such appearance would be organized through the Department of State's Bureau of Legislative Affairs and conducted in accordance with long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to complying with all relevant laws, regulations, and rules, and to raising concerns that I may have through appropriate channels, including reporting to the Office of the Inspector General.

Administrative

Question. Following President Trump's comments last year welcoming derogatory information on a U.S. political figure from foreign entities, it is important that the State Department have explicit guidance for all of its personnel on how to deal with this scenario. Guidance on handling interactions that prompt concern about exploitation by a foreign entity, such as FAM Chapter 12, Section 262, does not clearly address this situation.

- If a foreign person or government approaches you or a staffer at the embassy with derogatory information on a U.S. political figure, what is your understanding of official State Department policy on how to handle this specific situation? Has a cable with clear guidance on how to handle this specific situation been sent to all U.S. embassies?

Answer. If confirmed, I will follow the Department of State's guidance with regard to reporting derogatory information.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappro-

appropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness. To my knowledge, I have never been named in a formal or informal complaint of harassment or discrimination.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No. As stated above I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and would immediately address any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration is wholly inappropriate. I take allegations of such practices seriously and if confirmed, I will maintain a policy of no tolerance for retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices at U.S. Embassy Tallinn. I will hold U.S. Embassy Tallinn employees accountable to the highest standards in accordance with applicable law, rules, and regulations on anti-discrimination and prohibited personnel practices, including the Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002, as amended. If confirmed, I commit to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO WILLIAM ELLISON GRAYSON BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

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

Answer. I have made the promotion of human rights and democracy a priority in my private sector and public sector roles. I am proud to have helped select over 100 White House Fellows, as a Commissioner and a regional judge, who were committed to human rights and democracy. I have also served on non-profit boards (including colleges and universities) where I prioritized these issues. If confirmed, I will ensure that the promotion of human rights and respect for individual human dignity remain central in the work of the United States Embassy in Estonia.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Estonia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Estonia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Estonia has consistently ranked near the top of various international indices that measure democratic protections, media freedoms, and government transparency. The country is a founding member of the U.S.-led International Religious Freedom Alliance and has made the promotion of human rights one of the centerpieces of its ongoing U.N. Security Council term. The Government has continued to demonstrate serious and sustained efforts to combat trafficking in persons, although further improvement should be made to better investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, and authorities should proactively identify and assist potential labor trafficking victims, as noted by the State Department's 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report. Estonia continues to face challenges in overcoming social and linguistic divides between Estonian and Russian speakers. The U.S. supports the Government's initiatives to continue integration efforts between the majority ethnic Estonian population and the country's Russian-speaking minority, as such outreach protects social cohesion, builds civic identity and trust in the national government, and encourages resiliency against disinformation campaigns by malicious foreign actors. If confirmed, I will work to foster dialogue between the Government and civil society and

to connect Estonian civil society with U.S. experts and practitioners to share best practices and experience.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Estonia in advancing human rights, civil society, and democracy in general?

Answer. The primary obstacles to addressing human rights issues concern the social and linguistic divides between the country's ethnic Estonian majority and Russian-speaking minority, which constitutes some 25-30 percent of the population and is concentrated in the country's northeast and in Tallinn. Such divides have the potential to manifest stark differences in social and economic indicators between the two groups, which in turn can create vulnerabilities. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. efforts to support the Government of Estonia's development and implementation of outreach efforts that promote mutual understanding between the two linguistic groups.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Estonia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and non-governmental organizations across the United States and in Estonia on a wide array of human rights. While there are no reports in the 2019 Human Rights Report of serious human rights abuses and the Government generally takes steps to investigate and punish abuses, I will continue to ensure vetting procedures for U.S. assistance to Estonian security forces are implemented consistent with U.S. law.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Estonia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Estonia?

Answer. Estonia is a strong partner sharing our values and principles on human rights. There are no reported cases of political prisoners or people unjustly targeted by Estonia. If such reports become known in the future, if confirmed, I will engage Estonian Government officials, regulatory bodies, parliamentarians, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to address them.

Question. Will you engage with Estonia on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage Estonian officials on promoting democracy, respect for rule of law, human rights, the important role of civil society, and good governance practices, measures, and programs.

Diversity

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

Answer. I fully support a diverse workforce. Diversity advances and illustrates American values and improves work environments by tapping into new perspectives and visions. Increasing diversity fosters an inclusive workplace and promotes exchange of new ideas and innovative thinking. I have been involved in diversity and inclusion training roles at the companies where I have worked (JP Morgan, Alliance Bernstein, Bank of America) and in the Government departments and agencies where I have served, the Department of Defense and the Presidio Trust in San Francisco. I strongly support the State Department's goal of fostering a workplace that reflects the rich diversity of the United States. If confirmed, I will promote a workplace that encourages tolerance, respect, collaboration, and inclusion.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy in Estonia are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. Diversity and inclusion must be a focus area for Embassy planning and leadership. If confirmed, I will foster a positive work environment by instituting diversity and inclusion as priority objectives in Embassy strategy and planning documents. I will also promote diversity and inclusion as focal points in my first meetings with Embassy leadership. If confirmed, I will underscore that our policies and outcomes are improved by drawing on inclusive, diverse teams with a breadth of ex-

periences and perspectives. I will also communicate strongly the Department's EEO policies in my mission and work to ensure they are followed.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

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

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

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

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

Answer. Neither I nor any of my immediate family have any specific financial interests in Estonia. My investment portfolio includes both individual stock holdings as well as mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Estonia, but the latter of which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and remaining vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Corruption

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Estonia specifically?

Answer. Around the world, corruption saps economic growth, hinders development, destabilizes governments, undermines democracy, and provides openings for dangerous transnational criminal organizations and malign actors. In addition, weak rule of law and a corrupt judicial system constrain U.S. interests in promoting economic development, democratic consolidation, and stability in our allies. The Government of Estonia has passed and adheres to laws aimed at controlling corruption. However, when corruption does occur, it weakens public confidence in judicial institutions and democracy, impedes access to justice, and limits the willingness of foreign investors to invest in the country.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Estonia and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Estonia is a vibrant democracy with resilient institutions, established respect for rule of law, and a free press. Estonian law provides effective mechanisms to investigate and punish corruption, including criminal penalties for corruption by government officials, and the Government generally implements the law effectively. Estonia's investments in digital governance have shown that such innovations can also be a powerful tool for fighting public sector corruption. Estonia has improved its standing each year since 2012 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, scoring 74 on the index in 2019 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Estonia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with Estonian officials on promoting democracy, good governance, and anticorruption reforms, measures, and programs. Through relevant U.S. programs and engagement, I will also deepen and expand our cooperation with Estonia on ways to promote transparency and respect for rule of law and I will leverage available U.S. assistance programs to promote good governance, democracy, and human rights in Estonia. If confirmed I look forward to learning more about how Estonia has made the promotion of digital governance innovations the centerpiece of its international assistance programs, and discussing with the Government how the U.S. and Estonia can work together to increase anti-corruption capacities in third countries.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
TO WILLIAM ELLISON GRAYSON BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

Online Disinformation

Question. Russia has been engaged in online misinformation and influence campaign against democratic nations, particularly in countries with Russian-speaking communities such as Estonia. Through this component of “hybrid” warfare, Russia looks for opportunities to challenge democracies. We now know well that one such opportunity was the U.S. presidential election in 2016. The outbreak of COVID-19 has presented Russia with another opportunity to undermine liberal democratic norms and institutions, weaken cohesion among democratic allies and partners, reduce U.S. influence, and advance Russian interests. The European Union reported that Russian media have deployed a “significant disinformation campaign” against European societies to worsen the impact of the coronavirus:

- What measures should the U.S. consider to push back, expose, and impose costs on Russia for their disinformation campaigns?

Answer. The United States should continue to use all available tools including diplomatic engagement, public diplomacy, intelligence, and financial and law enforcement lines of effort to expose and impose costs on Russia for its disinformation campaigns. The Department of State works through a variety of interagency mechanisms, to include the Global Engagement Center, to streamline day-to-day efforts to counter all aspects of Russian influence campaigns and to ensure more efficient coordination of these resources. The Department should continue these efforts and actively work with our Allies and partners in Europe, including the Baltic nations, which have confronted Russian disinformation campaigns for decades, to identify and expose Russian disinformation. The Department should also continue to promote accurate messages about the United States and other nations in the pursuit of freedom, prosperity, and security in Europe.

Question. As Ambassador, how will you prioritize deterring Russian aggression in Estonia and the larger Baltic region?

Answer. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are strategically aligned with the United States, fundamentally value the transatlantic alliance, and actively seek to support U.S. policy on Russia. NATO’s eastern flank, including the Baltic nations, is again confronted by the actions of an aggressive Russia. Russia continues to seek to intimidate its neighbors, challenge their national sovereignty, and disrupt Euro-Atlantic integration. If confirmed as Ambassador, deterring Russian aggression in Estonia and the larger Baltic region would be a top priority for me. I will continue to work closely with Estonia to counter threats posed by Russia’s subversive measures aimed at weakening the credibility of America’s commitment to Europe, undermining transatlantic unity, and weakening European institutions and governments.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HENRY T. WOOSTER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What concrete steps has Jordan taken toward structural reform and fiscal consolidation?

Answer. Jordan has taken steps toward structural reform and fiscal consolidation since 2018. Jordan’s economic team, led by Finance Minister Mohammad Al-Ississ, is committed to implementing these reforms and working with international financial institutions and bilateral donors, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as part of its new \$1.3 billion four-year Extended Fund Facility. Notably, Jordan has implemented reforms that have helped it improve the Kingdom’s business climate, as noted by the World Bank’s 2020 Doing Business rankings, which cited Jordan as one of the top three improvers after it jumped 29 spots. Additionally, Jordan has diversified its sources of energy after facing an acute power crisis the previous decade.

Question. If confirmed, how will you support Jordan’s own Economic Growth Plan 2018-22?

Answer. The U.S. Government will continue to work with the Government of Jordan to support not only efforts at reform, but also efforts to invigorate economic growth and attract foreign investment. If confirmed, I will work with USAID to identify areas of potential growth in the Jordanian economy and target U.S. support and assistance in a way that provides a net boost to overall growth prospects. If confirmed, I will also work with the Government of Jordan to identify regional and

global trade opportunities in areas in which Jordan has a competitive advantage and support its pursuit of those opportunities. Lastly, if confirmed, I will work to strengthen economic ties between Jordan and Israel.

Question. In your view, what reforms should the Government of Jordan be making at this time, to ensure that continued financial assistance isn't necessary?

Answer. Despite recent progress, Jordan still needs to improve public sector effectiveness; increase the Government's ability to generate revenue; reduce costs to businesses and increase regulatory quality; deepen energy and electricity sector sustainability; expand access to finance; and include more women in the formal economy. If confirmed, helping Jordan move forward on its path to self-reliance will remain one of my priorities.

Question. How is the United States Government prepared to assist Jordan in reducing business costs, enhancing competitiveness, reforming the labor market, overhauling public governance, improving tax collection, and increasing access to credit?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with our partners in Jordan to reinforce and sustain their commitment to critical economic reforms. First, I will work to support continued engagement by the Government of Jordan with the IMF and other international financial institutions to implement reforms. Second, I will ensure Jordanian officials understand the priority we attach to economic reform while encouraging my economic team to continue advising and assisting their Jordanian counterparts. Lastly, I will ensure U.S. assistance is used properly and in a way that diminishes Jordan's dependence on external support.

Question. In addition to our healthy economic assistance for Jordan, how can the United States help Jordan with its refugee population?

Answer. The U.S. Government will continue to work with the international community to support Jordan in meeting the needs of refugees and host communities. The United States has and will continue to support improvements to Jordan's education, health, and water infrastructure, under strain from a variety of factors including the presence of a significant refugee population, approximately 83 percent of whom live in host community towns and cities. In addition, the United States contributes substantial funding to international organizations and non-governmental organizations in Jordan that directly support refugees from Syria, Iraq and over 50 other countries. We also have resettled nearly 33,700 refugees from Jordan since FY 2010. The United States also spearheads donor support to the Government of Jordan by coordinating assistance and promoting burden sharing.

Question. In your view, what are short- and long-term solutions for the population trapped at al-Rukban camp? How can we partner with the Jordanians on these solutions?

Answer. To meet humanitarian imperatives, the United States continues to coordinate with the U.N. on assistance deliveries to Rukban from Damascus, but the Assad regime has refused to permit regular deliveries. We continue to urge the Assad regime and Russia to allow sustained deliveries of humanitarian assistance to Rukban.

To end the Syrian conflict, which has displaced nearly 12 million Syrians both internally and outside of Syria's borders, a nationwide ceasefire must be implemented, followed by a political agreement, in line with U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254, that will provide for a Syrian-owned political transition to end the conflict. In addition, the U.S. Government and our allies can also help find durable solutions for all Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons, particularly those who wish to pursue safe, dignified, and voluntary returns. If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Jordan to support each step towards the resolution of the conflict in Syria.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to foster Israeli-Jordan cooperation over water resources?

Answer. Jordan and Israel have a history of cooperation on water, which, if confirmed, I will build upon. In addition, Israel has provided additional water to Jordan for purchase almost every year, including the past several years. If confirmed, I will continue our efforts to expand their partnership to share water resources, as both countries face an even drier future. I will support and promote dialogue on this water cooperation that provides mutual benefits while fostering partnership between the two countries.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
 SUBMITTED TO HENRY T. WOOSTER BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. Can you please explain the security dynamics along the border between Jordan and Israel that necessitate Israeli control over the Jordan Valley, as acknowledged through President Trump's peace proposal?

Answer. Israel's security is of tremendous importance to the United States. The U.S. Vision for Peace between Israel and the Palestinians fully addresses Israel's security requirements, does not ask Israel to take additional security risks, and enables Israel to defend itself, by itself, against any threats. That includes the Vision's provisions for the future of the Jordan Valley. Israeli security cooperation with Jordan is also a key element of Israel's security, and the administration strongly supports military and intelligence coordination, as well as all other relations, between Israel and Jordan.

Question. Please describe the extent to which Jordan's refusal to extradite Tamimi has affected U.S.-Jordanian relations?

Answer. We continue to ask that the Government of Jordan arrest Ahlam Aref Ahmad Al-Tamimi and agree to extradite her to the United States. The Government of Jordan has been unwilling to accede to our request due to the Court of Cassation's ruling that our bilateral extradition treaty is not valid.

We continue to dispute the court's claim, as we exchanged instruments of ratification that brought the treaty into force on July 29, 1995 and the treaty has not been terminated. We continue to raise this issue at the highest levels in order to reach a satisfactory solution.

Question. What options and leverage does the United States have to secure Tamimi, including potentially withholding assistance to the Government of Jordan?

Answer. The United States has multiple options and different types of leverage to secure Ahlam Aref Ahmad Al-Tamimi's extradition. We will continue to engage Jordanian officials at all levels not only on this issue, but also on the extradition treaty more broadly. U.S. generosity to Jordan in Foreign Military Financing as well as economic support and other assistance is carefully calibrated to protect and advance the range of U.S. interests in Jordan and in the region.

Question. Can you commit to using those options and leverage to secure Tamimi's extradition?

Answer. If confirmed, I would explore all options to bring Ahlam Aref Ahmad Al-Tamimi to justice, secure her extradition, and address the broader issues associated with the extradition treaty.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED
 TO HENRY T. WOOSTER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

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

Answer. The virtue of being an American diplomat is that our presence or affiliation alone can promote our values, especially with regard to human rights and democracy. As the son of an Assyrian Christian refugee mother from the USSR, I know what it costs when human rights and democracy are absent. When the corpse of the Soviet Union was still warm, I volunteered to open the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe, Tajikistan 1992-93. Moving around the country during its civil war had a meaningful impact, leading to a drop in the number of atrocities and killings in the areas I accessed. In 1994, after the Haitian military ousted freely-elected President Aristide, I was selected to lead his government-in-exile's recruiting and training efforts to launch a nascent national police force that would replace the coup-prone Haitian army. From 1994-1995, at Embassy Moscow, I coordinated assistance and training for Russian police in the United States. I was struck by the esteem returning Russian police had for their U.S. counterparts and how much they wanted to be seen that way at home. From 1997-1998, I was seconded to the U.N. Observer Mission in Georgia as the human rights officer in breakaway Abkhazia where I accompanied Russian military forces on patrol. No Russian patrol I accompanied ever had an allegation of abuse or murder, which were otherwise routine occurrences. As desk officer, Deputy Director, Director, and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Iran (2005-2008 and 2010-2012), I promoted human rights, democracy, and freedom of expression, overseeing a budget of \$175 million.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Jordan? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Jordan? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Jordan include arbitrary arrest and detention, allegations of torture by Jordanian security forces, infringements on citizens' privacy rights, restrictions on free expression and the press, and restrictions on freedom of association and assembly. If confirmed, I will promote human rights in Jordan, as a reflection of U.S. values and in accordance with U.S. policy. The State Department's annual Human Rights Reports remain one of our most effective tools in highlighting human rights issues around the world. Our report regularly garners press attention in Jordan and is studied carefully by the Government of Jordan, international and Jordanian NGOs, and other groups working on human rights.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Jordan in advancing human rights, civil society, and democracy in general?

Answer. The most immediate obstacle to progress on human rights includes regional and domestic challenges that make security a priority for the Government of Jordan. The longer-term obstacles to progress include implementing laws. Although Jordan's legal structure provides for prosecution and punishment of officials who commit human rights abuses, enforcement remains a problem challenge, so government officials enjoy a measure of impunity. The Government of Jordan must ensure transparent steps to investigate, prosecute, and punish officials who commit abuses. Progress is being made, as evidenced by the 2019 convictions of 11 police officers for the extrajudicial killing of two detainees. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Jordan to ensure steps like these continue and are implemented transparently.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Jordan? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue meeting with human rights, civil society, and other NGOs in the United States and in Jordan. Embassy Amman routinely meets with local NGOs to learn about alleged human rights abuses and hear their views on how the United States can advance human rights. Our embassy team implements the Leahy Law and vets recipients of U.S. security assistance and participants in security cooperation activities. If confirmed, I will ensure my embassy team continues to do this.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Jordan to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Jordan?

Answer. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will actively engage with the Government of Jordan on the unjust detention and harassment of individuals for political reasons. Embassy Amman regularly engages at all levels of the Government of Jordan to emphasize the importance of an active civil society and freedom of expression. If confirmed, I pledge to continue to underscore the importance of these activities.

Question. Will you engage with Jordan on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Human rights, civil rights, and effective governance are vital to our bilateral relationship and, if confirmed, I will continue to work with senior officials, international human rights NGOs, local NGOs, and civil society to enhance judicial independence, promote accountability among the security forces, and encourage respect for the rule of law. Freedom of assembly, freedom of expression (including online), democracy, accountability and transparency, empowering women, economic opportunity, and education are all U.S. priorities.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

Answer. Creating a welcoming environment for all people is one of my priorities: it corresponds to the values I was raised on the Golden Rule; it fulfills the Depart-

ment's ethos; and it makes a more effective workforce. From a career in the Foreign Service, across multiple assignments, as a spouse and as a parent, I recognize that beyond being a workplace, U.S. diplomatic Missions are people's homes. To establish a baseline, I will conduct Town Halls, "walkabouts" to meet Embassy colleagues and their families, and consider other sources to gather information, such as an anonymous survey. These tools will provide multiple options for the Embassy Amman community to inform me how we are faring. The results will help me, in consultation with my senior interagency leadership team, in determining what next steps need to be taken. Additionally, I will support ongoing Diversity and Inclusion events, affinity groups, as I have throughout my career.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy in Jordan are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. To ensure that supervisors foster a diverse and inclusive environment, I will emphasize to them and our Embassy community that this is a U.S. value, it complies with the Department's ethos, and it is my priority as Chief of Mission. I will work to create an open community where everyone's concerns and experiences are heard and dealt with in accordance to State Department policy.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

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

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

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

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

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence overseas, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest any investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest. I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Jordan specifically?

Answer. Political corruption undermines the rule of law and weakens the judicial process, both of which we seek to strengthen in Jordan. Transparency International ranks Jordan 60 out of 180 countries rated for public corruption. The Government of Jordan has made strides in combatting corruption and works with us in this area.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Jordan and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Corruption trends in Jordan have held relatively steady since the mid-90s, with Jordan consistently receiving a Transparency International score between 44 and 57, with a higher score indicating less corruption. Variations year-to-year indicate Jordan can do better and that corruption is likely affected by the extent to which the cabinet at any given time prioritizes the issue. The Government of Jordan has increased its efforts to combat corruption, including through investigating and prosecuting instances of high-level corruption. We have worked with Jordan on this issue, including by strengthening its asset declaration regime and supporting the work of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Jordan?

Answer. If confirmed, I will commit to ensuring we maintain—and strengthening where possible—U.S. good governance and anticorruption efforts in Jordan. Our assistance program and relationships with Jordanian officials are the foundation for addressing these issues. If confirmed, I will underscore U.S. expectations that Jordan make progress on improving governance and strengthening anticorruption efforts.
