

**Statement of Senator Richard G. Lugar**

**East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee**

**September 30, 2009**

Thank you, Chairman Webb for holding this hearing to review U.S. policy toward Burma, and I also extend appreciation to Senator Inhofe for his work as Ranking Member on the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee.

This hearing is timely given the Obama Administration's review of the United States' policy on Burma.

As the United States contemplates policy options, we will, I hope, compare notes with other countries actively engaged in Burma. China, Japan, India, Thailand, Singapore and South Korea are among those nations who are direct witness to the deteriorating education and healthcare infrastructure within Burma. The mismanagement of Burma's economy started long before imposition of U.S. sanctions.

At a massive cost to themselves and the United Nations, Thailand and Malaysia receive hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees, largely ethnic minorities, who continue to flee Burma. More than 50,000 persons have now applied through UNHCR offices in Malaysia and Thailand for resettlement to a third country. Ten thousand Burmese refugees have now resettled in my home state of Indiana.

The Obama Administration's policy review includes reference to the growing North Korea – Burma relationship. The United States has a responsibility to our friends and allies throughout Asia to oppose actively the possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to or from Burma. Since I first discussed the troubling prospects of renewed ties between these two countries in 2004, the Foreign Relations Committee has repeatedly raised the issue of Burma's growing relationship with North Korea with a wide array of U.S. Administration officials.

For example, we have questioned the basis for hundreds of Burmese officials going to Russia for technical education which included nuclear technology training. The number of persons travelling to Russia for specialized training seemed to be far beyond the number needed for the eventual operation of a nuclear reactor for medical research purposes, intended to be built by the junta with Russian government assistance.

Burma's multiple uranium deposits, reports of uranium refining and processing plants, and its active nuclear program reportedly assisted by North Korea collectively point to reason for concern in a country whose officials resist transparency.

Dr. Sigfried Hecker, Director Emeritus of Los Alamos National Laboratory and now Co-Director of the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University recently wrote, "The A.Q. Khan network connected companies, individuals and front organizations into a dangerous proliferation ring. The revelations of the North Korean reactor in Syria, along with developments in Iran and Burma, appear to point toward a different type of proliferation ring --- one run by national governments, perhaps also assisted by other clandestine networks".

Mr. Chairman, today's witnesses represent distinguished experts on Burma. I am pleased to introduce a Hoosier, Professor David Williams, Executive Director of the Center for Constitutional Democracy at Indiana University, who has extensive background on Burma-related issues. Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding today's hearing.

