

Dick Lugar

U.S. Senator for Indiana

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Opening Statement for USAID, US Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Nominations

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Dick Lugar will make the following statement at this morning's Committee hearing.

I join the Chairman in welcoming our distinguished nominees.

Mr. Steinberg and Ms. Lindborg would be taking on difficult tasks at an agency in transition. Dr. Shah is making admirable efforts to strengthen USAID, and he would benefit from having his entire team in place. The challenges of global poverty and hunger are growing at a time when worries about the sustainability of natural resources are increasing. Even as the important role of foreign assistance has come into sharper focus, policy makers have not made it easy for USAID to perform its vital function.

During the last two decades, reorganization initiatives resulted in the agency's loss of evaluation, budget, and policy capacity. There is a broad consensus among development experts that the loss of these functions at USAID is inhibiting the success of our development programs. Our development efforts will never be as effective as they should be if the agency that houses most of our development expertise is cut out of relevant policy, evaluation, and budgetary decisions.

This has contributed to a further stove-piping of aid programs. Roughly two dozen departments and agencies have taken over some aspects of foreign assistance. We do not have adequate knowledge of whether various programs are complementary or working at cross-purposes. Congress's decisions about resources for development programs will be effected by our confidence in how funds are managed and coordinated.

The Administration has initiated two separate studies that are coming to fruition. The State Department's Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review and the National Security Council's Presidential Study Directive on Development will both receive much attention in the coming weeks. Among other goals, they will attempt to make recommendations about how development programs can better support U.S. foreign policy objectives.

This Committee will be eager to review the Administration's ideas. But Congress also should be offering its views on how to improve development assistance. The foreign assistance reform bill, S. 1524, which was passed by our Committee in November 2009, should be seen as an essential input into this process. It attracted the strong support of most development groups, led by the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network. It is co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of 24 Senators, eleven of whom are members of this Committee.

It envisions USAID as a full participant in policy making and budgeting. USAID must be able to independently evaluate the effectiveness of foreign assistance programs and provide coordination between agencies. A strong aid agency serving under the policy guidance of the Secretary will best empower the Secretary to accomplish U.S. development goals.

Today, we also consider the nomination of Robert Mikulak (Mick-yoo-lack) to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The United States has not had a confirmed

ambassador at the OPCW since Eric Javits resigned last year. If confirmed, the nominee will serve in the OPCW at an important time. The 15th Conference of the States Parties to the OPCW is set to convene in The Hague on November 29. By agreement, the States Parties have decided to extend the deadline for chemical weapons possessor states to destroy all chemical weapons to April 29, 2012. The OPCW verified the destruction of 9,697 metric tons of chemical weapons in 2009. Russia has destroyed more than 46 percent of its stockpile, while the United States has destroyed more than 69 percent of our stockpile.

This excellent progress -- achieved without much fanfare -- represents a bargain for U.S. national security. In 2009, the total cost to the United States for implementing the CWC was \$12.9 million. The cost to U.S. business was only about \$200,000. But challenges remain as we work to destroy all declared stockpiles. Chemical destruction facilities are coping with increased workload, budgetary constraints, and the departure of some experienced inspectors. I have been concerned about whether the Department of Commerce has made cuts in funding for its OPCW functions that have resulted in budget shortfalls that directly affect U.S. implementation of the CWC.

I look forward to discussing these issues, but more importantly, to sending another Ambassador to the OPCW to maintain critical progress toward our chemical weapons destruction goals.

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