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NOMINATIONS OF THE 110TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JANUARY 30 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations

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*Note: Reassigned to Committee on Finance January 24, 2008.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

110TH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr., Delaware, *Chairman*

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*Note: Appointed February 12, 2008.

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NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2008

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

Ameri, Goli, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs
Glassman, James, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy
Kramer, David, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:15 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bill Nelson, presiding.

Present: Senators Bill Nelson, Feingold, Menendez, Cardin, and Lugar.

Also present: Senators Lieberman and Smith.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator Bill NELSON. We're here to consider the nominations of the Honorable Goli Ameri to be Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, and the Honorable James Glassman to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, and Mr. David Kramer to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

We've been joined by our colleague, Senator Smith, and I want to extend the courtesies of the chair to you for your statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. GORDON H. SMITH, U.S. SENATOR FROM OREGON

Senator SMITH. Thank you, Senator Nelson. I'm honored to be back in the Foreign Relations Committee. I miss this committee very much and I thank you and Ben for your service on this committee. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did in my first term.

It is for me both a privilege and a pleasure to be here to speak on behalf of Goli Ameri. She is one of the most remarkable Oregonians that it is my privilege to know. She's a long-time friend, she's been a supporter, she has been a public servant, she has been a distinguished businesswoman. She has a lovely family and a great husband in Jim.

But her story really is much richer than that. Goli was born in Iran and came to the United States under very difficult cir-

cumstances, made her way through Stanford University, and distinguished herself academically. Moreover, she took that knowledge and built a very successful business. She's the founder and president of eTinium, which is an international consulting and marketing research company specializing in telecommunications. Her opinions are regularly sought by business magazines, journals, and newspapers.

Before starting eTinium, she served as a director of U.S. Leasing, a former division of the Ford Motor Credit, and Fleet Bank. She has recently completed service, played a valuable role in representing the United States internationally as a public delegate to the 61st session of the United States Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland.

In addition to that, she is a supporter of the Iran Democracy Project at the Hoover Institution, which seeks to study democracy and how to aid it, its development, in Iran.

I believe she truly embodies all the best in the American spirit and I'm very excited at this nomination and I urge your support. She certainly has mine, because she has earned it over many, many years with a distinguished career in public service and mostly just as a great human being.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Bill NELSON. Thank you, Senator Smith.

Senator Lugar.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I would like to just make a short statement of greeting, if I may, this morning. I'm very pleased to welcome three very distinguished nominees. I have often spoken of the need to draw talented individuals from the private sector into public service. Given the potential loss of privacy, the reduction in pay, financial restrictions, other complications, government service sometimes holds little attraction for men and women who have built careers in the private sector. Many nominees make personal and financial sacrifices to pursue difficult assignments in the service of our country.

I am grateful that Mr. Glassman, Mr. Murray, and Mr. Kramer have stepped forward to serve their country at this critical time. Understandably, during an election year the country begins to look ahead to the possibilities of a new administration. But irrespective of the upcoming election, the important business of our Government continues on, and this is especially true in the State Department, which is contending with numerous diplomatic challenges.

With less than a year remaining in this administration, it's essential that the Foreign Relations Committee move with dispatch to confirm qualified nominees so they can provide leadership as soon as possible. Similarly, I would urge the Bush administration to make decisions about vacant posts at an early date so the State Department does not experience gaps in its diplomatic or managerial leadership.

I congratulate the nominees before us today. I look forward to your discussion with them and support of them as we try to expedite this procedure.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for chairing this meeting.

Senator Bill NELSON. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Would each of you introduce your families that might happen to be joining you today?

STATEMENT OF HON. GOLI AMERI, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Ms. AMERI. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce my husband, Jim Ameri, who is sitting over there, and my oldest son, Darius Ameri, who is here today.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ameri follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. GOLI AMERI, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would also like to thank Senator Smith of the great State of Oregon for being here today and for his kind words of introduction.

I would like to begin by recognizing the members of my family who are sitting behind me for their love and support. Joining me here today are my husband, Jim, and my son, Darius. My second son, Sherwin, could not be here and I am proud to say that he is in New Orleans building homes for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. My parents are both elderly and unfortunately could not be here either, but I want to thank them for their ever-present love and support and their foresight in sending me to the United States for my higher education.

It is also a great pleasure to be seated before the committee today with David Kramer to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as well as a gentleman who I've gotten to know well in the last few weeks and who I will have the pleasure to work with in the coming year, Jim Glassman, nominated to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

I am honored by the trust and confidence shown to me by President Bush and Secretary Rice in putting my name forward to be Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

I believe that my background and experience will enable me to carry on the proud tradition of excellence at the Bureau.

First and foremost, there is who I am—an American by choice. I was born and raised in Tehran, Iran, and came to the United States to attend Stanford University—one of the 100,000 international students who embarked for the United States in 1974. When the revolution in Iran happened in 1979, there were thousands of us studying in America whose futures were put in doubt. But even in our gloomiest moments, we knew there was a light at the end of the tunnel because we were armed with a first-class education we had gained right here in the United States. Our education not only propelled us to success, but it also taught us many valuable life lessons. Among the myriad of things I learned and they are too numerous to list, was the value of freedom and democracy, the fundamentals of critical thinking, the questioning of ideas, and a profound sense of empowerment. I learned that in America there are no constraints to one's desire to achieve. That it's ok to be a woman, its ok to be an immigrant, and most importantly its ok to be a dreamer.

Where else in the world would an immigrant, a woman of Iranian heritage, be nominated as an Assistant Secretary and have the privilege to sit in front of this distinguished panel?

The idea of America is alive and well and as strong as ever. Education and culture are among America's greatest soft power assets—assets recognized around the world. These programs allow us to demonstrate American values, not just assert them. I am delighted that President Bush and Secretary Rice have emphasized that public diplomacy and exchanges are top priorities for the State Department and for foreign affairs, in general.

I understand both personally and professionally what Secretary Rice means when she speaks of the transformational power of education and exchange. I have experienced it firsthand and, if confirmed, it would be not only be a tremendous privilege to lead the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs but to have firsthand responsibility to promote these values overseas.

If confirmed, I am committed to strengthening the many achievements of the Department's educational and cultural exchanges. I intend to expand our people to

people exchanges and introduce (1) more opportunities for engagement with key countries like Iran and North Korea where we seek better relations between our citizens, and (2) reach out to the more disadvantaged segments of the population around the world. I will encourage more women and girls to participate in our exchange programs and I would like to make sure that we institutionalize successful and powerful programs like the Middle East Breast Cancer Initiative and the Fortune Women's Mentorship program.

Coming from the private sector, I know that the challenges of the 21st century cannot be addressed by the government alone. I have been delighted to see that public-private collaboration is a significant part of the organizational culture at ECA with hundreds of partners among NGOs, businesses, and academic institutions. ECA has made significant progress in creatively expanding these public-private partnerships with impressive new undertakings, such as with the Edward R. Murrow Program for Journalists, the Global Cultural Initiative, American Public Diplomacy Envoys, and engagement with America's higher education community. My goal is to engage and enlist the private sector and private foundations more fully to expand our No. 1 public diplomacy tool—exchanges and teaching English abroad.

I would also like to expand our outreach to ethnic communities in the United States to listen to their ideas about expanding our exchanges and finding creative ways to have them represent us overseas. If confirmed, I will also be looking for effective ways to engage the 800,000-plus strong alumni of ECA programs who are often America's best friends.

Having two young sons and coming from a technology background, I have come to understand the incredible power of this industry in attracting youth around the world and one of my goals is to further harness this power in achieving the goals of the ECA. Our challenge is to build mass in reaching out to the world and today the Internet is our most significant ally.

And, of course, last but not least, I am committed to investing in and recognizing the hard work and expertise of all PD professionals who are responsible for much of the success of our programs, and coming from the private sector, my commitment to you will be to ensure that the resources allocated to ECA are spent wisely, effectively, and with maximum impact.

Ladies and gentlemen, we all know that these are challenging times for public diplomacy. But I am hopeful about our activities, because after all what we are promoting is the idea of America—our people's commitment to freedom and democracy, to honesty and integrity, to trust, and most of all to tolerance. There is still not a day that goes by that I don't feel a surge of joy, a thankfulness for being a part of this commitment. It is indeed a joy worth sharing with others. I look forward to working with all of you and your staff to spread the powerful message of our values all over the world. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and look forward to your questions.

Senator Bill NELSON. Welcome.

Mr. Kramer.

STATEMENT OF DAVID J. KRAMER, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to introduce my oldest brother, Steven Kramer, who has joined us today. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kramer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID J. KRAMER, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today to seek confirmation as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. I am grateful to Secretary Rice for recommending me and to President Bush for nominating me for this position—a position central to the pursuit of the President's global freedom agenda.

If confirmed, I will devote my utmost energy and effort to serving as our Government's lead representative in the worldwide defense and advancement of human dignity and democracy. Should you afford me the opportunity to serve, I know that my work will be strengthened, as that of my predecessors has been, by the active, bipartisan support of this committee, and indeed, of the entire Congress.

Let me also take this occasion to say, Mr. Chairman, that if confirmed, I will be fortunate to inherit an impressive Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau from my distinguished colleague and good friend, Barry Lowenkron.

The advancement of human rights and democratic freedoms reflects the core values of the American people. As President Bush said during his visit to Prague last summer, "[F]reedom is the nonnegotiable right of every man, woman, and child, and the path to lasting peace in our world is liberty."

In his Prague speech, the President spoke about the great promise that has emerged with the rebirth of freedom in many parts of what used to be the Soviet Union, and Central and Eastern Europe. That region for many years has been the primary focus of my professional efforts, both during my time in government and before that when I worked in the foundation world, helping to establish one of the first independent public policy think tanks in post-Soviet Russia, the Carnegie Moscow Center.

My commitment to promoting human rights and democratic principles is longstanding. Relatives on my father's side were the victims of Soviet totalitarian brutality. Only one family member in Riga, my father's first cousin, survived—after 17 harrowing years of forced labor in Siberia. She died 5 years ago. What happened to her and countless millions like her is seared upon my memory. And so I am personally, as well as professionally, committed to do all I possibly can to help other innocent men and women who are caught in the cruel grip of oppression—from Belarus to Burma, Zimbabwe to Cuba, North Korea to Iran, and Eritrea to Syria. And, if confirmed, I also will use every tool available to me as Assistant Secretary to support those in every region of the world who are working to help their countries make the transition to accountable, democratic government.

President Bush's second inaugural address in January 2005 struck a deep chord with me and reminded me why I wanted to serve in government in the first place. Early in this administration, I had the privilege of serving as senior advisor to Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky—and I would look forward, if confirmed, to the pleasure of working with her in my new capacity. I worked intensively on democracy and human rights issues. I pressed, for example, for more attention to be focused on the tragic situation in Chechnya. I also played a role in developing the President's unprecedented HIV/AIDS initiative—a vivid demonstration of the good that our compassionate country can do. This experience also impressed upon me the need not just to promote democracy, but also to strengthen the capacities of democracies so that they can deliver a better life to their people. Human rights and democracy assistance is not the same as development aid—both are important and they are mutually reinforcing.

Similarly, advancing democracy cannot be pursued to the exclusion of important security interests, such as combating terrorism and extremism and promoting nonproliferation. At the same time, cooperation with the United States on strategic matters of mutual interest should not win a country a pass on pushing forward with political liberalization and reform. As President Bush said during his recent trip to the Middle East: ". . . the best way to defeat the extremists in your midst is by opening your societies, and trusting in your people, and giving them a voice in their nation."

In my current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, I have made sure that democracy and human rights issues are at the top of the agenda. The collapse of the oppressive Soviet empire opened the possibility for nearly 400 million people to live in freedom, many for the first time in their lives. This opportunity, I know, has not yet been realized for all in this region. Time and again, Mr. Chairman, my colleagues and I have been deeply moved by the courage of human rights defenders, independent journalists, NGOs, religious and minority rights advocates, and labor activists striving—some even sacrificing their lives—to secure the blessings of liberty for their fellow citizens. Indeed, much of my work and that of my colleagues has been focused on the defense of human rights and democratic processes in this part of the world.

I have been told that I am not allowed into Belarus anymore because of my advocacy for freedom in that country and my leadership in imposing sanctions against that dictatorial regime due to its human rights abuses. I guess I have been doing something right.

For the first time in a long time, there may be some reason for hope in Belarus. In the past 2 weeks, the government has released several political prisoners—a cause that my colleagues and I in the U.S. Government have been pressing for years. While the Government of Belarus needs to do much more, we may be seeing our policy of pressuring the regime through sanctions combined with support for the democratic opposition finally paying off. If confirmed, I will continue to press hard for reform in Belarus.

When governments veer from the democratic path, it is our responsibility to speak up for the people who are being denied their rights, to urge the governments to return to the path of democracy, and, when necessary, to take appropriate punitive action. As the President said in his speech last summer in Prague, "Freedom can be resisted, and freedom can be delayed, but freedom cannot be denied."

Mr. Chairman, the goal of the Bush administration's democracy promotion efforts is not to impose America's ways on others, it is to encourage adherence to international principles and help others effect positive change so that they have the freedom to choose. As Secretary Rice has said, we seek "to expand the circle of well-governed states that enshrine liberty under the rule of law, that provide for their people, and that act responsibly in the international system. America cannot do this for other countries. Nor should we. It must be their choice, and their initiative. But we can help and we must help. This is partnership, not paternalism."

If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I will continue to concentrate DRL's diplomacy and programs on the core components of democracy that must be present in countries around the globe if human rights are to be effectively exercised and protected: (1) Free and fair electoral processes, with a level playing field to ensure genuine competition; (2) good governance, with representative, transparent and accountable institutions operating under the rule of law, including independent legislatures and judiciaries; and (3) robust civil societies, including independent media and labor unions.

These components are central to our efforts to help the people of Afghanistan and Iraq to assume their rightful places in the global democratic community. As the President said in his State of the Union speech on Monday, over the past 7 years, "We've seen Afghans emerge from the tyranny of the Taliban and choose a new president and a new parliament. We've seen jubilant Iraqis holding up ink-stained fingers and celebrating their freedom. These images of liberty have inspired us."

At the regional level, we will continue to deepen work with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the African Union, the Organization of American States, and the Association of South East Asian Nations. These bodies already have established or are in the process of establishing human rights and democracy standards, institutions, and mechanisms. At the global level, we seek to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Community of Democracies. And we will continue to work in partnership with like-minded countries at the United Nations to defend human rights and democratic principles, for example by marshalling international efforts to press for democratic reform in Burma and an end to the Darfur crisis.

Partnerships with NGOs—indigenous and international—are essential to the development and success of free societies and play a vital role in ensuring accountable government and peaceful, democratic change. If confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, I will regularly reach out to civil society representatives here and abroad for their valuable ideas and insights. There also is much that we can do in partnership with the private sector, for example, to promote corporate social responsibility and uphold international labor standards.

Mr. Chairman, outstanding, dedicated men and women serve in the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. I see my job, if confirmed by the Senate, as helping them to do their vital work by ensuring that DRL has a strong voice at the policy table and that issues of human rights and democracy are fully integrated into the decision making process here in Washington and at our foreign posts.

Mr. Chairman, if this committee and the Senate see fit to confirm me, I will make the most of each and every day as Assistant Secretary. The brave men and women around the world who are striving against great odds, often at great risk, to advance human rights and democracy deserve nothing less. I am acutely aware that this is a time when NGOs, the independent press, labor activists, and other human rights and democracy defenders are under siege in every region of the world in countries as various as China, Russia, and Zimbabwe. In many countries, those in power wield unjust laws like weapons, or dispense with all pretense of legality and employ brutal extrajudicial measures against people who try to peacefully exercise their rights. As long as men and women around the globe are deprived of their most fundamental freedoms of belief, expression, association, assembly and movement, we, who live in liberty, can never do enough.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look to work closely with this committee and with your other congressional colleagues on the full range of human rights and democracy concerns in furtherance of the goals set forth in the Advancing Democratic Values Act. I also am determined to ensure that when my term is ended, I will leave the DRL Bureau in strong shape for my successor in the next administration. Working for freedom's cause transcends politics. It is part of what it means to be an American, and that is why I would be deeply honored to serve the American people as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

And now, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I will be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.

Senator Bill NELSON. Welcome.

Mr. Glassman.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES K. GLASSMAN, NOMINATED TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Mr. GLASSMAN. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to introduce my uncle, Bernard Glassman, who's seated behind me. Unfortunately, my wonderful wife, Beth, is recovering from emergency surgery on Monday. She's doing well, but she couldn't be with us.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Glassman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES K. GLASSMAN, NOMINEE TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, on October 1, 2003, the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, mandated by Congress and chaired by Ambassador Edward Djerejian, produced a powerful report that concluded, "At a critical time in our nation's history, the apparatus of public diplomacy has proven inadequate."[1]

The report pointed to our "unilateral disarmament in the weapons of advocacy that has contributed to widespread hostility toward Americans and left us vulnerable to lethal threats to our interests and our safety."[2]

I was one of the 13 members of the Djerejian Group, and it is not hard to sum up our conclusions: get serious and strategic about public diplomacy, rebuild the institutions, modernize them, provide interagency leadership and coordination, increase resources, get the President and the Congress fully behind the effort.

That was 2003. Times have changed. There is today a broad, bipartisan consensus that soft power, smart power, public diplomacy—that is, the arsenal of persuasion—are absolutely critical to counter and defeat the violent extremists who threaten America and the freedom of people around the world.

The will is there. The President and Congress are more engaged. Many of the recommendations of the Djerejian Group have been adopted over the past 2 years under Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Under Secretary Karen Hughes—not only programs but what the report called a "culture of measurement," a rigorous examination of how well public diplomacy is "moving the needle"—that is, enhancing understanding and changing minds.

The rebuilding is well underway. Indeed, I believe that American public diplomacy, after a bipartisan period of neglect in the 1990s, is now poised to move beyond the successes of the cold war, beyond anything envisaged by the Djerejian Group.

This is the background, Mr. Chairman, for today's hearing. I am honored by the nomination of President Bush and the support of Secretary Rice, and I seek your confirmation as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

I am proud to introduce my wife, Beth Glassman. Much of the rest of the family is far-flung: My daughter, Zoe Miles, and her two children, Violet and James, live in New Orleans; my daughter, Kate Bennett, and her daughter, Tess, live in Las Vegas; and my stepchildren are in college: Michael Rocks at the University of Virginia and Hilary Rocks at Vanderbilt. My mother is nursing a knee injury. I want also to recognize the support of my stepmother, Betty Glassman; my brother and sister, Peter and Betsy; and my uncle, Bernard. My father, Stanley, who died in 2005, would have loved to have seen this day.

I also want to take this time to thank Senator Lieberman for his kind introduction. I have been an admirer of Joe Lieberman even before he was elected to the United States Senate. He is a man of principle and vision.

Just 8 months ago, this committee and the United States Senate confirmed me as chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees taxpayer-fund-

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[1] Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for US. Public Diplomacy in the Arab & Muslim World, Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, Oct. 1, 2003, submitted to the Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives, p. 8.

[2] Ibid, p. 13.

ed international radio, television, and Internet networks. This remarkable electronic platform, built over 65 years, now directly touches the lives of 155 million people each week in 57 languages.[3] In Arabic alone, BBG radio and TV broadcasts reach 35 million people—more than 10 times as many as were reached in 2002. In recent months, our broadcasters have provided a lifeline to people seeking the truth in such places as Somalia, Syria, Burma, North Korea, Russia, Cuba, Tibet, and Pakistan.

As just one example, one in every five Iranians watches VOA Persian television at least once a week. U.S. taxpayer-funded broadcasting beams 7 hours of TV a day into Iran, including a popular call-in show that allows Iranians to talk directly with American policymakers and Iranian exile dissidents. Taken as a whole, U.S. international broadcasting—including such venerable institutions as Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty—is our largest single civilian public diplomacy program by far.[4] If I am confirmed, I will, of course, step down as chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, but I will remain on the board as the Secretary of State's representative.

In addition to my service on the Djerejian Group and on the Broadcasting Board, I have spent nearly 40 years as a professional communicator—a writer, publisher, editor, TV public-affairs show moderator, and Web site host. I have founded two media businesses and rejuvenated two others. My respect and admiration for this institution was nurtured during the time I was editor of Roll Call, the congressional newspaper, in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Additional preparation came from a deep immersion in the world of ideas, which began when I was publisher of The New Republic and president of The Atlantic Monthly and continued through my 11 years in the think-tank world, at the American Enterprise Institute, where I am now a senior fellow and editor of AEI's magazine of economics, The American.

If I am confirmed, it is my intention to focus on three areas: 1) Leading the war of ideas, 2) building on our current public diplomacy strengths in educational and cultural exchanges, and 3) bringing fresh and vital technologies to bear on all of our efforts.

LEAD THE WAR OF IDEAS

The war against al-Qaeda and other extremist threats to peace, freedom, and justice is not only military. It is a war of ideas. Secretary of Defense Gates made just this point when he extolled "soft power" in a lecture at Kansas State University in November.[5] As the 9/11 Commission put it: Eliminating al-Qaeda requires "prevailing in the longer term over the ideology that gives rise to Islamist terrorism."[6]

In this war of ideas, the White House in April 2006, gave the State Department—and specifically the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy—the lead. The Under Secretary is charged with "leading our strategic communications efforts to promote freedom and democracy and to counter extremism."[7]

If I am confirmed, this will be the main focus of my attention: The war of ideas—perhaps better expressed as global ideological engagement. "Al-Qaeda," as Michael Doran, a scholar of Middle East politics at Princeton and now a Pentagon official, has written, "is the ideological organization par excellence."[8] The organization disseminates its messages through mass media and the Internet, and our job is not merely to explain and advocate American values and policies but to counter the disturbingly persuasive ideology of the enemy.

Let me give you an idea of what we are up against. A poll last April by WorldPublicOpinion.org, a project of the University of Maryland, found that about four out of five respondents in Muslim nations surveyed agreed with the proposition that the goal of the United States, in its global policies, is to "weaken and divide

[3] See http://www.bbg.gov/bbg__aboutus.cfm.

[4] The budget of the BBG is greater than that of all educational and cultural exchange programs supervised by the State Department, but the total public diplomacy budget of the State Department is greater than that of the BBG by about $200 million for fiscal 2008.

[5] Robert Gates, Landon Lecture, Nov. 26, 2007. See http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1199.

[6] The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (W.W. Norton & Co., 2004), p. 363.

[7] Stephen Hadley, Memorandum, "Establishment of the Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications Policy Coordination Committee," April 8, 2006.

[8] Michael Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al Qaeda," Political Science Quarterly (Summer, 2002), p. 187. Quoted by William Rosenau in The McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook (2005), p. 1132.

the Islamic world."[9] Roughly two-thirds of those polled in Muslim countries said that a U.S. goal was to "spread Christianity to the Middle East."[10]

A Pew survey found that 80 percent of Indonesians were "very" or "somewhat" worried that the United States could be a military threat to their country.[11]

Where do such notions come from? Straight from the doctrine that is at the foundation of al-Qaeda ideology.

The fact that so many people adhere to these beliefs is testimony to the effectiveness of the radicals, who, as Mary Habeck, a historian at Yale who now is with the National Security Council, writes, comprise a "faction—generally called 'jihadi' or 'jihadist'—[that] has very specific views about how to . . . return Muslims to political power and what needs to be done about its enemies, including the United States. The main difference between the jihadis and other Islamists is the extremists' commitment to the violent overthrow of the existing international system."[12]

Certainly, the many millions in the Muslim world who believe that the United States seeks to destroy their religion do not themselves adhere to jihadist ideology. But that they buy into major tenets of the ideology presents an enormous challenge to our national security.

How do we counter such notions? How do we counter the widespread misperception that America does not allow mosques on its soil? Or that we are not a religious or family-oriented people? Part of the answer lies in ideological engagement—directly entering the conversation to confront lies and distortions with truth. At the time of the Djerejian Report, that was barely happening. Now, the efforts is gaining momentum, through institutions that Ambassador Hughes inaugurated, like the State Department's media hubs in London, Brussels, and Dubai, which rapidly deliver voices that advocate for United States policy on Arabic and other important international media, and the Digital Outreach Team, which began engaging with Arabic Internet sites in November of 2006, and expanded to include Persian and Urdu sites in December of 2007.

What makes the current war of ideas so difficult is that jihadist ideology is built on a religious base—which means that non-Muslim Americans are not the best messengers in countering its appeal. As President Bush has said, "The war on terrorism is not a clash of civilizations. It does, however, reveal a clash inside a civilization, a battle for the future of the Muslim world. This is a struggle of ideas, and this is an area where America must excel."[13]

Ideological engagement is the job, of course, not only of the State Department. Other agencies of government are hard at work. If confirmed, my intention will be to coordinate closely with these agencies and with our allies—especially in Europe, where the traditions of the Enlightenment and critical thinking were born and where the extremist threat today is intense.

BUILD ON THE FOUNDATION OF EXCHANGES

Another way to counter the ideas of the extremists is personal engagement through educational and cultural exchange programs. Funding for these programs has more than doubled since fiscal 2003[14]—and with good reason. Exchanges are the crown jewels of public diplomacy. We are fortunate that a talented Iranian-born American, Goli Ameri, has been nominated by the President to head these programs as Assistant Secretary of State.

We should never forget that, to the rest of the world, education is America's great brand. In my preparation over the past few weeks, I have learned that the total number of international students in the United States is on track to rise to a record high in the 2007–2008 academic year. This is big news, and welcome.

We will also look for new ways to spread the benefits of educational and cultural exchanges to less advantaged youth to study in the United States. In particular, we will work to fulfill the President's vision to expand the Partnership for Latin Amer-

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[9] WorldPublicOpinion.org, Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, "Muslim Opinion on US Policy, Attacks on Civilians and al Qaeda," April 24, 2007. A press release summarizing the study began, "An in-depth poll of four major Muslim countries has found that in all of them large majorities believe that undermining Islam is a key goal of US foreign policy." See http://worldpublicopinion.org.

[10] Ibid.

[11] America's Image in the World: Findings from the Pew Global Attitudes Project, Testimony of Andrew Kohut, Pew Research Center, before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, March 14, 2007.

[12] Mary Habeck, Knowing the Enemy: Jihadist Ideology in the War on Terror (Yale University Press, 2006), p. 4.

[13] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002. See http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss9.html

[14] From $244 million in fiscal 2003 to $501 million in fiscal 2008.

ican Youth, a program which will increase access to English language teaching and provide thousands of young people in our own hemisphere a greater chance to study here in the United States.

BRING NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO BEAR

The truth is that ordinary Americans are superb citizen ambassadors. They live our values: Generosity, tolerance, compassion. The problem is that the vast majority of people in the world have never met an American. The challenge is how to amplify our exchange programs. Research shows that the Fulbright program is highly effective. Through video technology and the Internet we can magnify the life-changing experiences of nearly 7,000 Fulbrighters and 2,000 Flex and YES high school students who come here each year so that such experiences are shared not simply by the families and friends but by millions.

New technologies also will play a larger and larger role in the war of ideas, through innovations such as the Digital Outreach Team.

After I was nominated, I read a great deal in the press about my job. People speculated on what I would do to burnish America's image, to increase our popularity ratings—as if the United States were a brand of soft drink or an entrant in "American Idol" seeking global votes.

Let me offer a different perspective. Public diplomacy's role is to help achieve the national interest by "informing, engaging, and influencing people around the world."[15] It is a tool, a means, to achieve specific ends. One of those ends—the first goal as defined by President Bush's National Security Strategy in March 16, 2006, is "promoting freedom, justice and human dignity—working to end tyranny, to promote effective democracies, and to extend prosperity."[16] And why do we do that? Not just for moral reasons, but because free governments, since they are accountable to their people, tend not to attack other free nations. "Peace and international stability," says this National Security Strategy, "are most reliably built on a foundation of freedom."

What does all this have to do with popularity? It matters that people in other parts of the world trust us and respect us. Their leaders are sensitive to public opinion, and when we ask nations to support our aims in the world—to send troops, to impose sanctions, to assist in humanitarian relief—those nations are more apt to respond if their publics are favorably disposed toward the United States.

On the other hand, isn't it better that more and more people in the Arab and Muslim world today reject suicide bombing as a tactic[17]—even if their love for America has not necessarily increased?

I have spent a good deal of time since my nomination in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the data on attitudes toward the United States. I met for 2 hours with Andy Kohut of the Pew Research Center and have conferred with experts at the State Department and read practically all the surveys. Here are some conclusions:

1. Animosity toward the United States is real, and it must concern us.

2. Different countries have different views of the United States. In Africa, Japan, and India, for example, most people favorably disposed toward the United States.[18] In much of Western Europe and nearly all the Arab and Muslim world, they are not.

3. Much of the animosity is not deep. Even people who say they dislike us want to have strong bilateral relations with us, and attitudes are not set in stone.[19] As Secretary Rice said last year, the United States is "still the place where people like to send their kids to school, where people want to start a new

[15] Changing Minds, Winning Peace, op. cit., p. 13.

[16] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2006. See http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/intro.html.

[17] "Islam and the West: Searching for Common Ground," Testimony of Andrew Kohut, Pew Research Center, before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, July 18, 2006. For example, in Jordan, the proportion saying that suicide bombing against civilian targets is "often" or "sometimes" justified dropped from 57 percent in 2005 to 29 percent in 2006. See http://pewglobal.org/commentary/print.php?AnalysislD=1009.

[18] For example, proportions of those with favorable views of the United States, according to a June 2007 Pew Global Attitudes Project Survey, were 88 percent in the Ivory Coast, 80 percent in Ghana, 59 percent in India, 61 percent in Japan, 30 percent in Germany, and 21 percent in Egypt. In Nigeria a majority of Muslims views the United States favorably.

[19] See, for example, a study conducted between November 30 and December 5 by Terror Free Tomorrow: The Center for Public Opinion and D3 System. It found that 40 percent of respondents in Saudi Arabia had a favorable opinion of the United States, compared with just 11 percent in May 2006. See http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/template.php?section=WN.

life. Sometimes we overstate the degree to which America is not popular, even if sometimes our policies are not."[20]

4. The animosity of foreigners has three sources:

a. They understand that we are a powerful nation and will ultimately set policies with our own interests in mind, but they believe we do not listen to them, do not act as a reliable partner, and do not respectfully take their views into account.[21]

b. In the Arab and Muslim world, especially, they have major misconceptions about America, our aims, and our policies. Remember the examples I cited before, such as a belief that we want to supplant Islam with Christianity in the Middle East.

c. They disagree with our policies, especially our presence in Iraq and what they see as our bias in the matter of Israel and the Palestinians.

The first two sources of animosity, I believe, we can address effectively through public diplomacy. We can listen better and more respectfully and through exchanges, information programs, and ideological engagement, we can address and rectify the lies and misconceptions.

As for policy: Edward R. Murrow, when he was USIA director, famously said that public diplomacy should be in on the takeoffs, not just the crash landings.[22] In other words, public diplomacy should have a place at the table, to advise policymakers of the potential reaction of foreign publics to policies. But never, in my view, should global public opinion polls determine the foreign policy of the United States.

Can we do a better job explaining our policies? Yes. Will those policies be universally embraced? No.

In the early 1980s, the United States and our allies agreed on the placement of cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. It was a decision that was aggressively opposed by much of Europe's public opinion, but it was a policy that helped bring down communism.

Consider Muslim Americans. A Pew study in May found that foreign-born American Muslims, by a 70 to 3 percent majority, have an unfavorable view of al-Qaeda.[23] By 78 to 18 percent, they are happy with their lives in America. They are optimistic, by a four-to-one margin, that a way will be found for Israel and the Palestinians to coexist. In all of these measures, Muslim Americans differ not only from Muslims in the Middle East and much of Asia but from Muslim immigrants in Europe.

Yet American Muslims, by a margin of more than six to one, say that the war in Iraq was wrong. That compares to a split of roughly 50–50 at the time among the entire U.S. public.

In other words, Muslims in America embrace U.S. values and participate actively in U.S. society, yet they differ with other Americans and with the U.S. government on policy. That is to say, policy is not the determining factor in their view of America. This is precisely the condition we should strive for in the world. People in other countries will not agree with our policies all the time, but we want them to have an accurate picture of those policies and the motivations behind them, and we want the disagreements to be constructive.

Since I was nominated as Under Secretary on December 11, many friends have congratulated me and perhaps just as many have offered condolences. They were half-joking, I suppose, in their reference to how difficult this job must be.

Public diplomacy requires seriousness, dedication, imagination, and hard work, but no condolences are in order. This is a position for which I have prepared all my life. My focus will be leading the war of ideas, building on the strong foundation provided by Karen Hughes, especially in the area of educational exchanges, and bringing new technologies to bear, in large part to amplify the effects of our programs.

The task ahead is to tell the world the story of a good and compassionate nation and, at the same time, to engage in the most important ideological contest of our time—a contest that we will win.

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[20] "A Resolute Condoleezza Rice," by Maria Bartiromo, BusinessWeek, July 23, 2007. See http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/07_30/b4043101.htm.

[21] This is the finding of many surveys. For example, in the June 2007 survey cited in the footnote above, respondents were asked how much the United States "takes into account the interests of countries" like yours in "making international policy decisions." The total proportion answering "not too much" or "not at all" was 79 percent in the Czech Republic, 75 percent in Turkey, 79 percent in South Korea, and 61 percent in Chile.

[22] See http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/murrow/snow.htm.

[23] These results and those that follow are from "Muslim Americans: Middle-Class and Mostly Mainstream," published by the Pew Research Center on May 22, 2007. See http://pewresearch.org/pubs/483/muslim-americans.

In closing, I want to thank the men and women working in the area of Public Diplomacy around the world. This includes our Foreign Service officers, Civil Service colleagues, and Foreign Service Nationals. I am honored to have you consider my confirmation and I look forward to working closely with the committee and your staff. Thank you.

Senator Bill NELSON. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Thank you, sir.

Senator Bill NELSON. Senator Lieberman.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. I am honored to be here with my colleagues Senator Lugar and Senator Nelson. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to introduce James K. Glassman formally—I think you've already met him—to this committee and urge its members to favorably consider his nomination to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

I'm pleased to make this recommendation based on my great admiration for the work that Jim Glassman has done and, beyond that generic interest, I have a more parochial interest because Jim has been a long-time resident of the great State of Connecticut.

The Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy is the closest thing in the United States Government to what might be called a supreme allied commander in the war of ideas, responsible for rallying our Nation's resources so that we can prevail in the most critical and unconventional of battlefields. It is therefore one of the most important posts, I believe, in Washington and in our worldwide struggle against the forces of Islamist extremism and terrorism.

I believe that the members of this committee will find Jim Glassman to be a highly qualified person to lead this fight. He brings considerable knowledge and depth of experience about this particular area of activity, public diplomacy. In 2003, he served as a member of the congressionally mandated Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, which was chaired by our very respected Ambassador Edward Djerijian. For the last 7 months, Jim has served with great effect and energy as chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. Unanimously confirmed in that position by Congress last year, Jim has overseen all U.S. nonmilitary international broadcasting, covering 57 languages and producing for more than 150 million viewers and listeners.

I believe that the committee will be especially encouraged as it looks into Jim's record of leadership at the BBG, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and the spirit of nonpartisan, not just bipartisan but nonpartisan, cooperation and consensus that he brought to his decisionmaking. I know that he will bring the same qualities of leadership to his work at the Department of State and to his dealings with this Congress if confirmed in this position.

Because the mission of this position is, of course, in no sense partisan, it is a quintessentially American mission, and for that reason I very much hope that you will favorably report on the nomination of Jim Glassman to lead us in the war of ideas.

Thank you very, very much.

Senator Bill NELSON. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

I will submit my statement for the record, as we will for each of you. We're going to get right into questions, so I turn to the Senator from Maryland.

[The prepared statement of Senator Bill Nelson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

This hearing of the Committee on Foreign Relations will now come to order. Today, the committee meets to consider the nomination of three individuals for key leadership positions in the administration.

The President has nominated James Glassman to be the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, Goli Ameri to be the Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, and David Kramer to the Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

I want to congratulate each of you on your nomination and welcome you and your families here today.

I also welcome our colleagues, Senator Lieberman and Senator Smith, who have joined us to introduce two of the nominees today.

Mr. Glassman has been asked to manage the critical effort of public diplomacy for our Nation. An integral part of state-to-state relations, public diplomacy is a way to engage foreign audiences about the United States on a personal level: It involves people-to-people programs like educational, cultural, and sports exchanges.

America's public diplomacy has been widely criticized since the attacks of September 11, 2001. Within months of those attacks, international opinion of this country changed from one of admiration, respect, and empathy to one of distrust and misunderstanding. Our damaged image abroad, even among our closest friends, has hindered our ability to work with allies toward our shared objectives, and it is imperative that we correct international misperceptions about America.

If confirmed, Mr. Glassman would be responsible for this monumental task.

As Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, he would be the principal adviser to the Secretary of State for shaping the international community's perception of this country. Mr. Glassman would oversee and manage three important bureaus within the Department of State: The Bureaus of Information Programs, Educational and Cultural Affairs, and Public Affairs.

One of those three bureaus, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs would be directed by Ms. Ameri. Her primary responsibility would be implementation and oversight of international exchange programs.

We are all familiar with the importance of public diplomacy, and specifically cultural exchanges, especially in times of great misperception and misunderstanding. As a young boy during the cold War, I myself had the opportunity to participate in public diplomacy by representing the youth of America and going to the Iron Curtain at the German-Czechoslovakian border.

There in the little village of Tillyschanz in the midst of the cold war, I got to speak over Radio Free Europe to the young people behind the Iron Curtain. At the age of 17, what I saw at that border made a lasting impression on me not until then could I have understood what it means for a people to be enslaved and shut off from the world behind machine gun nests, guard towers, and mine fields.

Although the times have changed, the importance of interacting with people throughout the world has only increased.

We also consider today the nomination of Mr. David Kramer to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

In this position, Mr. Kramer would lead U.S. efforts to promote democracy, protect human rights and international religious freedom, and advance labor rights around the world.

He would report to the Secretary of State on countries' human rights records. Because a country's human rights record is considered in the decision to provide U.S. foreign and security assistance, vigilant reporting is enormously important to our foreign policy.

I look forward to a thorough discussion with all of the nominees about their plans for providing leadership to our efforts to shape America's global image and pursue the highest standards of democracy and human rights. Again, I would like to recognize each of them for their distinguished careers and thank them for the continued personal commitment necessary to undertake these challenging assignments.

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

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me thank you for convening this hearing, and I want to thank all three of the nominees for their willingness to serve in the public sector. I agree with Senator Lugar, it's really helpful to our Nation when people with strong backgrounds in the private sector are willing to come forward and help their government in the public sector. It's not easy. It's not easy on you as far as your rights of privacy. It's not easy on your families. And we thank you for being willing to serve your country. Quite frankly, I'm impressed by all three of your backgrounds.

I just want to spend one moment, if I might, with Secretary Kramer, who is no stranger to me because of his close association with the Helsinki Commission. I am honored to be on this committee, but I'm also honored to be the Senate chairman of the Helsinki Commission. It's interesting, the Helsinki Commission predates the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and it's been an unusual entity in that it's a cooperative effort between the Executive and Legislative Branches.

Your position, once confirmed, will be most likely the designee of your agency to the Helsinki Commission. So, first, I want to thank you for your past help. You testified before our committee on Belarus. You've been very helpful to our staff. And really an invitation to work very closely with us in the Helsinki Commission so that we can advance the portfolio that comes under the position that you're seeking confirmation and we can work closer together, the Members of Congress and the administration, to advance U.S. interests internationally in human rights. I welcome your comments in that regard.

Mr. KRAMER. Senator Cardin, thank you very much for that invitation to continue to work very closely with the Helsinki Commission. I have valued my opportunities to engage with you and certainly the staff members, with whom I worked very closely on a range of issues. In addition to testifying before the commission on Belarus, I also testified on the negotiations and discussions we've had with Russia on the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, and appreciated very much your comments and thoughts during that session.

I certainly pledge to you, sir, that if confirmed, I look forward very much to a close working relationship with the commission.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Well, I thank you for that, and I do look forward to your confirmation and I look forward to having the full complement within the commission, and I think you can add tremendous strength to our work. I know I speak for all the members.

Mr. Chairman, this is one area where there has been no partisan differences at all. It's a commission that works in very close harmony. It's interesting, it's also one where there is virtually no division between the executive branch and the legislative branch. We work in very close unity, which has made, I think, our effectiveness within an organization which is basically Europe and Central Asia—it includes North America; don't get me wrong—but it's

given us an extraordinary impact in that organization to advance the causes, our interests in Europe and Central Asia.

So I thank you for that answer and I look forward to working with you.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for recognizing me.

Senator Bill NELSON. Senator Lugar.

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

Mr. Glassman, during the last few years of this administration, we've had numerous hearings about public diplomacy and in due course people have been sent forth to do that work, the most recent being Karen Hughes. At the same time, those who come into our hearings from the outside world keep pointing to surveys that indicate that the United States is held in less and less regard by more and more countries. Sometimes it's in support of a particular cause or position they have, to indicate that we're on the wrong foot. But on the other hand, the pervasive nature of these adverse surveys is certainly dispiriting to committee members.

You've watched all of this from various vantage points for many years and now have an opportunity to make a substantial difference. What strategies do you intend to employ or what kind of program, or at what point could the committee be apprised of how you will make a difference in this situation?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Thank you for that question, Senator Lugar. I've actually spent the last 6 weeks poring over a lot of the data on exactly this subject. I've met with Andrew Kohut of the Pew Center and I've looked at his surveys as well as internal surveys that have been done by the State Department, and I've come to a number of conclusions.

The first is that the animosity toward the United States is real, it should concern us, but it's not monolithic. For example, in Africa we do quite well in the surveys. In parts of Latin America that's also true; in India, Japan. But there is a great deal of animosity, especially in the Arab and Muslim world and in Europe.

What are the sources of that animosity? I think there really are three. One is that there is a perception that we are not listening and respectfully taking the views of other people into account. People seem to understand in the rest of the world that we're the big dog, that we are ultimately going to make decisions in our national interest, as we should. But they feel that they're not being heard.

The second thing is that there are a lot of misperceptions and, frankly, outright lies that are being told about us. Some of them are based on a particular framework that the ideology on which al Qaeda's doctrine is based comes from. Those are serious. For example, majorities of people in the Middle East, in the Arab world, believe that our engagement in that area is to destroy Islam and to supplant it with Christianity. I mean, that is just wrong and we have to address that.

Finally, there are people who just don't agree with our specific policies, such as those in Iraq, and we need to do a better job of explaining those policies, but global public opinion should absolutely not set our foreign policy.

So my feeling is that the first two areas are ones that we can absolutely work on, and I believe we can work on the third one as well and explain our policies better. But this is a major concern of

mine. I believe that we are making headway already and I am very happy to report back to this committee after a few months of work and tell you where we stand.

Senator LUGAR. Well, that would be very helpful, because clearly this is a crucial area which you've discovered. Mr. Kohut and the Pew Foundation have done a lot of work in this area and sort of flood us with material of this sort, all of which is pretty sad news.

Do you have any particular strategies in terms of changes in broadcasting or in contacts with newsmen? Or really, how would you proceed, having noted these deficiencies?

Mr. GLASSMAN. One of the things I think we need to do better is amplify what we're doing in our exchange programs. These are fabulous programs. They're really the crown jewels of what we do in public diplomacy. But you take a program like the Fulbright programs, which are great. Currently 7,000 people a year are participating in Fulbrights and that's a good number historically. But how do we get the rest of the world to know about these programs and, let's say electronically, come into contact with more Americans?

Most people in the world have never met an American and ordinary Americans are our best ambassadors. So one of the things that I want to try to do, especially in concert with Goli because both of us have a background in telecommunications and Internet, is to amplify what we're doing.

The second thing is quite simply to engage in a much more vigorous way. We're already doing that, but we need to do more of it in the war of ideas, explaining what we're doing, pushing back against the lies and misperceptions.

Senator LUGAR. That leads me to a question for Ms. Ameri, because clearly the exchange programs are an extraordinary aspect of public diplomacy, but they're really much more than that. Now, one of the problems that you will face, I suspect, although you may be more optimistic, is the Congress has not increased the ECA budget and so rapidly you're going to come up against barriers, which you may already have discovered even as you begin to move into this thing.

Have you given any thought just creatively as to how the Department of Defense budget or other budgets might be utilized? I mean that sincerely, not as an invasion into their territory, but again and again our committee is trying to think through in the constructive work, for instance in Iraq, how if we are going to be successful in nation-building defense funds could be utilized. Secretary Gates is very much in favor of this sort of collaboration.

It just occurs to me that some good diplomacy on your part, given the short framework here, would be important. But have you thought about, how do you do the Lord's work with exchanges with very little money and what kind of plans do you have?

Ms. AMERI. Thank you, Senator, for that question. Actually, the President's $501 million budget for ECA in 2008 will certainly allow the bureau to expand exchanges, and particularly its English language programs and international visitors. Clearly, the President and the Secretary of State have mentioned on a number of occasions their support for all the exchanges that the bureau does.

In addition, I would actually like to extend my gratitude to Congress and yourself in particular for having always been such a big supporter of the programs of the ECA.

Having said that, as you mentioned, we can always clearly use more funds. One of the ideas that I had, which Jim and I have discussed, is, No. 1, we need to get the private sector more involved and more engaged. Both of us coming from that kind of background, we've talked about it. I've talked to a couple of NGOs regarding this, talked to a couple of contacts, just briefly, to kind of get some feedback and ideas. If confirmed, that will be one of the main items on my agenda—to make sure that we bring the private sector in to fund more of our exchanges, more of our incredibly successful English language teaching programs, English Access Microscholarship Program, which has taught English to 32,000 young kids, especially in Muslim countries.

We've done, ECA has done, an evaluation on this and the results are phenomenal—close to 90 percent say that they have a more favorable view of the United States. Ninety-six percent of parents, for example, say if they had another child they'd put them through the program. This is a program that clearly moves the needle.

On your question regarding the Defense Department, this was a very brief conversation that Jim Glassman and I had yesterday. I know he's had a meeting over there, and that is certainly an issue that I think we both need to take into consideration, concerning Secretary Gates' recent announcement on this subject. We welcome your input on that as well, Senator.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much. I came to this hearing from a wonderful meeting with 10 students from St. Petersburg University. These are all future diplomats, and they are deeply interested and very sophisticated about foreign policy in our country. These things occur every day in Washington, thank goodness. I hope for many more, because I was telling them about a group of young Georgians that came here 15 years ago, including the now-President, Mr. Shakashvili. They were graduate students then. They went back to Georgia and a while later the Rose Revolution occurred. Thus, this is serious business in terms of our public diplomacy and likewise the right outcomes of history.

So I appreciate very much your leadership and your collaboration with Mr. Glassman.

Ms. AMERI. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Bill NELSON. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. I want to thank all the witnesses for their commitment to public service. Your dedication to supporting U.S. foreign policy goals is commendable, particularly since you would be taking on these positions with only a year left in the current administration.

Let me just ask a few questions. First for Mr. Glassman. In our meeting earlier this week you mentioned your intent to work to improve the structure of the Bureau of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, and I appreciate your attention to strengthening this Bureau, particularly since it has undergone many changes since the

U.S. Information Agency was folded into the Department of State operations.

To your predecessor's credit, she undertook a difficult task when accepting this assignment in 2005 and she should be recognized for her accomplishments. As you are well aware, however, this Bureau has been criticized for having a weak communications strategy, which obviously raises questions about its ability to meet its important mission.

I'd like to hear from you if you have spoken with your predecessor first about the development of a communications strategy and how you'll work to improve it; and secondly, how you see the communications strategy fitting into the broader "structural" changes you intend to implement?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Thank you very much for the question, Senator. I have indeed spoken at length with Karen Hughes and I agree with you, I think she did a superb job in her 2½ years as Under Secretary and, frankly, just speaking personally, I don't think she received credit, at least in the media, for all that she did. I think people within the Department understand it, people who know public diplomacy understand it.

She did a number of very important things. One of the things she did was really help to liberate ambassadors and other public officials throughout the State Department to get out and advocate for American policies and American principles. You know, many of them are looking at their own careers and worried that they might say something wrong. And in fact when somebody might—in one case did say something a little bit wrong, she backed that person up and said that we all make mistakes. That was a very important signal to send.

I want to, if I'm confirmed, continue on that same path. The fact is that we need a multiplicity of voices out advocating for United States policy and for American principles in the long term.

Two other things that she did that are tremendously important, I think. One was establishing media hubs in London, Brussels, and Dubai. In fact, when I was in Dubai 2 months ago I met with the people there. It's a very small staff. There are really only six people throughout the world who are doing this. But what they're doing is getting out into the Arabic language media as well as other media on a very fast, very quick response basis and engaging.

When I was on the Djerijian group 4½ years ago, one of the points that we made was we need to get into the conversation. Four and one-half years ago we were not in it. We're now in it more and more.

Finally—and I got an impressive demonstration of this the other day—the digital outreach team, which is now I believe eight or nine people who are blogging, identifying themselves as U.S. Government representatives. They are on blogs, they're on Web sites in the Arabic language, Farsi, Persian, and Urdu, again trying to get the facts out, because that's the big problem.

So I am deeply committed to a program of vigorous communication. In that sense I will be following in Karen's footsteps, and I think my entire career of 40 years in communications is background for that, sir.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Mr. Glassman.

Mr. Kramer, I'd like to just ask you a question about Russia as we just touched on it briefly when we met. I'm concerned, as I'm sure you are, by the significant weakening we've seen in Russia's democratic institutions. Promoting the rule of law and strengthening democratic institutions are an important part of United States foreign policy and we cannot afford to see Russian democracy backslide.

I'd be interested to hear what you've done in your current position to address this backsliding and, should you be nominated, how would you promote democracy and the rule of law in Russia?

Mr. KRAMER. Senator, thank you very much for the question. It is an issue that has occupied me both in my service in Government and before I joined the Government, working in the think-tank community. I would note that while working at the Carnegie Endowment in the 1990s I played a key role in setting up the first independent think tank in Moscow, the Carnegie Moscow Center, which continues to this day as a vibrant institution of free expression.

In my Government service, have tried to draw attention, particularly when the Chechen War flared up again in 1999, to the plight of Chechens and what was happening there. In my current capacity as Deputy Assistant Secretary responsible for Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Modova, I've also been outspoken on the problems that you've identified—the backsliding and the internal situation in Russia—even to the point where my public criticism of last December's Duma election earned me a condemnation from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

My intent is not simply to speak out from on high, but to actually try to make a difference. I think we have to be realistic about our ability to influence the situation in Russia these days. It's a different Russia than what we saw emerge from the initial period of the breakup of the Soviet Union, but it doesn't mean that we give up and let Russia continue without drawing attention to the democratic backsliding that you've identified. So Russia will remain a key challenge for us as we continue to try to address the problems there.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Finally, as we discussed briefly yesterday, there are many countries across sub-Saharan Africa that require assistance in consolidating recent democratic gains. A good example is Nigeria, which is an important United States ally and a leader on the continent. But the last Presidential election there was the latest in a line of troubled elections, with this most recent one heavily, if not completely, rigged in favor of the ruling party. More recently, the Nigerian President has deposed the head of the country's anticorruption commission, undermining a previous commitment to fight corruption that plagues this resource-rich country.

So although the administration has certainly paid lip service to democracy and good government in both cases, the State Department's response to these inexcusable actions was, in my view, seemingly little more than a slap on the wrist and then back to business.

If confirmed, how would you in your role as head of DRL seek to address the significant discrepancies between our government's actions and words?

Mr. KRAMER. Senator, I greatly appreciate your involvement and interest in matters dealing with Africa. It is a continent of enormous importance to the United States. If confirmed in this new position, I pledge to you a great deal of attention will be focused on Africa by me and by the bureau.

I also am aware of the letter you sent to Secretary Rice drawing attention to the concerns you have with the situation in Nigeria. I know when the Nigerian President came for meetings and met with President Bush that concerns were raised at the highest levels. Certainly the issues that need to be addressed include corruption, the problems facing democratic institutions, and the ability for people to associate in opposition parties.

I would also just add that countries don't deserve a pass just because they may be important because of energy resources or because they may contribute to peacekeeping operations. Nigeria is very important on both scores, but that doesn't mean that Nigeria or any other country, for that matter, should earn a pass when it comes to being held up to democratic standards.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Bill NELSON. Mr. Kramer, is Putin the next czar of Russia?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, the question of where Mr. Putin is going has perhaps been clarified by his statement saying he would be willing to serve as prime minister following the March 2 election. The expectation, and I think it seems more and more clear, that Dmitri Medvedev will be Russia's next president. His standings are above 80 percent and given the difficulties of registering opposition candidates, the way seems fairly paved for Mr. Medvedev to become president.

Mr. Putin has said on numerous occasions in the past that he would not stay as president. He now does in fact seem to be living up to that. But I think, in responding to Senator Feingold's question, we have seen significant rollback on democratic progress in Russia in the centralization of power, the elimination of gubernatorial elections, the crackdown on NGOs, the harassment of journalists, even the murder of several journalists, including Paul Klebnikof, an American citizen. All of these things point to disturbing trends in Russia and President Putin has been President during that time.

It is my hope, whether from my current position or if confirmed as Assistant Secretary for the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, that we would be able to engage in a productive and effective and serious way with new Russian leadership on how to get Russia back on the right democratic path.

Senator Bill NELSON. As prime minister, do you think he will be the power behind the throne?

Mr. KRAMER. Now you're asking me to look into my Kremlin crystal ball, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Bill NELSON. I'm asking your opinion.

Mr. KRAMER. Indeed. I would say, and President Putin has said himself, that he plans to remain an influential figure in Russian politics. I would not question that statement in the least. I think that will remain the case.

Senator Bill NELSON. Tell me what you think about human rights in Cuba.

Mr. KRAMER. Cuba stands out in the Western Hemisphere. There are other countries in the hemisphere that have their problems, but Cuba has for decades. Our policy, the U.S. focus, has been on getting ready for the post-Castro transition. We've been ready for quite a while, but the day is getting closer. So we want to help forces in Cuba that are fighting for democracy, for respect for human rights, for release of political prisoners.

If confirmed in this new position I would work very closely with colleagues, through the inter-agency process, to make sure we are ready to help Cuba once it reaches that phase.

Senator Bill NELSON. Waiting until that point or acting now?

Mr. KRAMER. Acting now.

Senator Bill NELSON. Doing what now?

Mr. KRAMER. Providing the necessary support for NGOs, speaking out when there are human rights abuses and transgressions against democratic freedoms, and also trying to reach out to support democratic groups for when that day comes.

Senator Bill NELSON. Do you support humanitarian assistance to family members in Cuba?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, I would. Humanitarian assistance would fall beyond the purview of the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau, but whenever humanitarian assistance is needed that appeals to the hearts of the American people. So my instinct would be to provide humanitarian support wherever it's needed.

Senator Bill NELSON. How do you grade the new president of Nigeria and his record of human rights?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, the problems in Nigeria are serious—human rights abuses and corruption, the lack of ability of people to speak out and to organize in opposition parties. When the Nigerian president came to Washington last December, these issues were raised. So it is my intention if confirmed in the new position to continue a dialog.

We want to see Nigeria succeed. It's critically important, given Nigeria's place in Africa and, frankly, on the global scene that Nigeria become a success story. So we want to do what we can to help Nigeria develop in a more democratic fashion.

Senator Bill NELSON. It's ironic that some of our best international friends are also some of the greatest abusers of human rights, and yet we support these allies for other reasons. So tell the committee, how do we strike the balance between the security interest and seeing that our commitment toward human rights is adhered to in those countries?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, that's a key question that you've asked. My approach, if given the opportunity to serve as assistant secretary, would be to avoid tradeoffs and even avoid trying to balance things. My approach would be to try to push on all cylinders on all issues. Security interests, economic interests, democratic in-

terests all work for the same ultimate goal, which is promoting a more secure, stable, democratic global community.

So, while some issues may rise on the priority list given certain exigencies, it would be my goal to try to push countries to become more democratic, not in a lecturing or hectoring way, but in a way that tries to demonstrate to them it is in their own interest to do so. Countries that crack down on opposition forces or on religious minority groups run the risk of producing the very kinds of extremist activities that we don't want to see. So to me these interests go hand in hand. If given the opportunity, it would be my goal to push and work very closely with my colleagues in the regional bureaus in the State Department, as well as in the inter-agency process.

In my current capacity, I am coming from a regional bureau so I bring that experience. I can work to make sure that the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor has the same relationship with all the bureaus in the State Department.

Senator Bill NELSON. What would you do differently than the previous assistant secretaries?

Mr. KRAMER. If confirmed, I would inherit a bureau that is in extremely good shape, and if confirmed, I thank my predecessors, Lorne Craner, Glen Davies, Mike Kozak, and Barry Lowenkron of course, and old dear friend of mine. They have positioned the bureau to become an effective vehicle for providing money to those in need, to support NGOs who are promoting democratic activities.

Barry Lowenkron, the immediate predecessor, has left a bureau that's in very good shape. Perhaps I would speak out a little more publicly on some issues, but I think Barry also has a very strong and proud record on that. I'm not known in the State Department as a shy person and, if confirmed, I don't plan to become shy in this new job.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, kudos to you on that. Other than speaking out publicly, any other changes?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, if confirmed in this job, I would have less than a year, and I think it would probably be not the wisest thing for me to do to try to turn the bureau upside down. I also don't feel there's a need to do so. My interests would be to ensure that focus on democracy, human rights, and labor rights remain an issue for the next presidency, the next administration. To me, support for democracy and human rights, freedom, liberty, justice, labor rights, those issues transcend politics. There's bipartisan support for that. And so I'd want to ensure that the bureau would be in the best shape possible for the next team, and also make sure we focus on some of the crises right now that we're looking at, whether it's in Darfur, focusing on the issue of Burma, dealing with problems in Belarus or Zimbabwe or Cuba, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Bill NELSON. Will you cooperate with your successor?

Mr. KRAMER. Absolutely.

Senator Bill NELSON. Regardless of party?

Mr. KRAMER. Yes, sir.

Senator Bill NELSON. Do you have a history of that?

Mr. KRAMER. I've only been serving in the Government since the start of the Bush administration, but I certainly had extensive contacts and dealings with people in the Clinton administration when

I worked in the think-tank community, and many of those friendships and relationships have carried over into the current administration.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, tell me what you think about the United Nations human rights organizations?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, you raise a very important point here. The Human Rights Council has been a serious disappointment. Its predecessor was not a great organization and the current institution is not a good one either. When you have countries like Saudi Arabia and China and Russia on the commission, that's a problem.

We work with other U.N. mechanisms, the third committee, as it's called, in trying to bring attention to problems, whether it's in Belarus or in Cuba. I will say that the Human Rights Commission did draw attention to the problem in Sudan last fall. But there has been an extremely unhealthy focus on Israel in the current Human Rights Council.

So we try to work with it, make the best of it. We're not a voting member, as you know. We also look to the possibility when universal periodic reviews start in a few months to use that as a mechanism to focus some attention where it so far has not occurred.

Senator Bill NELSON. What do you think it takes to stop them being an Israel-bashing club?

Mr. KRAMER. A sense of shame. They seem to focus on Israel to an unhealthy degree, while overlooking problems elsewhere in the world. I would hope that there would be a greater sense of balance brought to the agenda of the HRC. So far, alas, I have not seen that.

Senator Bill NELSON. If we make some progress in the settlement in a two-stage solution, should that help?

Mr. KRAMER. I would hope that would contribute to a more productive HRC, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure it will, but certainly that would be a positive step in and of itself, regardless of the impact it may have on the Human Rights Commission.

Senator Bill NELSON. Who do you think in the State Department or elsewhere ought to make the decision about whether or not the United States would join the Human Rights Council?

Mr. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, that would be a matter decided at the highest levels of our building, I'm sure in full consultation with our colleagues at the NSC and the White House. I think we have not been hindered by the decision not to be a full voting member. We have participated in informal meetings as well as formal meetings. We have an opportunity to speak out in those.

So it's my intent, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, to continue to do what we can while recognizing that we're dealing with an institution that does not have a good track record at all.

Senator Bill NELSON. Do you recall who was the most recent country to be put on the council?

Mr. KRAMER. I don't, Mr. Chairman. I'd be happy to get back to you on that. I apologize; I don't have that answer.

Senator Bill NELSON. No, I should have that answer, and maybe we'll have it here in a minute.

Last November, the Secretary of Defense made a very insightful statement, Mr. Glassman. Secretary Gates said, quote, that "The U.S. is miserable at communicating to the rest of the world what we are about as a society and a culture, about freedom and democracy, about our policies and our goals. It's just plain embarrassing that al Qaeda is better at communicating its message on the Internet than America." End of quote.

Do you agree with that assessment?

Mr. GLASSMAN. I think that assessment's a little on the extreme side, but I generally agree with its spirit. I think there's an important history here, which is that in the 1990s this country unilaterally disarmed [our public diplomacy apparatus], for reasons that I think were understandable. We had won the cold war, so why did we need the greatest public diplomacy apparatus in the world any more? And we got a rude awakening 6 years ago, and since then we have been rebuilding [our public diplomacy apparatus].

I think that absolutely in the last 2 years that there is a new spirit and I think a successful beginning at rebuilding that apparatus so that it can do the kinds of things that Secretary Gates and I myself and many others want it to do is underway.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, this is January and that was 2 months ago that the Secretary of Defense said that. You think that it's been fixed. What else would you do to fix it?

Mr. GLASSMAN. I think it's on the way to being fixed. What else would I do? Well, in many parts of the Government, including the Department of Defense, including the intelligence community, there is an effort under way in ideological engagement or the war of ideas. That effort, however, is not coordinated and it is not led to the degree that it should be. The President has given the lead to the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and my main focus will be to lead the war of ideas.

So it's not just a matter of getting the right words or the right messages. It's a matter of leadership and getting that out, and I think if I'm confirmed in the year that I have that will be my focus.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, let me tell you one thing that Secretary Gates said ought to fix it. When he made that statement, he called for increased funding for the foreign affairs budget and diplomacy. Do you support that suggestion?

Mr. GLASSMAN. In the past 5 years the budget for Education and Cultural Affairs has doubled, and I think that is an excellent indication of the concern that the Congress and the administration have.

My general feeling is this, and I certainly expressed it when I was on the Djerijian group. Resources are important, absolutely; no doubt about that. But we need the leadership and the structure to put those resources to work properly. I think we're there now. I don't think we were there 4 years ago or maybe even 2 years ago. Absolutely the Department of Defense has a great deal of resources and they're spending some of their resources, and certainly they have a great deal more resources than the Department of State.

Senator Bill NELSON. So when I see Secretary Gates next week, do you want me to tell him that he should fund it?

Mr. GLASSMAN. No, I want you to give us his money and we'll take care of it.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, that's what I mean. So you want the DOD to fund DOS?

Mr. GLASSMAN. No, I don't want DOD to fund DOS. However, DOD does provide some funding that is very important in the overall ideological engagement struggle, and that money is very, very useful. Let's put it that way.

Senator Bill NELSON. All right, we'll leave it that way. But I'm going to ask him to talk to you.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Absolutely.

Senator Bill NELSON. Because he's torqued up about this.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Absolutely. I want to talk to him. I've read his Landham Lecture that you referred to at Kansas State University last November. I thought it was an excellent speech. He extolled soft power. I agree with that. He also understands the roles that the different parts of government have. He knows that the State Department has been given the lead in the war of ideas, and there may be some concern at DOD, in the intelligence community, and in other areas of government, about the commitment to the war of ideas by the State Department. I can tell you that if I'm confirmed there won't have to be any doubts about that, and I want to work very closely with DOD and the other participants. I've already spent the 6 weeks since my nomination talking to many of the key players in that area.

Senator Bill NELSON. The Pew Charitable Trust did a survey between 2002 and 2007. They found that favorable views of the United States fell and fell considerably. For example, in Germany—this is from 2002 to 2007—fell from 60 percent to 30 percent; in Indonesia, fell from 61 to 29; in Turkey fell from 30 to 9; and in Egypt three out of four Egyptians and Turks and Palestinians all express unfavorable opinions of the United States.

Now, you say that what has happened in the past couple of years has improved, but that being a difference over that 5-year period of 2002 to 2007, what are you going to do to try to change that?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Favorable views of the United States are tremendously important. Our job in public diplomacy is to help achieve the goals, the national interest goals of the United States of America, and that's a lot easier to do if people are favorably disposed to us. Now, I don't know if it's a question of liking us or loving us. It's more trust and respect. You're absolutely right, Senator. Those numbers are disturbing.

A lot of the numbers are quite unstable. You know, we've seen, for example—I'm looking at the same table—in Jordan in 2002 there was 25 percent approval for the United States. Then it dropped to 1 percent the next year. Now it's back up to 20 percent. These numbers are low, but they are somewhat unstable. It's also true that in other parts of the world, such as Africa, Latin America, parts of Europe, we do have much more favorable ratings, if you want to call them that.

Senator Bill NELSON. Would you agree that Germany definitely has fallen?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Germany has definitely fallen, as has most of Europe. Italy is still 53 percent.

Senator Bill NELSON. Okay, what can you do? You've only got a year to do this.

Mr. GLASSMAN. I think there are a number of things we can do. No. 1, as I said earlier, I think it is important that this perception that the United States doesn't care or does not take into account the views of people of other nations really needs to be dispelled or worked on. I think there are a lot of ways we can do that and show that we're listening more. So that's No. 1.

No. 2, we have got to fight back against the lies that are being told about us. That is more in the Arab and Muslim world. That's not so much in Europe. But there are a lot of misconceptions in Europe as well.

Finally, there's the policy question. If you look at the Europe numbers, you see that they took a dive when the Iraq war began. They don't like the Iraq war. I'm not telling you anything you don't know. But policies come, policies go. I support the administration's policy in Iraq. Lots of people in Europe clearly do not. We need to explain those policies better, but we also have to understand that people will disagree with our policies.

Let me just give you one example from another Pew survey. In May Pew looked at Muslim Americans, especially at foreign-born Muslim Americans. Here's what they found. Muslim Americans do not like the Iraq war by a 6-to-1 or seen to one margin. There is huge opposition to the war, compared at the time to about 50–50 view within the United States. However, Muslim Americans completely support American values, American principles. A majority of them are optimistic about the settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. They are ideal citizens.

That seems to me to be the paradigm that we need to go for throughout the rest of the world. People will disagree with our policies and we should never set policies based simply on global public opinion. But people need to understand what those policies are and also have the kind of feelings about American principles that Muslim Americans have. That should be our goal.

Senator Bill NELSON. The war aside, what new tools would you use to improve our image in the Muslim world?

Mr. GLASSMAN. I think that a lot of the new tools have to be through technology. As Secretary Gates said, to some extent our enemies are—and this is my term—eating our lunch when it comes to getting their word out on the Internet. But we are coming back and we are coming back forcefully. The digital outreach team that I talked about earlier, where actually we are, as far as we can tell, the only government that's actually participating in blogging, is going online and saying, here's the truth, we're pushing back. We need to do that more and more.

YouTube is being used at the Broadcasting Board of Governors. We're using more and more of the tools that exist on the Internet to get our word across. That will be a major focus of my attention, as well as, if I'm confirmed, as well as if she is confirmed, Goli Ameri's attention, because both of us have a background in the Internet and in telecommunications.

Senator Bill NELSON. One of the problems that this Senator sees is that a bastardized version of Islam is being promoted by folks like al Qaeda. What should we do to show that for what it is?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Senator, that's a tremendously important question and it raises a difficult problem. The ideology of al Qaeda is

based on a distorted view of a religion, and it's very difficult for us as Americans or as non-Muslims to say to them or to their followers, you know, this is what the Koran really says, it's not what you say it says. We're not particularly credible in that sphere.

It's important to have credible Muslim voices. I believe that is an area that we need to do better in, in encouraging Muslim voices to step forward and say exactly what you're saying, that [al-Qaeda has] built an ideology—which is a violent and vicious ideology—on top of a religion that is not like that at all.

Senator Bill NELSON. So have we identified one of your new tools?

Mr. GLASSMAN. That is definitely a tool, absolutely.

Senator Bill NELSON. All right, tell me about Cuba? How are you going to increase communication with Cuba?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Our major means of communication with Cuba is through what's being done at Radio Marti and TV Marti. I'm proud to say that this is a major—and as far as we can tell, successful—effort of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. We are beaming into Cuba through shortwave, through medium wave, and by television, now 6 hours a day, the truth about not only what the rest of the world is saying and the United States is saying about Cuba, but what's going on within that island itself, because the people who live there have no way of finding out what the truth is.

So we're doing that and we're doing it very vigorously. I think that's the most important thing we can be doing.

Senator Bill NELSON. What do you think about the visits of family members as a means of communication?

Mr. GLASSMAN. I have to say, Senator, that this is not an area of knowledge that I have, and I will look into that certainly. But I'm really not up to date on exactly what the policies are in that regard.

Senator Bill NELSON. Do you think that TV Marti gets through?

Mr. GLASSMAN. As far as we can tell, TV Marti definitely gets through. We can't do the kind of research that obviously we can do in many other parts of the world. We gather as extensive research as we possibly can from people who have left Cuba, from help that we have within Cuba, and we have anecdotal evidence that people are watching TV Marti. As I think you know, one of the first things that I did when I became chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors was to go down to Key West and see our operation there, which is quite impressive. We put up a plane that is able to beam signals from United States waters into Cuba much more effectively than previous means, and we believe that people are watching.

Senator Bill NELSON. How frequently does that plane fly?

Mr. GLASSMAN. The plane flies, I believe, every night. There may be one day that it doesn't fly. I'm not sure. But I think it's every night, from 6 to 11 p.m., or maybe 6 p.m. to midnight. I've been in the plane although I haven't been up in it. You know, people in corporate life like to brag about their G4s and G5s. This is a G1. This is the first Gulfstream. It's a two-engine plane. It's a very impressive operation, done very much on a shoestring.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, at least it's not a Piper Cub.

Mr. GLASSMAN. No, at least it's not a Piper Cub. It's a very well equipped and very well maintained plane and, from what we can tell, it's effective.

Senator Bill NELSON. I wish you would provide for the committee, please, the frequency of the flight and the estimate of the degree of penetration, along with the hours of broadcast, the estimate of the penetration, because that's been the problem on the TV Marti in the past, is ability to penetrate his jamming.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I have two short questions for Mr. Kramer.

Senator Coleman of our committee has visited with me specifically about the decision of Canada not to send representation to the Second World Conference on Racism, which is now scheduled for 2009, to be held in Durbin, South Africa. We note that the United States cast the lone "no" vote against the latest proposed United Nations budget, specifically because it included costs for the 2009 Durbin conference.

Obviously, the Durbin conference in 2001 failed to live up to its potential. The United States walked out. I'm just simply curious. Canada has already decided not to attend. We apparently have not made that decision at this point, although we walked out of the last one.

What is your overview of the Durbin conference, the 2009 affair?

Mr. KRAMER. Senator, I appreciate your flagging this issue. As you rightly point out, there were huge problems with the first Durbin conference, to the point where we certainly made the right decision in walking out. From what I understand so far, we have similar concerns about how the second one is shaping up and certainly, if confirmed, would take a very close look at this issue and the question of attendance and would be happy to discuss this matter further with you at the appropriate time.

Senator LUGAR. Well, good. It would be good to keep the committee informed, because questions will be raised, for obvious reasons, given the previous experience and our vote on the U.N. budget.

My second question concerns legislation that I offered a while back, which has passed, fortunately, to establish the Center for International Media Assessment, CIMA, as a part of the National Endowment for Democracy. Your Department, the Department of Human Rights and Labor, made a grant to CIMA, and they have had I think very good success during the past year, and have reported to all stakeholders on their remarkable results.

So I am hopeful as another grant request comes from CIMA to your Department that you would give it high priority in terms of consideration. It appears to me, having witnessed some of the meetings, press conferences, and what have you, that they have done a good job on behalf of their mission in terms of public diplomacy.

Mr. KRAMER. Senator, I appreciate your raising this issue and I think as of now I wouldn't be in much of a position to give you a response, but certainly if confirmed on the job would pledge to you to give this very serious consideration.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Bill NELSON. Yes, sir. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Ms. Ameri, in this fiscal year, Congress is providing a little over a half a billion dollars for exchanges, and that was an increase of some $75 million in the last 2 years. How much of that money would you like to see for educational and cultural exchanges for next year, 2009?

Ms. AMERI. Senator, are you asking what is the increase that we'd like to see?

Senator Bill NELSON. In the past 2 years we've had a 17 percent increase.

Ms. AMERI. Right.

Senator Bill NELSON. Now, of that total amount of money for exchanges, how much of it would you like to see go into educational programs?

Ms. AMERI. Right now, Senator, in the 2008 budget, which is about $501 million if I remember correctly, about $280 million is spent on academic programs, of which the majority is Fulbright. What I would like to see happen more this year, Senator Nelson—and that's why I brought the help and support of the private sector in—is for us to be able to increase our sponsorship and activities in these very successful micro-access scholarship in the English language programs that we have overseas, especially in the Muslim world.

The evaluation of ECA clearly shows that that's a program that moves the needle. So I want to make sure that we put a tremendous amount of emphasis on that. Of course, you know our international visitor leadership program, the ECA's international visitor leadership program, is incredibly successful. And as you very well know, as Senator Lugar mentioned at the beginning of the hearing, over 270 heads of state, current or former heads of state, have been a part of that program, including Hamid Karzai, Tony Blair—you're aware of the names—and about 1500 cabinet-level ministers. Forty-four alumni of this Department are Nobel Prize winners.

So we need to make sure that that's an area that we focus on as well. That's why I brought up the topic of getting more help and support from the private sector to make sure that we can really create a certain level of mass in these activities.

Senator Bill NELSON. How would that work, over and above the Federal money?

Ms. AMERI. Well, if confirmed, Senator, I've given a bit of thought to this issue and we've had some discussions with Jim Glassman—we would like to be able to reach out to the private sector, to corporate America, to other NGOs, possibly to the U.S. Chamber. These are all preliminary thoughts, Senator. We haven't done any of those right now. Possibly to the rotaries and to local organizations. The Rotary Club, for example, already sponsors some exchange programs. We'd like to really—I'd like for us to really go all out and to reach out to a large segment of the private sector and potentially bring them together in a summit to be able to announce a significant program by which the private sector becomes involved in a big way in all our exchange and English language activities.

In addition, Senator, one of the ideas that I have—and I certainly welcome the committee's feedback on this—is getting some of the private sector involved overseas. For example, with our Fulbright programs right now the governments provide 40 percent of our contribution to these programs. That's one of the reasons that our Fulbright programs are as successful as they are.

In my conversations with some private sector individuals, particularly in the Arab world—these are folks that are doing a lot for their communities right now. They've done well in life. The majority of them have been educated in the United States. They understand that spirit of philanthropy that is so prevalent in this country and they like to do more of that. And they are interested in Fulbright, and they are interested in the English language.

So one of my ideas, with feedback from you, of course, and making sure that we follow all the rules and regulations that we need to, is to reach out to them and to see if we can make a partner with them as well.

Senator Bill NELSON. Now, one of the problems with some of these exchanges is that there's been a lot more of the exchanges with European and Asian countries and less so with Africa, the Middle East, various Muslim countries. Tell me what you think that we can do about that? You mentioned you want to reach out to the Muslim world.

Ms. AMERI. Absolutely, Senator. That's definitely another one of the top items on my agenda. Let me just tell you a little bit about what ECA has done up to now with the Muslim world. We have more than 700 students from the Muslim world, high school students, that are in the United States todayu and are staying with wonderful, generous host families here. Our Fulbright scholarships have tripled in the last few years. Pakistan, for example, is one of our largest programs. The Government of Turkey has doubled their sponsorship of our Fulbright scholars.

Our international visitors have increased from the Muslim world. In fact, I had the privilege to meet with four Muslim scholars/leaders from Africa. When I was in Oregon, I served on the board of trustees of the World Affairs Council of Oregon. They were very interested in Islam in America and they were interested in learning more about the whole electoral process in America. I guess I was sort of a natural candidate for them to meet with.

I tell you, after that meeting was over, that was a good meeting. I had a much better understanding of some of the issues that they brought up. To them, it was just amazing that a person of Iranian heritage, of Islamic heritage, can—has been able to accomplish what this country has allowed me to accomplish in this country. So we sort of had a moment of enlightenment on both our parts.

These are very powerful programs. But clearly we need to do even more in Islamic countries. I think you asked some very good questions from my colleague, Jim Glassman. One of the issues that I see, Senator, is that the American people are a very humble people. Despite the great accomplishments of this country, we are not very good at talking about the wonderful things that this country does for the rest of the world. I think we need to talk a little bit more about that.

I think my nomination in itself, Senator, sends a tremendous message to the rest of the world about the level of tolerance and open-mindedness that exists in this country. We need to take advantage of this. We need to talk to the rest of the world about this, especially to the Islamic world.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, and that's why I ask about the Islamic world. You're only going to have a year, so what can you do about it, to rev it up, to increase these, what has been imbalanced in the past?

Ms. AMERI. You know, Senator, I'm actually painfully aware of the fact that I only have 11 months to do the job that I want to do. So clearly, as Jim said, one of the first things that we need to do is to build upon the successful programs that we already have. Our English access micro-scholarship programs work. It moves the needle. I gave you some statistics at the beginning. Close to 90 percent of the participants, their attitude changes about the United States.

If we want to increase that, we have to create mass. The way we create mass is to bring in partners, so private sector is one important thing.

We need more technology. We live in the Internet age and, as Jim said, both he and I have a technology background. We need to bring our activities into the 21st century. We need to be able to get more on YouTube. Jim and I have talked on a very preliminary basis on how can we put some of our English language programs for free on the Internet. This is just in the talk phase. I don't really know about the logistics yet. But it's a program that worked, that moves the needle, that changes values. We need to do that.

My goal is to reach out more to the Muslim American community because I know they are our best friends. Just like Jim said, they understand and like and admire American values. We need to get more of them to go overseas. We need to reach out more to our alumni, which are our very good friends, because these folks have understood what's happening.

If I may, Senator, just to give you a very brief anecdote here. I had the opportunity to meet with a couple of our Fulbright teaching language folks that have been brought here, about 300 of them. These were Iranians. One of them teaches at Emory, the other one teaches at Portland State University. I had an opportunity to meet with both of them, and one of them was this wonderful young lady, practicing Muslim, fashionably dressed, who clearly did not have a lot of information about the United States, and here she was in Portland, OR, teaching Farsi at Portland State.

I wish you were there, Senator, and heard the things that she was saying. She has seen nothing but kindness and graciousness from her American hosts. She's blown away by our election process. She loves what she's learning. Needless to say, it's been a life-altering experience for her.

I know it's been the other way around as well, because her colleagues, her students, the people around her, are seeing this young Islamic woman that is very different from the image that they see from al Qaeda.

So these exchanges work. We just need to find a mechanism to make more of them happen.

Senator Bill NELSON. Well, one of the problems you're going to encounter is that there are 63 separate entities that run these exchange and training programs and there are 243 of them. Now, I don't expect you to have an answer for that now. But since you only have a little less than a year, would you try to get your arms around that?

Ms. AMERI. Senator, are you referring to the private sector entities or are you referring to the different programs at the bureau?

Senator Bill NELSON. The different programs at the bureau, the U.S. Government.

Ms. AMERI. Right. In fact, Senator, that's an excellent question. Indeed there are 60 different programs at the bureau, and I have asked that question as well. The thing that I know is that clearly the bureau reaches out to a very diverse audience. That's a fact. Having said that, and coming from the private sector, Senator, I'm very focused on making sure that we only commit resources to programs that move the needle. You have my commitment that that will be an important item on my agenda.

Senator Bill NELSON. Thank you.

Ms. AMERI. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Bill NELSON. Mr. Kramer, just to complete that question of the recent appointees, paragons of virtue and human rights such as Bolivia and Nicaragua are recent appointees to the U.N. Human Rights Council.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me welcome you all. I want to start off with Mr. Glassman. First of all, I want to acknowledge your service on the board of governors, the Broadcasting Board of Governors. I do believe, in response to the chairman's questions on Cuba, I think we have made progress on using a process that penetrates into giving the Cuban people an opportunity for an outlet to the rest of the world, and I want to salute you on the work that's been done in that regard.

I want to raise the concern—this past December, Senator Reid—the Majority Leader—I, and a few other Members took a trip to Latin America, including some countries that in fact had not received delegations from the Senate in the past. One of the things that we heard in the five countries that we visited overwhelmingly was the incredulousness of the leaders of those countries as to how difficult it is to have students from Latin America come to the United States, particularly when Cuba invites their students to come in very significant numbers to study, when Chavez is doing the same thing.

It is a tremendous challenge to us in a hemisphere in which we have invested so much money and effort in Central America, to now see many countries moving in the opposite direction, where they do not believe that democracy brings good things to life.

I had been enthused when I read the President's comments in March of last year about the Partnership for Latin American Youth. However, I am disappointed in having information that basically says that that wasn't submitted for funding and therefore we are doing relatively very little in that regard. The goal was to have $75 million for 5,000 Latin American young people to improve their English and study in the United States.

If you are approved by the committee and by the Senate, confirmed by the Senate, will you be an advocate within the administration to try to move some of our resources to ensure that the President's own initiative becomes a priority and making sure that we see more Latin American youth come to the United States?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez. You know, one thing that I want to say to everyone on this committee is that we've been concentrating on the Arab and Muslim world to a great degree, but we can't forget our own backyard. I'm very happy that you brought this issue up.

I also thank you for the kind words about broadcasting into Cuba. We're also broadcasting through Voice of America 40 hours a week into Latin America in general, and we are doing our darnedest to get into Venezuela. We are broadcasting in Venezuela, but it's an extremely difficult environment, as you can imagine, including television.

As for your question about the Partnership for Latin American Youth, I have taken a look at the initiative and I know the President's commitment to it, and it appears to be exactly the kind of thing that we should be doing. I will do my best to get this program rolling. We already have, I've been told, the initial funding for fiscal 2008. If I'm confirmed, this is definitely the kind of thing that we should be doing and that I will dedicate myself to.

I can also tell you probably more broadly that if I'm confirmed I will look at the regional allocations of all of our public diplomacy money. I realize that it's possible that this is a job that if I'm confirmed I'll only have for 11 months to do, but we're going to hit the ground running and this is what we have to do. Job one is to make sure the money is being allocated to the right places and also, as Goli Ameri said, to make sure that we apply a "culture of measurement"—my mantra when I was on the Djerijian group, to every program that we have and only use and focus the resources on the ones that work.

But Latin America has been a focus of attention certainly in the past year of this administration. The President took a five-country trip there with the First Lady. We had the naval hospital ship COMFORT in Latin America. We are doing our best on exchanges.

The visa situation is difficult. I'm happy to say, though, that this year, the academic year 2007–2008, we will almost certainly set a record of 600,000 foreign students coming to the United States to learn. Education is our best brand.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, let me follow up on your answer. First of all, I would urge you, when we speak about Latin America in the future as part of public diplomacy, I like to think of it as our front yard, not as our backyard, and you might want to consider that phrasing.

But the bottom line is, you know, our problem is there's a difference between words and actions. That's our problem in Latin America. We have seen an occasional blip on the radar screen over the last 7 years about some words, but we haven't seen a hell of a lot of action outside of narcotics interdiction, which is important, and some trade agreements, which are important. But when you only deal with Latin Americans in that context, you run a great

risk of having them believe that they are marginalized to those issues.

So therefore it is nice to have the COMFORT down there, but it almost seems like we're chasing Cuban doctors at the end of the day. What is real, what will be real, is if the President's words are matched with action. So when we talked about $75 million over 3 years, that would have been approximately $25 million a year or so. The reality is from the information that we finally received from the Department we're talking about that, since this wasn't pursued as part of the 2008 fiscal year budget request, that there may be the moving of some money around.

I hope, even though you have a short period of time, that we can begin to move on the road in which Latin Americans understand that we are fully engaged with them. This is probably—of all those things those presidents said, that they could have said to us in terms of our engagement with them, it's interesting that so many of them raised the issue of having their students be able to come to the United States. So I hope you'll be a strong advocate of that.

We have challenges in this hemisphere—Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, just to name a few. So while I know we are engaged in the rest of the world, here in our own front yard we have a real challenge.

I appreciate both your comments and Ms. Ameri's comments about the Internet and that is very important. But there is no substitution for person to person, people to people engagement. The reality is that's why members of the Congress seek to visit both leaders and civil society in other parts of the world. We could have teleconferences, but we in fact seek to engage people in a direct context. So while that's a good dimension, I don't want to undercut the very essence of what I hope will be more people to people diplomacy as a critical soft power tool of the United States, and I hope that you will be a strong advocate, as well as Ms. Ameri will be a strong advocate, in that respect.

Let me ask you an overarching question, if I may, about public diplomacy, in general. It seems to me that to a certain extent there's a simple fundamental question in almost any discussion of public diplomacy. Put simply, do we put a priority on developing a following for the United States or do we tell it like it is? In effect, do we broadcast what people want to hear or what they need to hear? Are we in fact honest in our engagements with others in the world or are we willing to move from that direct honesty on both what our positions are and our expectations are and therefore move from there?

I'm wondering, how is it that you view it in terms of public diplomacy and how would you—well, let me start there. How do you view it?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Well, that's an excellent question, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. I'm waiting for an excellent answer.

Mr. GLASSMAN. You'll have to judge the excellence.

The answer is that we have to be honest. We live in a world in which people are very sophisticated. They have numerous sources of information. If we tell them lies they're going to figure that out pretty quickly.

You know, Edward R. Murrow famously said when he was the head of USIA: "The news may be good, the news may be bad; we shall tell you the truth." That has been the watchword of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. We don't do propaganda. We're not allowed to do propaganda, but one of the reasons we don't do it is it's not particularly effective. People have more than one source of information. We can't really fool them very well.

I think part of the big problem in public diplomacy, in fact, has been that we have not aggressively enough countered the lies that our enemies have been telling. So I don't think it's a question of twisting the truth. It is a matter of being honest, but being aggressively honest, being advocates that are out there unabashedly telling our story, which is a good story.

Senator MENENDEZ. So in that respect, let's talk about a challenging part of the world for us—I think the chairman referenced it—the Middle East. Should we be talking about the need for civil society, for democratization, civil rights for women, minority groups and their rights in that society? Should we convey our views of those who support terrorism and incitement?

Mr. GLASSMAN. We should and we do. Maybe we should do more of it, but we absolutely should. We should never shrink from advancing our—they're not only our own and the global principles of democracy and freedom. We should be out there doing that.

Now, sometimes in an official diplomatic sense that becomes difficult. That may be difficult in certain circumstances. Public diplomacy is different. Public diplomacy is people to people. There's no need for us to shrink from advocacy of our own principles.

Senator MENENDEZ. So to the extent that we have, for example, in the Arab world talked about our interest in having good relationships with the Arab world, but also talking about how very often those, several of those countries are undemocratic, face autocratic regimes, and do not respond to the aspirations of the Arab street and its people, you feel we should be direct about that, as well?

Mr. GLASSMAN. I do, absolutely, in public diplomacy we should be direct. At the Broadcasting Board of Governors we had a big problem in Egypt in that we can't get a radio station to broadcast Radio Sawa, an Arabic language radio network which is quite effective. We've been doing our best to try to get that. There's no reason in the world for us to back down on that or not to support—and I was recently in Egypt—not to support people who are advocating for freedom there.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, one more line of questions, to Mr. Kramer.

I have a great interest in, as the chair of the subcommittee that deals with all of our foreign assistance, as to how effective we are about that foreign assistance. In September of 2007, the GAO issued a report that found that—and I'm going to quote from it—that "The State Department did not have an accurate picture of the number and type of staff responsible for overseeing and monitoring foreign assistance responsibilities."

The amount of money that the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau has available to program has increased substantially

over the last several years, and since DRL provides grants, not contracts, from Washington instead of from the field, how does the Department manage these programs and ensure that they are coordinating with other parts of the U.S. Government? If you were to be confirmed, what would you do to improve the coordination with other parts of the U.S. Government, particularly USAID, in the implementation of these grants, and what would you do to improve the Department's ability to monitor these grants when they are all managed from Washington, DC?

Mr. KRAMER. Senator, thank you for raising this issue, and I am aware of the GAO report. As you rightly point out, sir, the amount of money that has been provided for the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau has increased significantly. My sense, in talking with folks and colleagues in the bureau, is that the bureau is in a position to handle those moneys appropriately.

My hope, if confirmed, would be to ensure that the bureau is an organization that can provide money in a timely fashion, that can get money out, do it quickly, provide support to the vital work that NGOs and activists are doing. Obviously, the bureau would need to ensure proper oversight and management of the funds, and grant oversight is a major responsibility.

Coordination within the Department and with other agencies is vital. We want to avoid duplication. We want to ensure that we are covering the issues that really matter. Funds are not limitless and so we want to make sure we get the biggest bang for the buck.

As I mentioned to the chairman when he asked me, I currently work in a regional bureau in the Department, and I think the European and Eurasian Bureau is a perfect example where there is assistance money available through the assistance office in that regional bureau, but it's a bureau that also works very effectively with the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau. I would, if confirmed, work very hard to ensure that that continues throughout the Department and maintain the EUR, the European and Eurasian Bureau, as a good example of that. We should all be working for the greater good here, and it's my view that the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor should be the bureau that many organizations go to for the necessary support they need to carry out the work they do.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, let me just close on that and say that I understand there's no one in the bureau's chain of command that works in these embassies. So the bureau needs to rely on informal or ad hoc assistance to ensure that programs are being implemented in the best possible way. I'm not sure that that's a good way to manage what is rather complex and context-specific programs.

It seems to me that one of our challenges is making sure that your staff in Washington and any staff that helps you overseas are qualified to manage these kinds of programs. It's just like, a little bit I guess, what we do in a Senate office. We've got so many things going on that we grab the staff assistant and before you know it they're writing letters and everybody else is doing something else.

The question is, when we are talking about large amounts of money, for which there is a purpose in terms of foreign diplomacy

of the United States, that to ad hoc grab somebody at an embassy for the purposes because you have no person in your bureau who is in the line there at the embassy on the ground where these grants are being implemented—it seems to me if that's going to continue to be the case for the next year, there needs to be an alignment at least of those individuals who have within the embassy context the best expertise to be able to pursue that specific grant. I often find that isn't the case. It's something that I hope you will pay attention to should you be confirmed.

Mr. KRAMER. Senator, I certainly promise to you that, if confirmed, that is an issue I will look at very closely. To state the obvious, I would want to assure that there are no problems with oversight and monitoring of grant moneys. So I would be happy to engage with you and your staff on how that looks, if confirmed, once I would be in the job.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Bill NELSON. We want you to be successful and so we want to encourage you as you tackle this task within a short period of time. So within a few months, what I'd like is to have a visit with you personally, without staff, privately, and find out how your progress is coming along. Will you do that, Mr. Glassman?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Yes, sir.

Senator Bill NELSON. Mr. Kramer?

Mr. KRAMER. Without hesitation, sir, yes.

Senator Bill NELSON. Ms. Ameri?

Ms. AMERI. It would be a pleasure, Senator.

Senator Bill NELSON. We are going to keep the record open for 2 days so that members of this committee can submit further questions for the record, and the meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:52 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF DAVID J. KRAMER TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

LABOR

Question. What is your view of the role of labor in our democracy promotion agenda? How can the Department best advance labor rights? What measures do you think are necessary, if any, to strengthen labor diplomacy?

Answer. Like any other freedoms such as association for political parties, the freedom of association for worker organizations is essential to building grassroots democracy. Supporting worker organizations is not just a matter of supporting democracy, it is a matter of human rights.

The Department of State can best advance labor rights by continuing to engage governments, worker organizations, and employers, individually and collectively, on issues such as freedom of association, prohibitions on child labor and forced labor, and the promotion of acceptable working conditions.

The Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau (DRL) already engages governments on labor rights in bilateral human rights dialogs, such as those with Vietnam and Azerbaijan, as well as in multilateral forums like the International Labor Organization. DRL also provides technical assistance to worker organizations and NGOs dealing with labor rights in countries where they can open up democratic space. DRL has consistently committed to use a portion of its Human Rights and Democracy Fund to provide this assistance to build the capacity of worker organizations to advocate for and protect their rights.

DRL's Office of International Labor and Corporate Social Responsibility engages multinational corporations in promoting the respect of labor rights throughout their

supply chain, including in operations which they outsource. DRL also engages these stakeholders collectively through multi-stakeholder dialogs that bring representatives from government, NGOs, and companies together to determine how to address specific labor issues in a country.

The Department also works through labor rights mechanisms signed in conjunction with Free Trade Agreements; trade preference programs, such as the Generalized System of Preferences; OPIC financing; and ExIm Bank financing to promote greater respect for internationally recognized worker rights.

Labor attaches have a long and distinguished record in the Foreign Service. The Department's Labor officers and other Foreign Service officers with labor responsibilities are critical to labor diplomacy. It is important that the Department has these positions at posts where labor diplomacy can most effectively contribute to the promotion of democracy and human rights. Last year, the Department undertook a review of labor-designated positions overseas, and 45 labor-designated positions were formally recognized by the Human Resources Bureau and the regional bureaus. The review also resulted in new operating procedures regarding the labor function; it formalizes the need for officers assigned to labor-designated positions to take the Foreign Service Institute's Labor officer skills course and ensures DRL a role in filling all labor-designated positions.

I noted the importance of labor rights in my statement to the committee, and at the January 30 hearing I pledged that, if confirmed, I would take an active role in the promotion of labor issues. The "L" in "DRL", after all, is just as important as the first two letters.

Question. In recent years, the Congress has repeatedly expressed concern that the Department of State does not adequately reward, train, and promote officers who chose to serve in the DRL Bureau or to otherwise place a high priority on human rights and democracy. Will you make it a priority to address these concerns? If so, how? Do you believe that there is a need for expanding Foreign Service training programs in human rights and democracy promotion tradecraft?

Answer. The Department is committed to excellence in democracy and human rights training. Improving the incentives and rewards for service in the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau (DRL) and strengthening training in Human Rights and Democracy promotion has been a DRL priority, and I will continue to make this a priority, if confirmed.

DRL has been working with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) on an ongoing basis. FSI has been steadily expanding the number and content of Human Rights and Democracy training modules and courses to ensure the integration of human rights, religious freedom, labor rights, democracy building, and conflict resolution into a broad range of FSI courses and seminars.

DRL is working with FSI now to increase training on grants management for program officers. Special training for Labor officers was introduced last year, in conjunction with the annual DRL Human Rights officers conference. The Department recently submitted a report to Congress on Democracy and Human Rights training. Finally, DRL has established a Democracy and Human Rights Training Working Group, along with FSI, USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, and the Office of the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance, to review, assess, and recommend further strengthening of our training.

If confirmed, I will work with the Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs and the Director General's office to review promotion and performance pay criteria with an eye toward increasing the incentives for Foreign Service officers to take on these challenging issues.

Question. In passing the Advance Democracy Act, Congress strongly urged the Department to work to increase the percentage of Foreign Service officers serving in the Bureau. While the civil servants in the Bureau are talented and dedicated, an effective Bureau needs a good mix of employees, including a substantial percentage of Foreign Service officers who have served abroad and are familiar with counterparts and processes in other Bureaus. Do you agree that it is an important priority to increase the number of Foreign Service officers serving in the Bureau? What steps will you take to encourage talented FSOs to serve in the DRL Bureau, if confirmed?

Answer. A good mix of Foreign Service and Civil Service officers is important for a strong and effective Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau (DRL). For the first time ever, DRL has two overseas positions, established last September and located in Baghdad. Other functional bureaus such as the Bureau of Populations, Refugees, and Migration, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental Scientific Af-

fairs have overseas positions and this has proved to be an effective way to attract more Foreign Service officers to serve in these bureaus domestically. I expect the new overseas positions for DRL will have a similarly positive effect for the Bureau. Changing the ratio of Civil Service to Foreign Service in DRL will be a long-term effort, especially given the resource constraints under which DRL operates. Unfortunately, since the Foreign Service has a shortage of employees in relationship to the demand for positions, and the Department has critical foreign policy priorities and mandates requiring service abroad, the Department's emphasis has been on filling overseas positions.

If confirmed, I will work with the Office of the Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs and the Director General's office, as well as with other bureaus, to identify additional measures to attract Foreign Service officers into the valuable work of the bureau. I want DRL to be as competitive and sought-after a bureau in the Foreign Service bidding process as any other bureau in the Department.

Question. Prison conditions in many countries around the world are far below acceptable minimum humane standards. Do you agree that this is a serious problem? If so, what will you do to insure that the Bureau places an appropriately high priority on investigating inhumane prison conditions and working to ameliorate them?

Answer. Yes, inhumane and life threatening prison conditions around the world are a serious problem. The attention of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) to prison and detention center conditions is ongoing and is an inseparable part of U.S. efforts to promote democracy and respect for human rights.

Prison conditions are highlighted in section 1.c of the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, where DRL describes prison conditions in each country in straightforward language. In requiring this information from all posts, it is clear that many embassy officials visit prisons personally, meet with prison officials, talk with released prisoners, their families and attorneys, and consult with local and international NGOs to closely track conditions and put together a complete picture.

DRL plays an essential role in ensuring that the United States remains active on this issue bilaterally. DRL works to ensure U.S. representatives consistently encourage governments to grant access to our embassy personnel and to international experts such as the ICRC. For example, DRL last year raised the issue of prison overcrowding and poor sanitation during its Human Rights dialog with Vietnam, and urged that members of the diplomatic community be allowed the opportunity to visit prisons. Subsequently, United States political officers were able to visit two prisons in southern Vietnam. So it is important that DRL continue to raise the issue in future bilateral dialogs with Vietnam and other countries.

In multilateral fora, the United States supports the work of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee Against Torture, the treaty bodies charged with monitoring implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment of Punishment, respectively. We follow closely reports from the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention which last year visited Angola, Equatorial Guinea, and Norway.

DRL is also funding a successful program in Morocco designed to enhance the ability of the Moroccan Observatory of Prisons, a local NGO, to process and monitor prisoner complaints, raise awareness of the treatment of prisoners, and conduct advocacy on behalf of prisoner rights.

While there are other bureaus (such as the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement and the Bureau of Consular Affairs), departments (such as the Department of Justice), and organizations (such as OSCE and the Council of Europe) involved in work to improve prison conditions, DRL should remain at the forefront of U.S. efforts to promote improved prison conditions.

COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

Question. Section 116(d) of Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 provides that the Secretary of State "shall transmit" the annual human rights report to the "Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate by February 25 of each year." The committee has been informed by the Department that it does not intend to meet this statutory deadline this year.

a) Is that in fact the case? If so, please elaborate why that is so.

b) Do you think it makes sense for the bureau charged with promoting adherence to the rule of law abroad to ignore a statutory requirement in U.S. law?

Answer. The annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices is a document important not only for the information it contains. Its value lies also in the manner in which it is presented to the press, the NGO community, and to the many world-

wide readers of the report. To have full impact, the Secretary of State in recent years personally has presented the report, followed by a press conference that is reported prominently in the local press of many diverse countries abroad. Secretary Rice believes fervently in the advancement of human rights worldwide, and she is determined to use the presentation of the report as a tool to help the United States Government achieve this goal.

The Secretary's launching of the human rights report and highlighting those cases of severe abuses, and the cases where progress has occurred serves as a powerful message to world leaders that we will not compromise on human rights to advance our other national interests, and that human rights abusers will be held to account for their actions.

The Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor takes statutory requirements very seriously and acknowledges that it would miss the statutory deadline of February 25 by delaying the rollout until March 11, the closest date possible to the statutory deadline when the Secretary will be available to preside over the rollout.

RESPONSES OF DAVID J. KRAMER TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

INDONESIA

Question. I have been informed that the administration has ended prohibition on training and other assistance to Indonesia's special forces, the "Kopassus," and the Brigade Mobil (BRIMOB). These forces continue to abuse human rights and senior officials of both continue to evade justice for past crimes, as noted by the State Department's annual human rights reporting. Why has this policy changed? How can the State Department justify such cooperation with an organization whose record of abuse amounts to state sponsored terrorism directed against peaceful political dissidents and human rights advocates?

Answer. Our goal, working with the Government of Indonesia, is that United States interaction with the Indonesian military would promote the adoption of democratic norms such as greater transparency, respect for human rights, and increased civilian control of the military, as well as build capacity to address immediate threats such as terrorism and natural disasters.

As the elite units within their respective forces, KOPASSUS and BRIMOB must be part of this transformation. The Department is currently considering on what terms and how to best engage both KOPASSUS and BRIMOB, and looks forward to consulting with Congress so that we can accomplish our twin goals of advancing our human rights interests and professionalizing these key parts of the Indonesian security forces. Indonesia's human rights record has improved in recent years as the Indonesian Government has sought to reform its security forces. Reform of the security forces has been an important part of Indonesia's overall reform of the military. We share your concerns regarding ongoing challenges Indonesia faces in bringing past human rights violators to justice. The Department continues to raise accountability as an important element of our bilateral relationship.

Question. When Secretary Rice in November 2005 exercised a national security waiver to resume full military cooperation with the Indonesian military despite the absence of significant reform, she noted that future assistance would be "calibrated" on the basis of measurable reforms. Human rights groups have raised concerns that the military continues to commit abuses and are concerned that the assistance has not been "calibrated" to address the lack of reform. What criteria does the administration use in evaluating the provision of military assistance to Indonesia? What steps are in place to monitor the impact this assistance has on human rights and reform in Indonesia? What military assistance is currently being withheld because of human rights concerns?

Answer. All Indonesian soldiers now receive human rights training. In recent years, the Indonesian military has made progress in reform. The military is under greater civilian control and out of politics. However, there is still much to be done in professionalizing the Indonesian military and accounting for past abuses.

All Indonesian security forces who receive United States training are checked for allegations of past human rights abuses, in compliance with the Leahy law. Individuals with credible allegations of past human rights abuses do not receive training. In the past 3 years, the Department has denied training for 122 Indonesian applicants after finding credible allegations of past human rights abuses.

LGBT

Question. I have supported greater equality for the LGBT population in the United States [and] am pleased that the State Department has taken steps to identify human rights abuses committed against the LGBT community throughout the world in its annual Human Rights Report. I am, therefore, interested in what further actions you intend to take to address violence and discrimination against LGBT communities across the globe.

Answer. Several years ago, the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau (DRL) took the initiative to add information to its annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices regarding discrimination and violence against the LGBT community worldwide. The information in the reports has been praised by representatives from the community in meetings with DRL. At our request, in the past year, the LGBT community has compiled for DRL information from authoritative sources on discrimination and violence on a country-by-country basis. We will consult with the community as we develop more precise instructions to pass to our embassies in garnering information on this subject.

HUMAN RIGHTS GENERAL

Question. Just over a year ago, Secretary Rice reaffirmed that protecting and supporting human rights defenders is a "central component" of U.S. foreign policy and announced a set of Guiding Principles on Non-Governmental Organizations and a fund to support defenders. How have the Principles guided DRL decisions? How has the fund supported human rights defenders? What steps can the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor take to ensure that these measures have an impact on the ground and that support for human rights defenders is integrated into foreign policy more broadly?

Answer. Last year, amid crackdown on human rights and democracy NGOs and human rights activists in various parts of the world, Secretary Rice responded in several specific ways to defend these NGOs and individuals.

First, she announced 10 core NGO Principles which guide our own treatment of NGOs. We actively encourage other governments to respect these principles, which distill and complement existing U.N. and European Union documents.

Second, the Secretary established a $1.5 million emergency fund to protecting and assisting human rights defenders who advance democracy and promote human rights, women's rights, fair labor, anticorruption, independent media and journalism, rule of law, and other issues where defense of such issues might result in personal and safety risks. The fund became operational in October 2007 and thus far has provided assistance to over 30 defenders.

DRL routinely uses the NGO Principles as a foundation for discussions with foreign governments, and indeed, President Uribe of Colombia has publicly embraced the NGO Principles. Another good example of the use of the NGO Principles took place at the last OSCE Human Dimension (HDIM) meeting in October when Acting Assistant Secretary Jonathan Farrar made an intervention on the need for NGOs to operate freely, to participate in open dialog with each other and governments, and to be recognized as an essential component of any free society.

Also in preparation of this year's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices we asked posts, in particular, to report on restrictions and/or repression of NGOs and other human rights defenders.

These principles will continue to be an important tool for the United States and other governments in measuring governmental treatment of NGOs. I also hope they will also be a useful tool for civil society groups and the media as they monitor the treatment of NGOs across the globe.

RESPONSES OF HON. GOLI AMERI TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. Cultural Property Protection: On May 27, 2004, China submitted a request to the United States that we restrict the import of artifacts and archaeological materials subject to looting in China under the Cultural Property Implementation Act (CPIA). In July 2005, the State Department's Cultural Property Advisory Committee made its recommendation to Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina H. Powell with regard to China's request. It is my understanding that, to date, the State Department has not made a final decision with regard to China's request. What do you consider an appropriate timeframe in which to render a final decision in cases such as these to ensure that delays within the State Department do not result in the loss of invaluable cultural material?

Answer. I have not yet had the opportunity to look into this question in detail, but I have been apprised of this matter and understand that the China request remains under review at this time.

Any issue involving the bilateral relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China is of utmost significance.

If confirmed, I will begin discussions of this matter with the relevant bureaus, including the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy, and the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

Question. Cultural Property Protection: CPAC was created to represent a diverse group of interests, including those of museums, archaeologists, collectors, art dealers, and the general public. I have heard from a number of constituents of mine who are concerned that all of these groups were not fairly represented in the recent State Department decision to impose import restrictions on ancient coins of Cyprus. Please explain the standards your office uses to determine that the diverse group of interests have been represented during the decisionmaking process.

Answer. The Cultural Property Advisory Committee (CPAC), appointed by the White House, plays a vital role in our efforts to preserve the world's cultural heritage from pillaging and looting. The members, as you point out, represent a variety of interests. They provide their input at the outset of any consideration of a bilateral agreement so that their deliberations can inform the entire onward process.

In addition to the statutory composition of the committee and the representation it provides for diverse views, the Department has taken a number of steps over the past several years to increase the access of members of the general public to the process. These steps include sessions that allow members of the public to present their viewpoints directly to the committee and the committee staff; solicitation of written comments; advance notification of such sessions on the cultural property Web site inclusion of all such comments in the documents provided to the decisionmaker, and a Web site that posts public summaries of incoming requests.

The current committee includes a member who is a coin collector and dealer and whose views were expressed and considered. Also, a public session of the CPAC was held during which the views of others concerning coins were also expressed. In addition, the Department took the extraordinary step of proactively seeking further public comment from organizations representing the coin collecting community and others representing the scholarly community.

If confirmed, I assure you I will pay close attention to this matter.

Question. Exchanges: I am a strong supporter of ECA's work and believe that education and cultural exchanges are critical to strengthening our public diplomacy programming. I would like to know your plans to increase ECA programming in the next year.

Answer. First and foremost, if confirmed, I am committed to expanding and creating scale for the many achievements of the Department's educational and cultural exchanges. My plan is to:

1. Engage and enlist the private sector more fully in our public diplomacy efforts to ascertain that we can reach a greater audience for our successful programs including, but not limited to, the English Access Microscholarship Program, Youth Exchange Programs, and programs for women.
2. Use new trends in technology and the Internet to expand the reach of ECA's programs to youth and youth influencers and to create a connected community amongst our alumni so they can sustain a dialog years after the formal end of their program.
3. Find creative ways of engaging ECA alumni and leveraging their goodwill and the knowledge and experience they gained during their exchange experience.

Other than these top three priorities, I will also be focused on the following activities:

- Encouraging more women and girls to participate in our exchange programs; and
- Exploring more opportunities for engagement with the Muslim world and with countries like Iran and North Korea (when the time is right), where we seek to better relations between our citizens. Exchanges and outreach promise lasting relationships and have such extraordinary potential for positive relationship building and mutual understanding.

I would, of course, be in close touch with you and your staff as any new program initiatives are developed and would welcome feedback from the committee.

RESPONSES OF HON. GOLI AMERI TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What are your top three priorities for this position, if confirmed? On the assumption that you may only serve until the start of the next administration, what do you hope to report to the committee next January that you have achieved during your tenure?

Answer. First and foremost, if confirmed, I am committed to expanding and creating scale for the many achievements of the Department's educational and cultural exchanges. My plan is to:

1. Engage and enlist the private sector more fully in our public diplomacy efforts to ascertain that we can reach a greater audience for our successful programs including, but not limited to, the English Access Microscholarship Program, Youth Exchange Programs, and programs for women.
2. Use new trends in technology and the Internet to expand the reach of ECA's programs to youth and youth influencers and to create a connected community amongst our alumni so they can sustain a dialog years after the formal end of their program.
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Other than these top three priorities, I will also be focused on the following activities:

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I would, of course, be in close touch with you and your staff as any new program initiatives are developed and would welcome feedback from the committee.

Question. The Bureau has received substantial additional resources in recent years. Has the Bureau allocated sufficient resources to financial systems and grants management to assure accountability and oversight of these additional resources? Please provide specific examples.

Answer. The Bureau has allocated sufficient resources to financial and grants management systems to assure accountability and oversight over its resources. Over the past 3 years, ECA has integrated three distinct databases into a single system housed in ECA's Office of the Executive Director. The system links ECA's congressionally mandated pre-award grants process with both the budget and grants offices and allows for the effective integration with the Department's financial management system and Grants.gov. The system allows ECA staff members to more effectively monitor and manage ECA institutional grant awards through all phases of implementation and closeout. It also provides the ability to reconcile program and administrative budgets bureau-wide and provide congressional, departmental, and OMB-mandated reporting on bureau activities and expenditures.

Additionally, I understand the Bureau is building an integrated information management, analysis, and reporting capability that will track the full life-cycle of ECA programs and provide an executive/user dashboard for data retrieval and reporting. This system will then be linked to the Executive Office System so that Bureau grant, financial, and program data can be centrally monitored and reports tying resources to program activities can be more quickly and easily produced. This initiative will result in a fully Integrated Management System (IMS) for key ECA program, grant, and financial activities.

Coming from the private sector and with a strong background in technology I know what is possible and necessary to effectively manage a complex organization and budget. If confirmed, I will devote my focus and expertise to accelerate the implementation of the Bureau's internal management systems to ensure that the Bureau spends its resources wisely, effectively and with maximum impact.

Question. Do you believe there are any existing exchange programs that are unjustified, and therefore should be discontinued?

Answer. I have been pleased to learn in the last several weeks that the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is a leader in the area of evaluation and performance measurement. ECA has an office staffed by professional evaluators and

social science researchers. It oversees independent in-depth evaluations of major exchange programs, such as Fulbright and the International Visitors Leadership Program. Coming from the private sector, this is particularly important to me.

The Bureau recently completed an evaluation of the English Access Microscholarships Program—a groundbreaking new program for high school students in underserved communities—that showed, among other findings, that:

- Eighty-seven percent of Access students reported a more favorable view of the American people due to their participation in the program;
- Ninety-six percent of parents said they would encourage their other children to participate in the Access Program; and
- Fifty-four percent of Access students reported more favorable views of the U.S. Government due to their participation in the Access Program.

Moreover, the Bureau constantly innovates with its proven, tested models to achieve current objectives. The Fulbright Program, International Visitor Leadership Program, English Language Program, and Youth Exchange Programs remain flagship programs of the Bureau, but they are constantly changing as the world changes and as foreign policy challenges evolve.

Here are a few specific examples:

- The Fulbright Program now offers Fulbright's Science and Technology awards that are designed to provide top-level students in science and technology with the U.S. Government's most prestigious and valuable scholarship.
- The International Visitor Leadership Program brought over 100 Iranian professionals, academics, and cultural figures to the United States last year—the first International Visitors since 1979.
- Our English Language Office pioneered the groundbreaking English Access Microscholarship program which provides a foundation of English language skill to high school students from disadvantaged sectors in their countries.
- The Bureau's Youth Exchange Office conducts the highly successful Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program, the U.S. Government's first-ever program designed for secondary school students from the Arab and Muslim world.

There is more that can be done. You have my full commitment that, if confirmed, I intend to review the effectiveness of all of our programs.

Question. The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (the "Hague Convention"), and the Hague Protocol, concluded on May 14, 1954, were submitted to the Senate for advice and consent by President Clinton on January 6, 1999. This administration has urged the Senate to act on the Hague Convention, but not the Protocol. Please provide your views on the Hague Convention, including whether in your view it should be a priority for the committee and if so, why.

Answer. Thank you for bringing this to my attention. While I am not personally familiar with the 1954 Hague Convention, I have looked into the matter and learned that the Department has identified ratification of the Convention as a priority, and also supports removal of the First Protocol from consideration for ratification at this time, leaving open the possibility of resubmission for ratification at a future date.

If confirmed, I will look into this matter further and would be pleased to work with the committee.

Question. The United States ratified the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property on February 9, 1983 (the "1970 Convention"). Under Article 9 of the Convention, a state party "whose cultural patrimony is in jeopardy from pillage of archaeological or ethnological materials" may call upon other states parties who are affected. Each state concerned is to take provisional measures to the extent feasible to prevent irremediable injury to the cultural heritage of the requesting state. How many requests has the United States received in the last 10 years (through 2007) pursuant to Article 9 of the 1970 Convention? Please provide details, including the date of such requests and the country making the request.

Answer. Since 1997, under Article 9 of the 1970 Convention, the United States has received 9 new requests for import restrictions (from Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, and Peru) and 13 requests for extensions of existing restrictions, including those imposed as a result of a bilateral agreement or of an Emergency Action (Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, Cyprus, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Mali, Nicaragua, and Peru). An Emergency Action differs from an agreement in that it is meant to address an emergency condition, entails action only on the United States' side, and may be extended only once. Please see the attached chart for the details.

Country	Emergency Action Date in Force	Emergency Action Date Extended	Date of Request to USG under Article 9 of the 1970 UNESCO Convention	Memorandum of Understanding Date in Force	Date of Extension(s) (with amendments) of MOU
Bolivia	Mar. 1989		Sep. 1999	Dec. 2001	Dec. 2006
Cambodia	Dec. 1999		May 1999	Sep. 2003	
Canada			Oct 1985, with supplemental info provided Jan 1988	Apr 1997 (currently expired)	
China			May 2004		
Colombia			Apr. 2004	Mar. 2006	
Cyprus Ethnological	Apr. 1999	Aug. 2003	Sep. 1998	Jul. 2007	Jul. 2007
Cyprus Archaeological			Sep. 1998	Jul. 2002	Jul. 2007
El Salvador	Sep. 1987	Mar. 1992	Jan. 1995	Mar. 1995	Mar. 2000, Mar. 2005
Guatemala	Apr. 1991	Sep. 1994	May 1997	Oct. 1997	Sep. 2002, Sep. 2007
Honduras			Aug. 2001	Mar. 2004	
Italy			Sep. 1999	Jan. 2001	Jan. 2006
Mali	Sep. 1993		Sep. 1992	Sep. 1997	Sep. 2002, Sep. 2007
Nicaragua			Nov. 1995	Oct. 2000	Oct. 2005
Peru	May 1990	Jun. 1994	Jan. 1997	Jun. 1997	Jun. 2002, Jun. 2007

Question. In accordance with the implementing legislation for the 1970 Convention, the President, upon making certain determinations, may enter into an agreement with a state party that has made a proper request under Article 9 of the 1970 Convention, in order to apply certain import restrictions. Please provide a list of the agreements that have been concluded as of today's date under the authority provided for in the implementing legislation. See 19 U.S.C. § 2602.

Answer. Under Article 9 of the 1970 Convention, the United States currently has bilateral agreements with Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, Cyprus, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Mali, Nicaragua, and Peru.

Question. In 2004, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued an extensive report of inspection of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Have you read the report, or been briefed on its findings? What major recommendations remain to be implemented?

Answer. Thank you for bringing this to my attention; I have now read and been briefed on the report. It is my understanding that the Bureau responded positively and quickly to the findings of this report. All changes/actions necessary to comply with the Inspector General recommendations were completed, and as a result, the OIG closed the inspection report in July 2006.

RESPONSES OF HON. GOLI AMERI TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BILL NELSON

Question. What is your position on United States sanctions and multilateral sanctions against Iran?

Answer. I fully support administration policy on Iran including current United States sanctions on Iran, and the need for multilateral sanctions. We must maintain pressure on the current regime.

Question. Have you ever advocated that sanctions against Iran imposed by the United States, any other country, or the United Nations, be lifted or reduced in some way?

Answer. I have opposed lifting or reducing sanctions imposed by the United States, the United Nations, or any country against Iran.

As U.S. Representative to the 60th Session of the U.N. General Assembly in 2005 and the senior diplomat at the U.S. Desk in the chamber, I rose and walked out of the General Assembly Hall in protest against the policies of the Iranian regime as Iranian President Ahmadinejad took the podium.

Question. What is your position on dialog with the Iranian regime?

Answer. I fully support the administration's position on direct dialog with Iran. Secretary Rice stated on January 23, "Should Iran suspend its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities—which is an international demand, not an American one—we could begin negotiations, and we could work over time to build a new, more normal relationship—one defined not by fear and mistrust, but growing cooperation, expanding trade and exchange, and the peaceful management of our differences." The ball is in Iran's court. Tehran must halt its current activities that violate its international obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and come clean on its past nuclear work before we can engage in further talks on nuclear and other issues.

I support the President's call to reestablish regular educational, professional, athletic, and cultural exchange programs with the Iranian people for the first time since 1979. Through these programs, we are promoting dialog between the citizens of our two countries. The Department sent the United States National Wrestling Team to compete in Iran in January 2007; we have also brought well over a hundred Iranian professionals to the United States since the Department restarted these people-to-people exchange programs in late 2006. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in March, 2007, Under Secretary Nicholas Burns said, "Part of charting a new course for U.S.-Iranian relations is intensifying our engagement with the Iranian people. While it is now not feasible for us to have formal diplomatic relations with Iran, it is within our grasp to bridge the divide between our peoples."

Question. Have you ever advocated that the United States engage in direct talks with the Iranian regime on any matter?

Answer. I have not advocated direct talks between the United States Government and the Iranian regime.

My record on this issue is clear and was stated most concisely in a 2004 "open letter" to Secretary of State Colin Powell. In that letter, I cautioned the Secretary that "any such dialog with the ruling clerics will only lead to more deceit and reinforce their belief that they can pursue their radical agenda without consequences."

At the same time, I support efforts by the President and Secretary Rice to reach out in appropriate ways to the Iranian people. It is important that we reinforce the message sent by President Bush in his historic 2002 radio address to the people of Iran that "if Iran respects its international obligations and embraces freedom and tolerance, it will have no better friend than the United States of America."

Question. Please provide the committee with a complete copy of the "prospectus" of the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian-Americans.

Answer. A copy of the June 2007 prospectus of the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian-Americans (PAAIA) is attached. As far as I know, it is the final version.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The prospectus mentioned above was too voluminous to include in this hearing. It will be retained in the permanent record of the committee.]

As the prospectus indicates, PAAIA is a bipartisan, nonsectarian, national organization open to all Iranian-Americans regardless of ethnicity, religion, or political belief.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the Cultural Property Advisory Committee, established under the implementing legislation of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, conducts its work in an appropriately transparent manner?

Answer. The Cultural Property Advisory Committee (CPAC), appointed by the White House, plays a vital role in our efforts to preserve the world's cultural heritage from pillaging and looting. The members represent a variety of interests. They provide their input at the outset of any consideration of a foreign government request for assistance so that their deliberations can inform the entire onward process.

In addition to the statutory composition of the committee and the representation it provides for diverse views, the Department has taken a number of steps over the past several years to increase the access of members of the general public to the process. These steps include a Web site that posts public summaries of incoming requests; sessions that allow members of the public to present their viewpoints directly to the committee; advance notification of such sessions on the cultural property Web site; solicitation of written comments, and inclusion of all such comments in the documents provided to the decisionmaker.

RESPONSES OF HON. GOLI AMERI TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR NORM COLEMAN

Question. I commend the Department for their leadership on the National Security Languages Initiative (NSLI), and urge continued consideration of innovative ways to teach foreign languages to children at a young age. If confirmed, will you commit to working with innovative programs to this end, such as those offered by Concordia Language Villages in northern Minnesota, which offers intensive training in 15 languages?

Answer. Please let me assure you, that if confirmed, I will be a strong advocate of all programs that improve the opportunities for our young people to master foreign languages. This is a critical strategic need that I fully support. I know that through its NSLI exchanges, the Bureau is supporting opportunities for American high school students, teachers, and undergraduate and graduate students to study critical languages abroad, and is strengthening foreign language teaching in the United States by placing native speakers as teachers and teaching assistants in elementary through post-secondary classrooms. Participants and alumni of Concordia Language Villages are encouraged to apply for summer, semester, and year-long programs abroad for high school students, supported by the Office of Citizen Exchanges, and for university level study in the future through the Critical Language Summer Institutes, Gilman and Fulbright Scholarship Programs. The Bureau can also work with Concordia to determine whether some Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants might extend their academic year programs in the United States, and serve as teaching assistants at the Concordia Language Villages during the following summer, before returning home. The Bureau is also developing a study abroad program for high school students in certain countries in Africa, the Near East, and East Asia. The Bureau will be looking to organizations like Concordia for

qualified participants for these exchanges. In this sense, Concordia and other programs that encourage instruction of critical (nontraditional) foreign languages may be seen as important potential "feeder" programs for the NSLI youth exchange.

RESPONSE OF GOLI AMERI TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BARBARA BOXER

Question. Senator Feinstein and I support innovative public diplomacy initiatives like the Global Perspectives Project, a media exchange program funded by the State Department and run by the congressionally mandated Independent Television Service that promotes the international exchange of documentary films made by independent producers. The United States Ambassador to Indonesia has said that this program has been opening minds in my country about the America behind the headlines. I am convinced that documentary film has an important role to play in advancing cultural exchange and international civic dialog.

What kind of impact do you think innovative media strategies such as the Global Perspectives Project can have on improving America's image and standing throughout the world?

Answer. Although I am not familiar with this project, I believe that such efforts can be very helpful in helping us improve the United States' image abroad. As I noted in my testimony, one of the reasons behind the decline of America's image is that we are not perceived as paying attention to the concerns of foreign governments and people. As we know from decades of experience, when we are able to put foreigners in direct contact with Americans, or aspects of America, their attitudes toward our principles become more favorable. To the extent that such projects as the Global Perspectives Project can become two-way exchanges that not only bring insight about America to foreign publics, but also information about other countries to U.S. audiences, this helps show that America is listening—and worth listening to.

RESPONSES OF HON. JAMES K. GLASSMAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. I would like to follow up on a question I asked during the nominations hearing relating to strengthening the structure of the PD bureau. As you are aware, the GAO released a report in May 2006 titled, "State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges (GAO–06–707T)." tactics. The report, in part, found that, "posts' public diplomacy efforts generally lack important strategic communication elements found in the private sector . . . These elements include having core messages, segmented target audiences, in-depth research and analysis to monitor and evaluate results, and an integrated communication plan to bring all these elements together." I am interested to know what the Bureau has done to address these concerns, particularly the creation of an integrated communications plan, and what you will do to improve upon the work done thus far in response to this report.

Answer. I am aware of the GAO report and its recommendations. As you know, the U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication put in place by my predecessor includes a planning model for strategic communications, the so-called "ABCDE" model, which is intended for posts to use in preparing communication plans. At this point I cannot say whether this model—or any other model that includes the critical steps of research, evaluation, and assessment—is being implemented in the field, but if confirmed, I will certainly be examining this question.

If confirmed, I also plan to issue implementation guidance that would flow from the national strategy already in place, to ensure that strategic communication planning—whether in Washington or the field—is consistent with strategic objectives.

Question. You stated in your testimony that the main focus of your attention will be "global ideological engagement" and that part of the answer to successfully fighting the "war of ideas" involves "directly entering the conversation to confront lies and distortions with truth." You identify the media hubs in London, Brussels, and Dubai and the Digital Outreach Team as part of this movement toward direct engagement. While improving our efforts to counter incorrect information is important, I also believe that direct engagement involves more than monitoring and improving media reporting. What other initiatives do you support to improve the U.S. Government's direct engagement with people and institutions overseas?

Answer. I agree with you that direct engagement entails much more than monitoring media reporting and responding to distortions and inaccuracies. I believe that we must engage with foreign publics and elites using the broad array of programs and capabilities at our disposal, including academic and professional exchanges, broadcasting, technology-based information programs, speakers, citizen ambassadors, binational centers, libraries, American Corners, and English teaching and other youth enrichment programs to reach so-called "marginalized" or "underserved" youth populations, to name just a few. I plan to use research, including polling and attitude surveys, to help determine which tools make sense in different programming environments, and as I indicated, I also intend to use evaluation to measure the impact of these efforts, and to refine them as necessary to maximize their effect on our strategic objectives.

Question. Your predecessor succeeded in increasing the number of participants in exchanges and increasing both the public diplomacy and education and cultural exchange budgets. How will you work to protect these advancements?

Answer. The President's fiscal year 2009 budget request includes $522.444 million for the educational and cultural exchange programs of the U.S. Department of State, the fourth year in a row the President has proposed an increase for these programs. Within the State Department's budget request, $394.806 million is included for public diplomacy international information programs, an increase of $33.9 million over the $360.905 million provided in fiscal year 2008.

I support the request and hope that the Congress approves it. As I have stated, I believe it is crucial that we gain a very solid understanding about the impact of these programs. To this end, if confirmed, I intend to stress evaluation and measurement, not just of program "outputs," but also of "outcomes." If it appears that a particular program is not meeting its objectives, is too costly for the results it achieves, or fails to address the strategic goals we have outlined for our communication and public diplomacy efforts, then I will not hesitate to recommend changes. If we are successful in evaluating our efforts and the impact they are having, then I believe we will be in a much stronger position, in future budget cycles, to recommend continuing the trend of increasing these resources.

RESPONSE OF HON. JAMES K. GLASSMAN TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BARBARA BOXER

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RESPONSE OF HON. JAMES K. GLASSMAN TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BILL NELSON

Question. What is the frequency of AeroMarti flights to broadcast television into Cuba? What are its hours of broadcast? What is your estimate of the Marti signals' penetration into Cuba?

Answer. The Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) has several methods to deliver TV Marti signals to the people of Cuba.

AeroMarti flies its broadcast missions 6 days a week, Monday through Saturday, from 6 p.m.-11 p.m. Cuban authorities usually attempt to jam these broadcasts.

TV Marti is carried on Hispasat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with each 5-hour programming block repeated throughout the day. TV Marti is also carried on DirecTV's "TV Azteca," which carries two 30-minute newscasts, Monday through Saturday, at 6 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. DirecTV is available to about 30,000–40,000 households that have dishes, according to estimates that OCB has received and that they deem credible. Neither of these satellite broadcasts are jammed by the Cuban Government.

Although OCB does not have the ability to carry out research inside Cuba to measure TV Marti's viewership, some surveys have been conducted by telephone. The most recent showed a penetration rate of 0.3 percent, in a survey of 28 percent of Cuban households with telephones. Other methods of measurement include personal interviews with Cuban émigrés. In 2007, 410 respondents were asked about TV Marti viewership, and their responses suggest that TV Marti's market share may be as much as 17 percent on the island.

Neither of these methods is necessarily representative or reliable.

OCB also gets considerable anecdotal feedback from Cuba that the TV Marti programs can be seen, including e-mails, call-ins to TV Marti talk shows, and other sources. For example, a Cuban governmental document presented to the International Telecommunications Union dated June 22, 2007, shows the AeroMarti TV signal strength to be in a range of 64 dB u-v/m to 74 dB u-v/m in Central Havana. In this case, the AeroMarti signal was about equal to or stronger than local Cuban television signals. This suggests that the signal is getting through despite Cuban efforts to jam it.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2008

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

Jones, Ms. Deborah, to be Ambassador to Kuwait
Moriarty, to be Ambassador to Bangladesh
Scobey, Margaret, to be Ambassador to Egypt

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:07 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Kerry, presiding.

Present: Senator Kerry.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. Good afternoon. I apologize for being late. This hearing will come to order.

I want to thank you all for coming before the committee today. Why don't I invite you to each, individually, introduce your family, if you can.

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I'm joined here today by my daughter, Ana, who is a sophomore at the Madeira School, here in Virginia.

Senator KERRY. Here? At Madeira?

Ms. JONES. At the Madeira School.

Senator KERRY. Great school.

Ms. JONES. And my husband, Ricole Olson, is also a Foreign Service officer. He is serving as Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. NATO right now. And our 12-year-old daughter, Isabella, is serving with him there.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, very much.

Ambassador MORIARTY. I would like to introduce my wife, Laura Moriarty.

Senator KERRY. How are you? Welcome.

Ambassador MORIARTY. A recently-retired Foreign Service officer who hopes to accompany me out to Bangladesh.

Senator KERRY. Great.

Ambassador MORIARTY. Our two children are off working in the West, my son is at U.H. Law School, and my daughter is working for UCLA.

Senator KERRY. Fantastic.

Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador, nice to see you again.

Ambasssador SCOBEY. Nice to see you again, sir

I'm very happy to introduce my brother, Jim, who came up from Winter Springs, FL, today, to attend the hearing. He and my brother, Marty, have been a real great moral support in providing a home away from home for me.

Senator KERRY. Fantastic, he came up from where?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Winter Springs, Florida.

Senator KERRY. Winter Springs, Florida. Florida—about 7 days from pitchers and catchers, right? We're all thirsty. We need to recoup, back in New England, you understand.

All right, well thank you.

Ambassador SCOBEY. Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Very much.

Well, let me just say, on behalf of the committee that we are really blessed to have three such highly experienced, qualified individuals to serve in these positions, and we really appreciate what you all bring to the table.

Ambassador Margaret Scobey, nominee to be ambassador to Egypt, has had a very distinguished career with challenging assignments in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Jerusalem, Pakistan, Yemen, and Syria. And I had the pleasure of spending time with Ambassador Scobey during my trip to Syria in 2005, during which time I saw her to be a capable diplomat, and a gracious host, and I thank you for that visit.

Ambassador Moriarty, nominee to be Ambassador to Bangladesh, brings also considerable experience to this task, and particularly in Asian affairs. And he has served in Islamabad, Beijing, Taiwan, and most recently as the American Ambassador to Nepal. I'm also particularly pleased, he's a native of Massachusetts, and has received several honors, including a Presidential Meritorious Service Award.

And Ms. Deborah Jones, the nominee to be Ambassador to Kuwait, comes to us from the U.S. Consulate General in Turkey. Before that, she has had several overseas postings, including the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Syria, and Iraq. And I would congratulate you, Ms. Jones, on your first nomination to be an ambassador, a much-deserved honor for a distinguished record, and we welcome you here.

Obviously, the relationships between the United States and Egypt, Kuwait, and Bangladesh are particularly significant, given the 21st century challenges that we're finding with respect to that part of the world, Islam, and radical extreme religious fervor, and so forth. So, these pose real challenges for our policymakers and for our ambassadors.

We have long counted on Egypt as one of our strongest allies in this difficult region. I have visited with President Mubarak frequently over the course of some 20 years, and consider that a friendship, and I have enjoyed the conversations that we have had.

But, while we've maintained a strong personal partnership with President Mubarak, there's a growing consensus emerging that that relationship with Egypt is not at its highest point, and faces some challenges right now.

There are obviously concerns from some here in Congress about the aid package. Those have been raised, particularly over on the

House side, but here in the Senate, too. That aid averages about $2 billion a year, and there are concerns that it may not have been as targeted as effectively as it might be, particularly in the effort to try to promote reform.

We all understand that Egypt faces internal challenges. And these are conversations that I and others have had with them. We also need to continue to encourage our friends to respect human rights, and move toward greater democratization. It's very important for the Congress and the administration to work closely together to craft an aid program that strengthens our relationship, at the same time that it delivers the maximum benefit to Egypt, and Egyptian people, by fostering programs that strengthen the civil society and the rule of law.

And I might add, both Egypt and other countries in the region—I'm not sure what the figures are for Bangladesh, but I know Saudi Arabia and Jordan, I think about 60 percent of the population is under the age of 25, and 50 percent is under the age of 21, and 40 percent is under the age of 18. And so the issue of education and jobs and disenfranchisement looms large in a world where people are waiting to snatch up fertile minds, and idle minds, and put them to other uses. And we need to think hard about that.

We welcomed Egypt's participation in the recent Annapolis Peace Conference, and look to them to make significant contributions in moving that process forward in the coming months. And nothing could be more important for our security interests or for stability in the region.

One key element of the peace process is controlling the flow of arms into Gaza. And for quite some time, we've heard concerns over the lack of enforcement at the Rafah border checkpoint. These fears were validated in the last days, when tens of thousands of Palestinians overran the border—a troubling development that may even have contributed to the first suicide bombing in Israel in over a year.

We know that $100 million in United States foreign military financing is currently suspended until the Secretary of State certifies that Egypt has cracked down on smuggling and tunnels into Gaza. So, this is a big issue in the relationship and will be going forward.

This is also a trying and troubling time for Bangladesh, now having been ruled by the military for over a year. We have a very strong interest in maintaining strong relations with Bangladesh, but we also hope that Bangladesh is going to continue as a moderating voice in the Islamic world.

We also can't lose sight of the fact that we need to restore full civil and political rights to all the citizens of Bangladesh. In May of 2007, I wrote a letter with Senators Biden, Lugar, and others, urging Chief Advisor Ahmed, the civilian head of the current caretaker government, to immediately lift emergency rule, and announce a timeline for free and fair elections. And although emergency rule is still in place, the government has announced elections by the end of 2008. It's very important these be transparent and held as scheduled.

And instituting reforms to end the country's notorious corruption is also a challenge, and vital to restoring popular confidence in the government.

We have a very strong bilateral relationship with Kuwait that dates back over 20 years. In early 2004, we designated Kuwait as a major, non-NATO ally.

Today Kuwait hosts some 50,000 United States military personnel as they rotate in and out of Iraq, and some 10,000 are permanently based there. That raises important questions about the role that Kuwait may or may not play, as our military redeploys from Iraq. And particularly, as a staging point, for an over-the-horizon presence that many of us here in the Congress envision.

Kuwait also remains a key strategic partner in fighting Islamic extremists, countering the influence of Iran, and promoting stability in the region. And we've shown our desire to further strengthen this partnership with significant new arms sales.

We also must express concern over the fact that Kuwait did not participate in the Annapolis conference. And, to date, they have provided only $135 million out of $500 million that they pledged for Iraqi reconstruction. These will be important issues for our ambassador to address.

So, with that, I invite each of you to make your opening statements. If you could mostly summarize them, the full statements will be placed in the record in full, and I think you know that procedure, and we'll look forward to then having a chance to question.

Thank you very much.

Do you want to begin, Ambassador Scobey?

STATEMENT OF HON. MARGARET SCOBEY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Ambassador SCOBEY. Mr. Chairman, I'm deeply honored to appear before the committee as President Bush's nominee as the new United States Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt. I'm mindful of the confidence and the trust placed in me by the President and the Secretary and, if confirmed, will do my utmost to fulfill my responsibilities.

I've had the privilege of representing the United States in many Middle Eastern capitals, and look forward to doing so again in a country where we have built a vital strategic partnership based on many mutually shared goals of peace, security, and prosperity—not just for the United States and for Egypt, but for the entire region.

Sir, Egypt, as you know, is the most populous Arab country in the world. Its leaders promote peace and stability in a region that has often known conflict. Its forces protect the canal, combat terrorism, and participate in important peacekeeping operations. Its press and cultural vitality influence the entire Arab world, and it's the only Arab country with a global diplomatic reach.

Egypt's regional role has clear implications for United States policy. The United States must sustain and strengthen the bilateral security cooperation that we have depended upon for years, and the United States must encourage Egypt to take the lead in economic and democratic political reform in the region.

Successive administrations with Congressional support have recognized Egypt's role with significant military and economic assistance that underlies the relationship between the United States and Egypt today.

The United States Ambassador to Egypt oversees a broad range of important activities, including the protection of our citizens, outreach to all sectors of Egyptian society, and management of a very large mission.

I'd like to highlight three of the most important elements as I see it: The search for peace and countering extremism; the promotion of democracy and human rights; and the advancement of United States-Egyptian economic ties and continued development assistance.

Egypt's contributions to shared regional objectives, such as the establishment of a Palestinian state, living in peace and security with Israel, their support for our aims in Iraq and Afghanistan, their countering of terrorism and support for the U.N. mission in Sudan, are no less important today than the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1979.

Recent breaches in the Gaza-Egyptian border have posed new challenges. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain and deepen our ability to cooperate in all of these areas, and more, with a much-appreciated partner.

Egypt's strong economic performance and reform measures are transforming an economic relationship from one based on assistance, to one based on trade. Gains in literacy, life expectancy, access to clean water and electricity have all been advanced by U.S. assistance, and the administration believes a strong need remains for some continued U.S. assistance to support essential work in health and education.

If confirmed, I will work to expand United States and Egyptian trade, and work with you, other agencies of the United States Government and the Egyptian Government to develop the most constructive use of continued United States economic and military assistance.

Mr. Chairman, I know the members of Congress share the administration's serious concerns about the condition of human rights in Egypt and the limitations placed on political activity and freedom. Egypt has taken important steps over many years in opening its society with a vibrant press and civil society, and many advancements in Egypt in women's rights.

However, the government's respect for human rights remains poor, and serious abuses continue. Progress on political reform has slowed, with limitations on political pluralism, and major obstacles to opposition parties taking their rightful place in the political life of Egypt. Recent indictments against newspaper editors, the continued incarceration of Ayman Nour, private lawsuits against Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the prosecution in military tribunals, rather than civilian courts of some Muslim Brotherhood members, and restrictions on NGOs illustrates some of these limits that have been placed on political freedom.

Sir, I fully understand the importance of Egypt moving forward with meaningful democratic political reform that does reflect Egypt's culture and traditions. The administration is committed to pressing Egypt on reform, and if confirmed, I will take every opportunity to support and advance civil and political liberties in Egypt.

I look forward to working with the government and to meeting, learning from, and working with, leaders of Egypt's civil society. I

will do all in my power to assure that U.S. support is both coordinated and available to all of those who are working for the advancement of democracy and human rights, and who would welcome our encouragement.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Scobey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARGARET SCOBEY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as President Bush's nominee as United States Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt. I am mindful of the confidence placed in me by the President and Secretary Rice and will do my utmost to fulfill my responsibilities. I have had the privilege of representing the United States in many Middle Eastern capitals and look forward to doing so again in a country where we have built, over the past three decades, a vital strategic partnership based on mutually shared goals of peace, security, and prosperity, not only for our own citizens but also for the people of the entire region.

I am also happy to introduce my brother, Jim, who came from Winter Springs, FL, to attend the hearing. He and my brother, Marty, who could not be here, have always provided me moral support and a home in between my assignments.

Egypt is the most populous Arab country in the world. Its leaders promote regional peace and stability throughout the Middle East and Africa; its security forces assure free navigation through the Suez Canal and combat terrorism; its press and cultural vitality influence the entire Arab world; and it is the only Arab country with global diplomatic reach. The implications for United States policy are clear: Continue to strengthen the United States-Egyptian partnership in advancing peace, and encourage Egypt to take the lead in economic and political reform in the region.

We recognize that reform must follow an Egyptian vision and proceed in an Egyptian manner. President Bush expressed in Sharm el Sheikh his firm hope that, "Egypt can play a role in the freedom and justice movement . . ." and that the Egyptian Government would build on its economic and democratic reforms to its people to give them "a greater voice in [their] future."

During the President's recent visit to Sharm Al Shaykh where he met with Egyptian President Mubarak, he also recalled the longstanding friendship between the United States and Egypt and the respect we have for the Egyptian people, their culture, history, and traditions. Above all else, this friendship has been strengthened by our shared objective of concluding a comprehensive peace between Israel and all its Arab neighbors in a manner that advances the interests of all and that liberates the human potential of this region by removing the fear of war. No Arab nation has done more to advance this fundamental goal. Egyptian courage opened the door to peace in 1979. Since then President Mubarak has persistently worked with us, the Israelis, and other Arab states in search for a just and lasting peace. Most recently, Egypt played a central role in the Annapolis conference, and now continues to seek ways to facilitate its aims.

Egyptian-United States cooperation on regional security and its contributions to regional stability go beyond the Israeli-Arab conflict. In recognition of this, successive administrations have made significant investments in security and economic assistance to Egypt, including $1.3 billion a year in military assistance. The United States-Egyptian military partnership is a powerful force for regional stability in the Middle East and Africa. Our current military operations in the Middle East would not be possible without the overflight rights and facilitated Suez Canal passages afforded by the Egyptian Ministry of Defense.

Egypt is the largest contributor of peacekeeping troops to UNAMID—the U.N. peacekeeping force in Darfur. Egyptian diplomatic leadership helped persuade the Sudanese Government that this force would be in its best interest.

Egypt does face challenges. On January 24, Hamas operatives destroyed the border wall separating Gaza from Egypt and encouraged an influx of tens of thousands of Gazans into Northern Sinai. Egypt has sought to manage this difficult situation with a minimum of violence. Senior United States officials have remained in regular contact with Egyptian, Israeli, and Palestinian leaders who are consulting on ways to find a solution that will restore order at the Rafah border. Egypt is also spending FMF assistance to procure equipment to help combat smuggling via tunnels beneath the Egypt-Gaza border.

The United States benefits from Egypt's regional diplomatic leadership. Egypt hosted the first expanded neighbors' conference with Iraq in Sham Al Shaykh and

supports continued United States military engagement in Iraq until the Iraqi military can safely handle its security duties. Egypt is at the very center of seeking to resolve the impasse over Lebanese presidential elections.

Like the United States, Egypt has suffered terrible human and economic losses from terrorism and has long been a stalwart ally in the war against terror. United States-Egyptian security cooperation has saved lives throughout the region and will continue to do so.

The President and the administration will continue to seek Egypt's advice and support; if confirmed, I will do everything possible to facilitate communication and collaboration.

Much has changed in the decades since Camp David. The United States can be very proud of its contribution to economic and social development in Egypt at all levels, thanks to efforts and investment of USAID and its Egyptian partners. As a result of United States assistance programs, 99 percent of all Egyptians now have access to reliable electricity; 22 million Egyptians in 11 governorates have access to clean water and sanitary sewage collection, greatly reducing infant and child diseases. Since 1975, infant mortality has decreased from 132 per thousand to just 33; child mortality has decreased 80 percent. Polio has been eradicated, and life expectancy has been extended from 55 to 70 years old. Similarly, adult literacy has grown from 39 percent in 1975 to 60 percent now. Girls attending school has risen from 56 percent to 95 percent.

Egyptian economic reform is another success story. Prime Minister Nazif's economic team, has reformed and streamlined Egypt's economy—retiring many vestiges of the old statist economy—to achieve record levels of growth—reaching nearly 7 percent in 2007. Egypt is attracting increased levels of foreign direct investment—$11.1 billion in 2007, up from just $5.3 billion in 2005. The World Bank in 2007 declared Egypt the "top reformer" in the world. Now the government is eyeing strategies for redistributing the benefits of nearly $8 billion in annual subsidies on food and fuel to the poorest poor.

Again, the United States is playing a central role in Egypt's economic expansion. The United States is Egypt's No. 1 trading partner: United States foreign direct investment in Egypt exceeds $5 billion and trade is sharply up—nearly 50 percent in 3 years. United States' exports to Egypt increased 33 percent in 2007; United States' agricultural exports to Egypt doubled.

The Qualified Industrial Zone program, which allows certain exports to enter the United States tariff and duty free, provided they contain 11.7 percent Israeli content, has produced more than $700 million in exports in 2007 and sustains more than 100,000 jobs. Exports from these zones grew 141 percent from $266 million in 2005 to $643 million in 2006, and the impact of this unilateral trade benefit now exceeds the economic impact of our economic assistance.

But much work remains to be done. Forty percent of Egypt's population lives on less than $2 per day. The government has identified major challenges in education and health reform. The United States intends to support these efforts in order to ensure a prosperous and stable future for this crucial Middle Eastern state.

As Egypt's economy has grown and matured, United States economic assistance has gradually declined, from $815 million a year in the 1980s to just over $400 million in fiscal year 2008. And in the current budget situation we can anticipate further adjustment. I look forward to working with you, other interested agencies of the United States Government, and our Egyptian counterparts to continue to develop the most productive and constructive use of United States assistance.

The transformation of Egypt's economy required patience and political courage. The gains we see today reflect the Egyptian leaderships' willingness to look beyond the needs of today to position Egypt to meet the needs of its people in the 21st century.

Mr. Chairman, I know that Members of Congress share the administration's serious concerns about the condition of human rights in Egypt and the limitations placed on political activity.

Egypt has taken important steps over many years in opening its society. Egypt's press, including new independent newspapers and television stations, engage in serious political debate, and Egyptian civil society, with countless NGOs, provide Egyptian citizens the opportunity to address many of the problems facing Egypt. In 2007, for the first time in Egyptian history, 30 female judges took their place on the bench. The Egyptian Government has acted to eliminate female genital mutilation—outlawing it in state hospitals and working at the grass roots to discourage this dangerous and debilitating practice. First Lady, Suzanne Mubarak has personally undertaken this campaign as a priority for the protection of young girls. In the second half of 2007, the state prosecuted three police officers for physical abuse of detainees.

However, as documented in our annual report, the government's respect for human rights remains poor and serious abuses continue. Progress on political reform has slowed, with limitations on political pluralism and major obstacles to opposition parties taking their rightful place in the political life of Egypt and to debate freely, government policy and actions. The recent indictment against seven newspaper editors, the continued incarceration of Ayman Now, the many private lawsuits pending against Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the prosecution in a military tribunal, rather than civilian court, of some 40 members of the Muslim Brotherhood, and restrictions on NGO's illustrate the ways in which the government limits political freedom.

Mr. Chairman, I fully understand the importance of Egypt moving forward with meaningful political reform. The administration is committed to pressing Egypt on reform, and if confirmed, I will take every opportunity to support and advocate the advancement of civil and political liberties in Egypt. I look forward both to working with the government and to meeting and learning from the leaders of Egypt's civil society. I will do all in my power to assure that U.S. support is both coordinated and available to all those who are working for the advancement of democracy and human rights and who would welcome our encouragement.

Over 200,000 Americans visited Egypt last year for business, education, and tourism. No embassy has a more important duty than extending protection and service to our citizens overseas, and I promise to make this a high priority. Likewise, over 45,000 Egyptians sought visas last year to visit the United States for similar reasons. While fully implementing necessary screening for all visitors, I want every Egyptian visitor to our embassy to feel welcomed and to anticipate the hospitality and positive experience he or she would have in the United States. We can also do more to encourage Egyptians students to study in the United States. Nothing can replace the opportunity to live and study in the United States. And we all know that the students who return to their home countries after that experience, come home with an admiration and affection for America that no overseas program can instill. I pledge to make this a personal priority.

If confirmed, I promise that the mission staff and I will give the great attention to getting our message out to the widest possible Egyptian audiences. Egypt enjoys a vibrant press and its opinion makers influence thinking far beyond Egypt's borders. Getting out to meet Egyptians throughout the country, promoting people-to-people exchanges, especially for students, academics, and religious leaders, bringing distinguished Americans to talk to Egyptian audiences, and engaging the Egyptian public at every opportunity and by every means possible will contribute to the improved mutual respect and understanding that we seek.

The United States' mission in Egypt is one of the largest in the world. If confirmed, I will have the great privilege of leading a team of talented Americans and Egyptians, from many different United States agencies but working together to advance our interests. I pledge to maintain the highest standards of accountability for the resources given to us and to assure that the U.S. mission takes care of its people.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, if confirmed, I would hope to welcome you and many of your colleagues from the Senate, as well as the House of Representatives, to visit. Your sustained interest in and oversight of our mission in Egypt is one of the most critical elements of any success we may have and helps assure that we are truly representing the American people in a country not only of strategic importance to us, but also one where we have enjoyed and benefited from great friendship.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Madame Ambassador.

Ambassador Moriarty.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES F. MORIARTY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Ambassador MORIARTY. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as the Ambassador to Bangladesh. I deeply appreciate the trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me for this position.

I also want to thank the State Department desk officers for Bangladesh, Sandeep Paul, Marcella Szymanski, and their administrative assistant, Alexis Olive—for all that they have done to help me prepare for my proposed assignment.

Would you stand up?

Senator KERRY. Thank you all very much.

Ambassador MORIARTY. Thank you.

I want to note the attendance here today of an old friend, the Ambassador of Bangladesh, Dr. Humayun Kabir.

Senator KERRY. Welcome, Mr. Ambassador, thank you.

Ambassador MORIARTY. And most importantly, I wish to express my personal gratitude to my wife of 25 years, Lauren. In addition to being my soul mate, she was the best Foreign Service officer I have ever met. She has made a heavy sacrifice, oh—current company, you know. [Laughter.]

She has made a heavy sacrifice in deciding to retire in order to accompany me to Bangladesh, if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, I have served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than three decades—in South Asia, Africa, the Near East, and East Asia. Most recently, I spent 3 exciting years as chief of mission in Nepal, as that country attempted to return to democracy.

My tour in Nepal followed a stint as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council. If confirmed, I will rely on the experience gained throughout my career to advance United States interests in Bangladesh.

I look forward to what promises to be a challenging assignment. In Bangladesh, our interests revolve around three intertwined D's—democracy, development, and denial of space to terrorism. The seventh most populous country in the world, Bangladesh, is overwhelmingly Muslim, and has—in the recent past—been grindingly poor.

If, under such conditions, it succeeds in building a tolerant, prosperous democracy, it will serve as a shining beacon for much of the world. If it fails in these tasks, it could become a nation of ungoverned space, and a potential safe haven and crossroads for international terrorism.

Mr. Chairman, over the years, the people of Bangladesh have overcome many daunting obstacles in their search for better lives. I feel strongly that it is in the United States' national interest to work with them, to help build a Bangladesh where democracy flourishes, where no child goes to bed hungry, and where no terrorist can find safe haven. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress in pursuit of these goals.

Let me also assure you that, if confirmed, I will zealously protect the welfare and safety of American citizens and interests in Bangladesh.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity of addressing you today. I would be happy to answer any questions later on.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Moriarty follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES F. MORIARTY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to serve as Ambassador to Bangladesh. I deeply appreciate the trust President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me and, if confirmed, I will serve to the best of my abilities. I also wish to express my personal gratitude to my wife of 25 years, Lauren. In addition to being my soul

mate, she was the best Foreign Service officer I ever met and her wise counsel has helped shape my career. She has made a heavy sacrifice in deciding to retire in order to accompany me to Bangladesh, if I am confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, I have served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than three decades in South Asia, Africa, the Near East, and East Asia. Most recently, I spent 3 exciting years as chief of mission in Nepal, as that country attempted to return to democracy. My tour in Nepal followed a stint as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council. If confirmed, I will rely on the experience gained throughout my career to advance United States' interests in Bangladesh.

I look forward to what promises to be a challenging assignment. Bangladesh is a country in transition in an area of the globe vital to United States' interests. In Bangladesh, our interests revolve around three inter-twined "D's": Democracy, development, and denial of space to terrorism. The seventh-most populous country in the world, Bangladesh is overwhelmingly Muslim and has in the recent past been grindingly poor. If, under such conditions, it succeeds in building a tolerant, prosperous democracy, it will serve as a shining beacon for much of the world. If it fails in these tasks, it could become a nation of ungoverned space and a potential safe haven and crossroads for international terrorism.

DEMOCRACY

Since winning independence from Pakistan in 1971, Bangladesh has struggled to build a viable democracy. Its democratic performance has been mixed, and its brief history has included periods of military rule and civil disorder. On January 11, 2007, Bangladesh's President declared a state of emergency in the face of an opposition boycott of scheduled national elections and widespread political violence. In accordance with Bangladesh's constitution, the President appointed a caretaker government comprised of 11 nonpartisan advisers; that caretaker government in turn embarked upon an ambitious agenda to rid the country of endemic corruption, reform institutions necessary for a sustainable democracy, and hold free, fair, and transparent elections. In a country that Transparency International described in recent years as "perceived to be the most corrupt in the world," the anticorruption campaign quickly led to the arrests of a number of prominent individuals—politicians and businessmen alike. At present, two of Bangladesh's former Prime Ministers are in prison facing corruption charges.

Bangladesh's state of emergency continues today, more than a year after the current caretaker government assumed power. Under the state of emergency, the Bangladesh Government placed a ban on freedom of expression and the right to engage in political activity. In August 2007, the caretaker government received a jarring wake-up call when the country erupted in violent protests. The government, with the strong support of the military, quickly restored order by imposing a curfew in the areas hit by rioting. But the demonstrations showed what can happen when legitimate means of expressing grievances are unavailable.

Before and after the protests, the United States has consistently urged Bangladesh's caretaker government to lift the restrictions on basic rights, and on September 9, 2007, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed announced a partial relaxation of the ban on political activity. The United States has welcomed this announcement and urged the caretaker government to move as quickly as possible to take additional steps to restore civic freedoms and democracy. In particular, the United States has called upon Bangladesh's caretaker government to adhere to the electoral roadmap it announced in July 2007. That roadmap promises national elections by the end of 2008.

I am heartened by indications that the electoral roadmap remains on track. In an address to the nation on the anniversary of January 11, the chief adviser reiterated his commitment to hold elections that will restore, not replace, Bangladesh's democracy. Bangladesh's Chief of Army staff has underscored that the military supports the caretaker government and that he does not personally seek political office. Bangladesh's efforts to register 90 million voters remain on track despite disruptions from cyclone Sidr that left much of the southern part of the country in ruins last November. There are encouraging signs that the caretaker government is cracking down on human rights abuses. Meanwhile, though, the United States continues to insist the Bangladesh Government investigate allegations of extrajudicial actions by the security forces, mistreatment of members of ethnic and religious minorities, or wrongful detention of individuals. The anticorruption campaign remains popular, although the government must carefully follow due process.

Meanwhile, reformers within Bangladesh's major political parties are pushing to democratize the parties. The caretaker government has also responded positively to

the parties' call for dialog. While these are ultimately matters for the Bangladeshi people to decide, the United States is actively following these developments. We also continue to monitor the court cases brought against those detained during the state of emergency, including the two former Prime Ministers. The United States—along with like-minded partners—has advised Bangladesh's caretaker government that it must meet international standards for due process, transparency, and respect for human rights in all cases.

DEVELOPMENT

With respect to the United States goal of fostering development, Bangladesh has enjoyed several years of strong economic growth, despite perennial struggles against flooding, overpopulation, and poverty. Bangladesh needs sustained growth, if it is to escape from the jaws of debilitating and destabilizing poverty. The caretaker government has attempted to take some positive economic steps. Encouragingly, the Bangladesh Government has worked to expand power generation and to improve infrastructure. For example, the government has streamlined operations of Bangladesh's largest port, cutting transit times through the port from 9 or 10 days to 3 or 4 days, and reducing cargo handling costs by at least 40 percent. In the near-term, the caretaker government faces the daunting task of reducing inflation: Prices have soared due to high international commodity prices, devastating monsoonal floods and widespread crop damage from cyclone Sidr. Recent surveys and anecdotal evidence show that the people of Bangladesh worry more about feeding themselves than about political reforms.

This is one reason why foreign assistance plays such a vital part of United States Government efforts to promote stability and development in Bangladesh. We have provided roughly $5 billion in assistance to Bangladesh since its independence. That assistance has, among other accomplishments, contributed to a 50 percent drop in Bangladesh's population growth, provided electricity to scores of millions of villagers, helped save the lives of hundreds of thousands during the most recent severe cyclone, and helped establish the conditions for three consecutive free and fair national elections. It has also built for the United States a degree of goodwill among the populace virtually unmatched in any other Muslim-majority country.

Currently, the U.S. Agency for International Development manages a large food aid program that targets the poorest of the poor, especially in the countryside where the effects of floods and other disasters are most severe. USAID also manages a broad-based program focusing on democracy and governance, public health, education for the country's poor, and expanded economic opportunity and competitiveness. These programs help provide a basic social safety net and a way out of poverty for their beneficiaries.

Late last year, the U.S. Government provided emergency relief to the millions of people whose livelihoods cyclone Sidr destroyed. USAID immediately provided $19.5 million in aid and the U.S. military immediately provided desperately needed airlift to deliver food, water, and clothing to remote areas during Operation Sea Angel II. The United States' response to the crisis received widespread and exceedingly favorable media coverage in Bangladesh. This has helped cement the friendly ties between our two countries.

The damage from cyclone Sidr has been estimated at billions of dollars, and the Bangladesh Government has asked donors to help rebuild agriculture and aquaculture industries, to reconstruct rural electrification networks, and to mitigate future disasters. Bangladesh also needs help from donors to ensure that the most vulnerable of its citizens have adequate food security. The nation's grain stockpiles could be dangerously low by spring as Bangladesh struggles to meet the needs of its cyclone victims.

DENIAL OF SPACE TO TERRORISTS

Mr. Chairman, I would like to turn now to the United States interest in denying terrorists the use of Bangladesh's territory. Despite a long and admirable history of religious tolerance, Bangladesh has become a target of extremists in recent years. Poverty and political turmoil have provided some space for terrorists. Home-grown terrorists called the Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) simultaneously exploded over 400 small bombs throughout Bangladesh in August 2005; shortly thereafter, the JMB embarked on a terror campaign of suicide attacks against judges, other prominent figures, and crowded markets. The subsequent execution of six JMB leaders appears to have left the terrorist organization on the run.

A number of press reports also indicate, however, that Pakistan-based militant groups are using Bangladesh as a staging area and transit point to facilitate attacks directed at targets in India, and at least one of these groups, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba

(LT), has been able to tap into resources provided by local militant groups such as Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami, Bangladesh (HUJI–B) to support their operations. Indian press reports allege that Bangladeshi HUJI–B members and individuals affiliated with the LT are involved in an active terrorist network, operating from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Press reports also suggest that this particular network is responsible for a string of attacks in India, including the October 2005, May 2007, and August 2007 bombings in Hyderabad and probably the October 2007 bombing of a shrine in Ajmer, Rajasthan as well.

That said, Bangladesh is committed to partnership with the United States in the global war on terror, and the vast majority of Bangladesh's citizens appear to have little sympathy for the terrorists. The caretaker government has identified counterterrorism as a top priority and has actively pursued extremists. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to work with Bangladesh to help it counter the internal terrorist threat, while strengthening control of its borders and various ports of entry.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, in closing let me say that I look forward very much to the challenges I will face if confirmed as United States Ambassador to Bangladesh. Over the years, the people of Bangladesh have overcome many daunting obstacles in their search for better lives. I feel strongly that it is in the United States' national interest to work with them to help build a Bangladesh where democracy flourishes, where no child goes to bed hungry, and where no terrorist can find safe haven. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress in pursuit of these goals.

Let me also assure you that, if confirmed, I will zealously protect the welfare and safety of American citizens and American interests in Bangladesh.

Thank you again for the opportunity of addressing you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Ms. Jones.

STATEMENT OF DEBORAH K. JONES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF KUWAIT

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I also welcome this opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. I am also deeply honored by the confidence shown in me by the President and Secretary Rice in making this nomination and, if confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with this committee and with others in Congress to continue to advance the vital interests of the United States in Kuwait, and in the broader Middle East region.

I'm also grateful today for a number of friends who have joined me from various countries in the region, as well as my daughter. I'm so proud of my husband, my family, and grateful for their steadfastness and encouragement as we have often served, particularly in later years, at different posts, not necessarily together as a family, in the world.

Mr. Chairman, as you've already noted, the State of Kuwait has been a reliable partner and friend in a turbulent and transitional region of utmost importance to United States' interests. Because of this, as you noted, Kuwait was designated a major non-NATO ally in 2004.

Since Kuwait's 1991 liberation from Saddam Hussein's brutal occupation, whose painful remnants remain visible to this day, United States military forces and our coalition partners have relied on Kuwait's indispensable material and logistical support for our policy priorities in Iraq, Iran, and the global war on terror.

If confirmed, I will work to consolidate and expand that support into broader political, social, and economic arenas, to build and sus-

tain a stable and democratic Iraq, and Iraq at peace with its neighbors, and also to maintain throughout the region.

We share with the Government of Kuwait a common interest in combating the spread of extremist ideologies, and in rooting out terrorist elements that threaten our peace and security.

If confirmed, I will seek to build even stronger and more robust counterterrorism cooperation to ensure the best possible force protection for our troops in Kuwait, as well as the safety of our mission employees, our family members, and the larger American community.

Kuwait continues to build positively on a proud indigenous tradition of boisterous political discourse, somewhat unusual in that region. In 2005, women were granted the right to vote, and subsequently, nearly 60 percent of those eligible to do so participated in their June 2006 parliamentary and municipal elections.

Since then, Kuwait has witnessed further democratic advancements, including increased press freedoms, and a much-needed redistricting law. If confirmed, I will endeavor to help Kuwait consolidate and expand those democratic gains, consistent with Kuwait's own goals and with the President's freedom agenda, to include supporting the development of additional civil society groups in advancing the rights and protections of vulnerable populations living within Kuwait's borders.

On the economic front, we must seek to create new paradigms of partnership, both within and beyond the energy sphere. The potential for dynamic synergies between Kuwait and the United States, combining capital, technology, and expertise to advance global development compatible with current environmental and other concerns, is enormous. Constructive, bilateral engagement on trade and investment-related issues through tools such as the Trade and Investment Framework, will support needed reforms and cement our committed partnership.

If confirmed, I will pursue ongoing policies that promote increased investment, trade, and project development between our two countries.

Finally, if confirmed, I will expand U.S.-sponsored exchange and English language programs to build stronger bilateral ties, and thus counter the negative extremist influences found all too often in regional media.

Mr. Chairman, I've served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than 25 years, most recently as principal officer at the Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey—another vital ally of the United States undergoing dynamic transition in a volatile region.

Prior to that, I served in Washington as Country Director for Arabian Peninsula Affairs, and the lead up to the March 2003 engagement in Iraq.

My experience with the region includes overseas postings in Baghdad, Tunas, Damascus, Riyadh, and the United Arab Emirates, and I look forward to continuing to serve the American people in Kuwait.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will work with persistence, with enthusiasm, and with stamina to protect American citizens and promote U.S. interests, while consolidating and augmenting the close ties between our leaders and our peoples.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I'm honored by this nomination and the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Jones follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEBORAH K. JONES TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF KUWAIT

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I welcome this opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. I am deeply honored by the confidence shown in me by President Bush and Secretary Rice in making this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with this committee, and others in Congress, to continue to advance the vital interests of the United States in Kuwait and in the region. I am joined today by my daughter, Ana, a sophomore at the Madeira School here in Virginia. My husband, Rick Olson, also a Foreign Service officer, is serving as Deputy Chief of Mission at USNATO, and our 12-year-old, Isabella, is happily serving with him there. I am so proud of them and grateful for their steadfastness and their encouragement.

Mr. Chairman, the State of Kuwait has been a reliable partner and friend in a turbulent and transitional region of utmost importance to United States' interests; because of this, the President designated Kuwait a major non-NATO ally in 2003. Since Kuwait's 1991 liberation from Saddam Hussein's brutal occupation, whose painful remnants remain visible to this day, United States military forces and our coalition partners have relied on Kuwait's material and logistical support for our policy priorities in Iraq, Iran, and the global war on terror. If confirmed, I will work to consolidate and expand that support into broader political, social, and economic arenas to build and sustain a stable and democratic Iraq at peace with its neighbors, and to maintain security throughout the region.

We share with the Government of Kuwait a common interest in combating the spread of extremist ideology and rooting out terrorist elements that threaten peace and security in the region. If confirmed, I will seek to build even stronger and more robust counterterrorism cooperation to include increased information sharing, intensified training efforts, and the careful evaluation of existing cooperative programs to ensure the best possible force protection for our troops in Kuwait, as well as our mission employees, family members, and the larger American community.

Kuwait continues to build positively on a proud, indigenous tradition of boisterous political discourse. In 2005, women were granted the right to vote; subsequently, nearly 60 of those eligible to so do participated in their June 2006 parliamentary and municipal elections. Also in 2006, the Government of Kuwait respected constitutionally mandated procedures in appointing its new leader, Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al Sabah. Since then, Kuwait has witnessed further democratic advancements, including increased press freedoms and a much needed redistricting law. If confirmed, I will endeavor to help Kuwait consolidate and expand those democratic gains, consistent with the President's Freedom Agenda, to include supporting the development of fledgling, grassroots women's organizations, civil society groups and other activists, and advancing the rights and protections of vulnerable populations living within Kuwait's borders.

In addition to deepening our security cooperation and advancing President Bush's Freedom Agenda, we must seek to create new paradigms of economic partnership, both within and beyond the energy sphere. The recent historic deal between DOW Chemical and the Kuwaiti Government, the largest of its kind in Kuwait's history, exemplifies the kind of creative initiatives that are possible. The potential for dynamic synergies between Kuwait and the United States, combining capital, technology, and expertise to advance global development compatible with current environmental concerns, is enormous. Constructive bilateral engagement on trade and investment-related issues, through tools such as the Trade and Investment Framework (TIFA), will help support needed reforms and cement our committed partnership. If confirmed, I will pursue ongoing policies that promote increased investment, trade, and project development between our two countries.

Finally, if confirmed, I will expand U.S.-sponsored exchange and English language programs and utilize Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) funds to reach a broad spectrum of young citizens and future leaders throughout Kuwaiti society. These programs ensure stronger bilateral ties and thus counter the negative extremist influences found all too often in regional media.

Mr. Chairman, I have served my country as a Foreign Service officer for more than 25 years, most recently as principal officer at our Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey, another vital ally of the United States undergoing dynamic transition in a volatile region. Prior to that, I served in Washington as Country Director for Arabian Peninsula Affairs in the lead up to the March 2003 engagement in Iraq. My experience with the region includes four Washington assignments directly related to the Near East and overseas postings in Baghdad, Tunis, Damascus, Riyadh (as a dependent spouse) and the United Arab Emirates. I look forward to continuing to serve the American people in Kuwait.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will work with persistence, enthusiasm, and stamina to protect American citizens and promote U.S. interests, while consolidating and augmenting the close ties between our leaders and our peoples. Again, I am honored, Mr. Chairman, by this nomination and the opportunity to appear before you today. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you

Senator KERRY. Well, thank you very much, each of you, for good, solid statements.

But, you just mentioned, Ms. Jones, in your statement, working to deal with this issue of the radical challenge, and so forth. Can you each share with me, based on your experience in these countries and this region, and just watching what's going on, what you think the most advisable and important steps are for us to take that would have an impact, in your judgment—not just in the country you're going to serve in, but speak to that specifically—and also, this is a larger issue regionally, and if you could address your sense of how we could best contribute in our policies to facilitate that minimization of radicalization?

Ms. JONES. Obviously, we have a lot of programs that are funded right by the Middle East Partnership Initiative that involve exchanges and a lot more outreach. My sense, and my experience based in Turkey and elsewhere, is that we are perfectly capable of competing in the vast world of ideas, and similar to what happened prior, previously with the cold war, the United States can honestly debate in public fora, what the choices are.

I think some of the choices may not appear to some people to be as stark as they were during the cold war, in the sense, then, that we had clear—no freedom of religion and a broken economic system. Now the challenge is much more subtle. But my sense and my experience is that, when people participate in the free dialog that is in our society, within our own society—when they come and study in the United States, when they see us, here, and see the variety that is here, it assists them in putting into broader context and more accurate perspective—the freedoms that we enjoy, the excesses that they may observe coming—what they perceive to be excesses coming out of our society—and where that really fits in the broader scheme of human freedom and personal choice.

I think it's in large part an educational issue. And our being comfortable and open about speaking to all of the issues and not shying from it. Maybe that sounds simplistic, but that's what I've seen work in Turkey.

Senator KERRY. So, your biggest single thing, you think, is on the cultural exchange side?

Ms. JONES. I would go beyond that to even say, I think that whenever we bring a young person to the United States, or whenever they engage with us, they become a force multiplier, particularly in the age of blogging, when they can go back and say, "This is what I saw, this is what it really was."

I think right now, in fact, the best advertisement we have for our system is our elections. I know so many young people throughout the Middle East who are watching, fervently, what happens in the United States elections, watching the debates, and watching democracy in practice. And when they see that, that has a far greater impact on them then any kind of pamphlet we could ever issue. I think that's the advantage we have, actually, with the Internet right now, and with global communication.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Moriarty.

Ambassador MORIARTY. I'd like to endorse what Deborah has said. I would also point out, though, that the issue in South Asia is actually a little bit different from the issue in the gulf and points further west.

Basically, in South Asia, you traditionally have had relatively little support for the more extreme forms of Islam. So, when terrorism does come into places like Bangladesh or India, it's usually an imported ideology. And why does it come in? It comes in because of poverty, it comes in because of a lack of options. I've actually been told that in Bangladesh, the United States has about its highest reputation in any Muslim majority country in the world. Why is that so? Frankly, it's so because we have stayed engaged with Bangladesh since independence in 1971.

I look at other places where we come in, then come out, and our reputation is not as strong. So, I think it's important that we remain engaged—when I say remain engaged, I do heartily endorse the concept of as many exchanges as possible, but in the grindingly poor countries of South Asia and other impoverished parts of the Muslim world, that also has to have a very strong economic component.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador SCOBEY. Mr. Chairman, again, I would agree with my colleagues as well, but in addition, I think we need to also realize, and again, based on my experience in the last several years, even though the challenge of extremism is keen and very real to Americans, I think we also need to realize that the societies in the region have also been, in some ways, taken by surprise and shocked by the violence that has emerged from their societies.

And one of the most important parts of the response to extremism, I believe, is taking place in these countries themselves, through voices of moderation, moderate clerics, government leaders, political leaders—they're all speaking out and working together. I think it is our challenge to make sure that we have outreach to these opinion makers inside countries, to assure that they understand what the United States stands for, what our principles are, because they are the true—they have the true ability to get out into their own communities, and to affect the views of the youth of today, and the attitudes that they will shape, then.

Senator KERRY. Just following up—can aid policy, and cultural policy, exchange policy, overcome the hurdles of perceptions of our larger foreign policy? In other words, how an administration is perceived in a region because of larger decisions, like Iraq, or Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, things like that? Do you think you can fender through, notwithstanding, or do those other things have a seri-

ous impact on your ability to achieve your goals on a more implementation/practical level?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir, I think that the U.S. aid policies, our economic programs in countries, our cultural programs and exchanges are some of the tools that we have. There is also an ongoing need for continued speaking out, publicly and frequently to—as I said—to make clear what our values are, what the United States stands for, and often to explain our policies. We may not always find agreement with our policies overseas, but I think that our honest effort to explain, and to reach out, and to listen, to respond, does maintain the kinds of ties that we will need to eventually overcome the challenge of extremism throughout the region and the world.

Senator KERRY. What do you think, and with respect to the current relationship with Egypt—visiting Senators, visiting Secretaries of State, visiting Presidents—have had conversations about human rights, opening the democracy, accountability, et cetera. But last year, even, our own State Department's report was pretty tough on what's happening in Egypt.

You know, we are grateful for Egyptian support in a lot of respects. And, I think they know that, and I hope they know that. And they have, and can, play a very constructive role with respect to the peace process. So, are we the prisoners of those other needs in that you can't leverage anything? Or is it that we've made a more pragmatic decision here about what we can do?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir, I believe that our goals and objectives in Egypt, our strong strategic cooperation are not in conflict with our goal, and our encouragement for a democratic reform, and respect for human rights. The visits of Senators, of senior administration officials, the work of our diplomats in the field—keep these issues to the front. And I would say that other parts of the world have also brought these issues to Egyptian attention.

We have, as you know, a number of other efforts underway to work with civil society directly, to work with trying to build the rule of law and institutions of government that will help Egyptians form opinions about what good governance is. I don't believe that this is an issue, as I said, where our goals are in conflict, but I agree that it is a work of—that may take time, so that all Egyptian voices will eventually be able to be heard.

The government—the leaders in the government themselves have, over time, acknowledged and pointed to areas where they need reform to take place. That hasn't happened. I think it is our goal—I know the President has made clear, even on his last trip—that he would like to see the Egyptians take a more leading role in the region, to promote democratic reform and justice.

We believe it is, certainly, a capability, and we will continue to encourage that, as we can. But, I don't believe that there is a conflict in our goals here.

Senator KERRY. And, do you have a view with respect to the linking of aid and human rights progress?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Well, sir, as you know, the administration very strongly opposed the conditionality element of the security assistance, economic assistance package. And, on the belief that it

does, it will not help leverage or move Egypt toward specific changes that we have articulated for them.

Senator KERRY. The President and the Secretary, as I've said, have repeatedly urged the Egyptian Government to "show the way" toward democracy in the Middle East. But the most recent State Department human rights report called the record on human rights "poor." And there are many who are certain that Egypt has regressed on democratic reform. What would you say about that?

Ambassador SCOBEY. I would say that the path toward democratic reform that many voices inside Egypt and many international observers, including our own observers—both from NGOs and from our embassy—have clearly pointed out that the government has not taken enough steps toward genuine, democratic, political reform. There are certain issues out there now that have been particularly noteworthy, and in the press the detention of Ayman Nour has been a particularly difficult action for us to understand, as to why he remains in detention, and it is our—I will certainly, if confirmed—continue to promote, and to urge that the Egyptians release him.

And there are other examples, as well, of what—where their actions have not matched what we had understood of their intent to be. If confirmed, I will continue to promote these issues, and we will continue to work directly with civil society, and other Egyptians who are really also seeking further reform within Egypt.

Senator KERRY. And what is your interpretation of the current state of threat of the Muslim Brotherhood?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Well, as you know, the Muslim Brotherhood, as an organization, is illegal in Egypt. And I don't think I have really good data as to what its ultimate strength is. But it is a potent force throughout the region, it has been attractive to a number of publics throughout the Middle East. It—although it did not run in elections because it could not—there are a number of independent candidates in the Egyptian parliament that most experts believe are, in fact, affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and they captured a good number of votes in the last parliamentary elections.

Senator KERRY. What's your attitude about the political banning with respect to them? I mean, obviously the experience—and I've heard this from President Mubarak, and we've all seen it—our pressure for an election in the West Bank, against President Abbas is—well, then Abu Mazan's pleas, and the Israeli pleas—resulted in the election of Hamas. And one of those things that people often talk about is, if you push that process too fast to a place you don't know, you better look out what you get as a result. Do you think there is that threat? That if you sort of open it up and the Muslim Brotherhood were legitimate, that you would in fact have a more radical outcome, and greater instability in Egypt?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir, I think that Egypt can open up its political system to greater political pluralism, it will be a question for Egyptians to be able to define that. But what we see now, is that there are many, many obstacles to the registration of new parties and their ability to act.

Of course, as I said, the Muslim Brotherhood—although illegal—there are many in Egypt that are drawn to its ideas, and I think

we believe that if the political process were opened up so that other political parties could emerge, Egyptians would be able then, to have their choice of possible solutions to some of the political challenges that they currently face.

Senator KERRY. Would you agree that there is some sensitivity in the Egyptian population about foreign interference, particularly American interference in their political system?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir, I can't answer specifically, because I have not really be able to test this in Egypt, but certainly from my experience in the region, I think it is a fairly standard sensitivity, of the appearance of any foreign power telling them what to do.

Senator KERRY. Is there the possibility that, as we promote political reform, we can also alienate the secular reformists and as well as frustrate the ruling elite?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Well, sir, I think if we couch our goals and objectives in terms that are consistent with international standards for political pluralism and political freedom, I think that we, at the end of the day, we will be able to defend our position, in that we will win more friends in Egypt.

Senator KERRY. Have you been given any specific instructions, with respect to enforcement on the Gaza border and the arms trafficking and tunnels?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Well, sir, as you know, I'm not yet confirmed, so I haven't. But my understanding of where the situation is——

Senator KERRY. Well, the process of prepping up for this and for everything——

Ambassador SCOBEY [continuing]. Yes, yes. Yes, sir.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Have they——

Ambassador SCOBEY. It's clearly a—has been even before the January 23rd breach—been a topic of a lot of concern, both to Egyptians, clearly to the Government and people of Israel and to others—it is a vulnerability. On the 23rd, the Egyptians were overwhelmed with the number of people pushing through, and an operation appears to have been coordinated by Hamas. The Egyptian Government was extremely sensitive to the possibility of civilian injuries, and were very, very careful to try to prevent violence from breaking out.

They have gradually pushed most people—encouraged most people—to get back into Gaza, and have tried to reseal the border. I think they are looking, talking—I think the good element here is that they are talking very closely, I understand, with the Israelis, with the Palestinian authority to try to find a way to improve the situation on the Rafah border. And as you know, with regard to the tunneling and smuggling problem that preexisted, the Egyptians have already, I think, submitted requests for some specialized technical equipment that will help them monitor the terrain, and try to mitigate the problems of these tunnels that have been there for 30 years.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Moriarty, what would you define as the principal challenges right now, with respect to Bangladesh? You mentioned the Muslim issue in your comments, also.

Ambassador MORIARTY. I look upon the three issues that I raised as intertwined. We have to address all of them, they have to be addressed together—one is democracy——

Senator KERRY. Development, the——

Ambassador MORIARTY [continuing]. The move back toward democracy, the other is development, increasing prosperity. The third, which sort of overlays both of the other two, is the desire to deny space to international terrorists.

Senator KERRY. How do you think we best do that?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, I think we have to——

Senator KERRY. With that kind of populace, with that kind of order, movement, et cetera?

Ambassador MORIARTY. In terms of denying space to the terrorists, I think we have to play on the already considerable suspicion of extreme Islam on the part of most of the Bangladeshi people. I think we do that by encouraging a return—as quickly as possible—to democracy. And I think we do that by encouraging steady development of the economy.

You remember that they were hit very hard by a cyclone in November—set back years of development progress down in the south. We are looking at a package to help with that, and I would hope that we will be bringing it to Congress in the coming weeks.

Senator KERRY. So, is it your judgment or the judgment of the administration, I suppose I should ask, that the military is resolved to withdraw from the political domain, and facilitate transition?

Ambassador MORIARTY. They continue to say so, sir. The chief advisor who, of course, is the chief civilian official, has repeated his commitment to this timetable of elections by the end of this year. The Chief of Army Staff has reiterated his determination to see this process move forward. He has consistently said he has no desire for political office, and he want to see the Army go back to the barracks by the end of this year.

Senator KERRY. Have we identified factions that are opposed to that action? That prefer to--

Ambassador MORIARTY. Within the Army? No, sir. In fact, I think that what happened was, after a few months of relative calm last year, there were riots at the universities. I think they looked at the—the military looked at the situation in Pakistan, and I think there was a decision reached at some point last year that, "Gee, we really do have to make this work. There is no alternative to marching back toward democracy."

Senator KERRY. How would you assess the influence and relationship that we have with their military?

Ambassador MORIARTY. I think it is strong. We have had training programs for a long time. A lot of their senior officers have studied in U.S. courses. We do have a big question, a human rights question related to something called the "Rapid Action Battalions"—that is the elite group that was set up to fight terrorism, to fight crime within the country. Up to now, we don't really have a formal relationship with them. We want to improve their human rights record as a precondition for any sort of improved engagement with them.

Senator KERRY. And how would you assess regional relationships with Bangladesh?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, again, I would rather let those kind of speak——

Senator KERRY. Has the political change, the military government altered that balance in any way? Our relationship?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, I think right now, Bangladesh's neighbors are willing to give the current government the benefit of the doubt and say, "Okay, you have a timetable, move on it." I don't think any of the neighbors would be comfortable if, as you suggested, there might be further military moves in the future. That would isolate the Bangladeshis.

Senator KERRY. And how has the political turmoil impacted the status of the Islamist radicals in the country at this time?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, you hear—oh, excuse me. I was going to say, you hear varying things on that issue. Some people assert that they are making progress because they have not had as many of their leaders arrested in the anticorruption campaign.

Others assert that there is no evidence of any groundswell of support for the Islamic parties. I would remind you, in the last election they gained something like 6 percent of the total vote.

Senator KERRY. You mentioned the cyclone, natural disaster, et cetera—this is an ongoing thing. We seem to always have a setback, whether it's a tidal wave, or you know, whatever. Are you aware of whether or not they are currently focused on taking steps, both in terms of their development policies and other policies, to deal with the potential of climate change having a profound impact on them?

Ambassador MORIARTY. They are extremely worried by climate change. Their fears are that Bangladesh, which is very, very low, would end up being one of the countries worst affected by climate change in the future.

Much of what we've been doing with the Bangladeshis, in terms of trying to improve their structure—infrastructure, to protect against cyclone, to protect against tsunami—does, of course, actually help out with respect to that, too.

They do need, they assert, a lot of help in improving the infrastructure down south, much of which was hit very hard by this latest cyclone.

Senator KERRY. When you say "a lot of help," what are you talking about?

Ambassador MORIARTY. They estimated that the economic damage and infrastructure damage was about $2 billion that need to be repaired.

Senator KERRY. Have commitments been made with respect to that?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Yeah, there have been—we're still looking at exactly what we need to do. In fact, we have teams out in the field in Bangladesh right now, including from the military, looking at what sort of infrastructure projects are necessary.

Senator KERRY. And what about the—do you have an assessment from the administration, anticipation as you approach this—about the prospect for elections, i.e., that they will be held? That they will be accountable and open? What's your take on that at this point?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, we are encouraged by the steps that are being taken, to date. Basically this roadmap, just—in-

cluded the final goal, it laid out the steps that needed to be taken to get to that goal.

Probably the most important is coming up with a revamped voters list that is much more foolproof than what they've had in the past. They're doing that pretty well, and progress to date is encouraging.

So, I would say that we have seen nothing to indicate that they're going to back off or shy away. And we, of course, are out there. And I, of course, if I get confirmed, will go out there to drive home the message that they need to make progress, and they need to hold the election on time.

Senator KERRY. Your confidence level about that?

Ambassador MORIARTY. Reasonably high. I mean, not having set foot in the country yet, but again, everything we've seen indicates that they are headed in the right direction.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Ms. Jones, Kuwait is an interesting and complicated place. I remember, I was there with Strom Thurmond and Pat Moynihan, literally, the day the al-Sabah family returned to their palace after the invasion had been repelled. And I remember having a long conversation with them about their gratitude, and our interests and mutual interests and so forth.

We've had some hiccups in between then and now, that sort of raise some questions about that. On the other hand, they are a very important staging area for us, and we couldn't be doing a lot of things we're doing, or pose some of the strategic positioning that we do without their supports. How would you characterize that relationship right now? Where do you see those strategic interests? And how would you describe the relationship?

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I would say that Kuwait's relationship with the United States remains the bedrock of its security strategy. And the mutual benefits of that relationship remain pretty clear and compelling, as evidenced by the amount, the support—both material and logistical—that Kuwait provides for us, as well, which is something to the tune of a billion dollars a year.

And that doesn't necessarily include the fuel arrangements we have, and other things. The generous support they've given—of course, in their interest, as well.

But because Kuwait sits at this nexus of very critical—in a very critical area, but of a unique set of political and geo-political circumstances, I think that relationship is going to continue, I have no doubt of that. And in that sense, there's an advantage for us.

It's also a small and wealthy and relatively agile society in some respects. It's a young society. As you've commented earlier, Mr. Chairman, the—as with most of these populations, more than 60 percent of the society is under the age of 30, more than 40 percent is under the age of 15, in fact, I believe, in Kuwait.

They do have an active and vociferous, sometimes, parliament, and they do deal with other dynamics internally that some of these other countries do not deal with in the region, which can, at times, make them appear to be less forthcoming.

You mentioned Annapolis, for example. The fact is that as their foreign minister later explained, Kuwait is not a member of the Arab Peace Initiative Committee that did attend Annapolis and did

represent a number of countries that were not part of that committee. But they had already agreed, in advance, to follow the lead of the committee in providing support, and they all subsequently pledged $300 million in assistance to the Palestinians.

I think the issue with Kuwait on the three—on the areas of importance for us, for example, with Iraq, sustaining their support, but—and expanding that support into commercial investment, and other areas that will solidify and stabilize Iraq's ability to function as an independent and a good neighbor-good, stable, democratic neighbor. Obviously, Kuwait has historical concerns about Iraq, which are somewhat justified in many people's minds there.

I would say that the same goes with the peace process—there have been a number of commitments that we need to work with them to follow up on, in terms of their support for the Palestinians, for the Palestinian authority.

Frankly, their record in terms of compliance is not quite as good as a number of our other gulf friends has been—beyond the initial commitment. Moving back to Iraq, I think you had—someone had commented on that earlier—the level of support, what—Kuwait has made a number of commitments for project assistance, and I think part of the question there is waiting for Iraqis to direct—to decide themselves, the Government of Iraq—which are the projects that merit the assistance. And my understanding was that this month, someone was coming from the Ministry in Iraq to talk to the Kuwaitis about specific assistance.

There's no question that we need to work, and if confirmed, these will be areas that I will press on, to push for that support, and to be forthcoming with it.

On the freedom agenda—and this is, again, where Kuwait has a unique environment, it's gone back and forth over the years—but in fact the march has been fairly steadily forward in terms of women's rights and other issues—there's a large problem that remains with the treatment of domestic workers in Kuwait.

This is an area of concern for us. Recently, they did open a shelter, for example, for domestics. But more needs to be done to ensure that, again, those vulnerable populations are protected within Kuwait, and that's one of, if confirmed, that one of the areas that I will work with them on.

Because as they—because they know it's the right thing to do, too. As Kuwait moves forward and continues to progress as a full player in the modern world, with international standards, they know that's the right thing to do.

Senator KERRY. Do you have any sense of whether or not rivalries within the al-Sabah family for succession may or may not complicate that relationship that you've described? The strategic relationship we have?

Ms. JONES. Well, I—obviously I'm not in a position right now, Mr. Chairman, to comment on a lot of those. However, I would only note that in the transition, I mean, as the current emir was selected, they followed their constitutional processes and I think that was a very encouraging thing.

Again, and I don't mean to be Pollyannaish, but I think with increased transparency, and with the transparency that comes with their young population not only observing what happens here and,

amongst their own society and their communication with each other—they do, I think, feel and understand that they have an obligation to play according to established rules, and they do have a constitution, and they have followed that.

Senator KERRY. To what extent are there, is there evidence of Kuwait citizens and/or organizations who finance terrorist activities?

Ms. JONES. This is, I think, the challenge of tracking and countering the flow of terror financing, is a huge challenge, one that I've dealt with quite a bit in previous assignments. And it certainly remains an item of concern in Kuwait. It's a place where a lot of cash does flow in and out of the country, and obviously, therefore, it's a place that people who want to exploit these avenues will seek to exploit, given its location.

The Kuwaitis have taken a number of steps over the past several years to increase the monitoring and tracking of money, primarily that's been given through charitable organizations, which is hard to track. They have put in place with their central bank and other things, systems for tracking. Obviously, more can be done, and that's certainly an area where we seek to work more intensely with them to improve the mechanisms, not only for the flow of the money itself, but for surveillance, et cetera, of individuals who might be involved with that.

Senator KERRY. Are you aware of—how would you describe al-Qaeda influence, and/or presence in Kuwait?

Ms. JONES. I am aware that are some who are very concerned about the growing influence and presence of al-Qaeda in Kuwait, perhaps in the sense of the Whack-A-Mole effect. As the Saudis have clamped down, and al-Qaeda looks for more fertile grounds where they might feel that they aren't under the same level of observation or monitoring.

The Kuwaitis feel—share this concern with us, deeply—and it is a small society, which gives them a certain advantage in the sense that they can monitor. Obviously, there's more to be done on that side, as well, but it's probably something that's best discussed in another venue.

Senator KERRY. What about infiltrators from Iraq and/or Iran, and Iran's regional policies? How do those impact Kuwait?

Ms. JONES. Well, obviously, on the Iraq side, of course, Kuwait is deeply concerned about flows back and forth over the border. And I think that's one of the reasons that they've been so receptive to having us there as a presence, and would hope to have us there for a time to come.

With respect to Iran, it's obviously—I would have to, honestly, Mr. Chairman, look more in terms of infiltration. I'm not aware that that is a big problem, per se, infiltration from Iran.

I do know that the Kuwaitis have a regular dialog with Iran. The Foreign Minister was there, recently. They have assured us that the purpose of this dialog is to convey our concerns, and to convey their own concerns to Iran about Iranian activities in the region.

Senator KERRY. So, what do you understand to be the like strategic interests here, between Kuwait and us? And are there different strategic interests that conflict with that?

Ms. JONES. Quite honestly, I don't see that we vary. Perhaps I'm lucky in this sense, but I don't see that we have great—that there's a great deal of light between our strategic interests, and Kuwait's, frankly.

I think we want the same things—we don't want a weaponized, an Iran that has nuclear weapons. We don't want an Iraq that is unstable, and a playing field for al-Qaeda. We don't want al-Qaeda active in the region, and extremism. We want development, we want a peace in the Middle East. I think Kuwait has been extremely supportive of the Arab Peace Plan, certainly, and others in support for the Palestinian Authority, as well as—I am, I think at the right time there will be—I don't think there will be problems in coming to full peace with Israel—although I'm probably stepping out of my role here, I'm speculating, obviously, which I shouldn't do—but I don't see any impediment to that. They are as concerned as we are about instability in the region.

And I think, at the same time, they have undertaken, on their own, not only in response to pressure from us, but their own society is undergoing important democratic transition and changes and development, and they have the luxury of being able to afford a lot of that, as well.

So, I think that we're actually, pretty much in step with each other, strategically.

Senator KERRY. The arms sales that we currently have on the table with respect to the region—how do see that affecting that relationship?

Ms. JONES. Again, with Kuwait, it's largely—I think it's about a $1.4 billion package, that it's mostly kits to upgrade with missile defense system, it's the PAC–3. And again, I think that Kuwaitis would agree with us, and the famous American poet, that "good defenses make good neighbors." Especially in that part of the world.

Senator KERRY. So, coming back to, again, all three of you—is there any—and two of you have now served as ambassadors, and you've been in the region a considerable amount of time. Is there anything that you would say to us, in the Congress, that we ought to be doing on this committee, or in the Congress as a whole, more effectively, in order to facilitate what you have to try to achieve out there?

Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir, I think the continuing interest and oversight of our mission, our roles out there, is continuing—is a valid, very great interest and important to us. I welcome visits from you, from your colleagues in the Senate and the House, to get out and to see for yourselves, and talk to the leadership there. Obviously, the administration has put forward requests for assistance packages, certainly, for Egypt that we would want to work with the Senate and Congress on, in terms of assuring that—answering questions to try to get these approvals needed for this, because we believe these to be very, very important elements of advancing our interests in Egypt.

Senator KERRY. Yes, sir.

Ambassador MORIARTY. Well, unfortunately, Ambassador Scobey stole almost all my thunder.

Senator KERRY. That's okay, we're happy to have nonanswers here. [Laughter.]

Ambassador MORIARTY. But I would also stress that as a country goes through transition, as Bangladesh is going to be going through transition, I think it's important that we have as many codels and staffdels out as possible. Not just to inform the Congress of what's going on out there, but more importantly, to let the Bangladeshis hear that there is a united message here—that we do support development, that we do oppose the spread of terrorism, and that we do want to see that democratic transition completed by the end of the year.

Another item I raised is, I think you will be getting a Cyclone Sidr package coming up in the coming weeks and months, and I hope that the Congress will look at that seriously and will be as supportive as possible.

Ms. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I think that the Kuwaitis have been gratified that, increasingly, Congressional delegations who usually have used Kuwait just as a stopping point to refuel or change planes, en route either to Iraq or Afghanistan, have actually taken the time to stop in Kuwait and meet with the leaders there and hear some of their concerns. I think the most important thing we can do with Kuwait is to reassure them again and again that we'll be there, and that we are there, and we intend to be there for the long run.

Senator KERRY. Do you foresee any logistical issue with respect to the potential of increased force presence there for over-the-horizon purposes?

Ms. JONES. I think the Kuwaitis have shown that they're ready to accommodate us as we need, in fact.

Senator KERRY. Do any of you have any potential conflict of interest that might arise in the conduct of your responsibilities in each of your posts?

Ambassador Scobey.

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir, I've been advised by the legal office in State that I will have to divest myself of a few investments, if confirmed, and I'm prepared to do that.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Moriarty.

Ambassador MORIARTY. No, not that I'm aware of.

Senator KERRY. Ms. Jones.

Ms. JONES. No. I was required to recuse myself from activity in my family's business in the State of Arizona—don't ask me why because we have careful lawyers at State—but other than that, I have no other issues.

Senator KERRY. And with respect to recusal, either of you, otherwise, is there any issue from which you'd have to recuse yourself?

Ambassador SCOBEY. No, sir.

Senator KERRY. None? Okay.

Well, I appreciate your testimonies today. We're going to truly want to try to get you out there as fast as possible, obviously. And I'm confident that we'll move expeditiously here in the Senate.

And again, I repeat, and particularly in the case of the two of you, Ambassador Moriarty and Ms. Jones, we're—you know, we hate for you to have given up your position, and respect the deci-

sion that you've made, and appreciate your mutual affection for the Foreign Service, and for your service to the country.

And we appreciate all of you in this willingness to do it. It is not the glamorous, glorious job that once many people thought an ambassadorship was. It's hard work, and in some cases hardship, and sometimes dangerous. And so, we have enormous gratitude to all of you, and to your families, for your willingness to undertake this.

And, we look forward to getting you confirmed, and get out there and get on the job.

One last question, just quickly—you got any idea whether we're ever going to have an ambassador back in Syria again?

Ambassador SCOBEY. Sir? Somehow I thought you might ask that.

As you saw, Syria, it's a fascinating country with a wonderful feeling, and wonderful people who deserve good governance and prospects for their future, but I've had to, sadly, conclude that the choices the Government of Syria has made over the past 2 years since I've left have not increased confidence that an ambassador is going there very soon.

Senator KERRY. Well, this hearing is not about Syria, it's another topic, but I appreciate your telling us that, and I thank you all very, very much for being here.

Good luck, Godspeed, thank you.

[Whereupon, at 2:12 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL K. INOUYE, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII

Today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will consider the nomination of James Moriarty to serve as the United States Ambassador to Bangladesh. I am pleased and honored to express my strong support for his nomination.

Ambassador Moriarty has had a long and distinguished record of public service beginning in 1975, immediately after graduating from Dartmouth College, when he joined the Foreign Service as a political officer. His many assignments have included posts at the U.S. Embassies in Morocco, Swaziland, and Pakistan, as well as tours in Beijing and Taipei. In addition, he speaks Chinese, Nepali, Urdu, French, and is learning Bangla. His various posts have earned him numerous awards for his vital role in shaping U.S. foreign policy. Furthermore, these recognitions are a reflection of his command and knowledge of the issues that affect Asia, and his effectiveness as a diplomat of the United States.

Most recently, Ambassador Moriarty served as the United States Ambassador to Nepal from 2004 to 2007, where he has been dedicated to end the Maoist insurgency, and to establish peace and democracy. In this capacity, Ambassador Moriarty has demonstrated his understanding of the complex issues of establishing a prosperous, democratic nation.

Ambassador Moriarty's experience demonstrates an enduring commitment to advocating American foreign policy and interests, and I am certain that his record of public service has well qualified him to take on the responsibilities of serving as the United States Ambassador to Bangladesh.

On a more personal note, I have had the pleasure of knowing Ambassador Moriarty for many years. He comes from a family dedicated to public service. His father-in-law, David M. Peters, served as my executive assistant and for 14 years, and his wife, Lauren Moriarty—a native Hawaiian—is a former U.S. Ambassador and career Foreign Service officer.

I am confident Ambassador Moriarty is well aware of the enormous responsibilities that await him, if confirmed, and I have no doubt that he will fulfill those responsibilities with great distinction. I respectfully urge my colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to favorably support Ambassador Moriarty's nomination.

RESPONSES OF HON. MARGARET SCOBEY TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What is your assessment of the state of political reform and human rights in Egypt? What are the most important steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in Egypt? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. According to the latest country report on human rights, the Egyptian Government's respect for human rights is poor, and serious abuses continue in many areas. The government limits the democratic rights of citizens and has resisted political reform.

The administration has been committed to promoting democracy and human rights in Egypt. Senior United States Government officials have raised serious concerns about the path and pace of political reform, human rights, and democracy in Egypt at the highest levels and will continue to do so. If confirmed, this will be a high priority for me as ambassador to Egypt. I hope to establish a constructive dialog with the government and with civil society advocates as both are necessary to the expansion of political freedom and democratic pluralism, respect for human rights, and rule of law that we seek. We intend to sustain existing programs and create additional initiatives to assist in democratic development in Egypt.

Question. Despite personal pleas from President Bush and the cancellation of a trip to Egypt by Secretary Rice, opposition leader Ayman Nour remains in jail. What will you do to try to secure his release?

Answer. The administration remains troubled by the continued imprisonment of Ayman Nour. His conviction and imprisonment raises serious concerns about Egypt's commitment to democracy, freedom, and the rule of law and is inconsistent with the Egyptian Government's professed commitment to increased political openness and dialog within Egyptian society.

If confirmed, I will continue to press the highest levels of the Egyptian Government to release Mr. Nour under Egyptian law. His release would be an important step in human rights promotion in Egypt, and one that I will try to encourage.

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 Egypt in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. The conditions in Egypt for advancing human rights, including specific cases, present both opportunity and challenge. The citizens of Egypt, both within the government and outside, are searching for ways to address the country's future needs—economic, social, and political. They have not reached consensus. The challenge for any foreign person or entity is to find a balance between providing support and encouragement, while not interfering in domestic matters.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Embassy Cairo's Mission Performance Plan (MPP) explains in detail post's human rights objectives. If confirmed, I will use the MPP as a framework to ensure that the embassy's country team promotes our human rights and democracy agenda. All agencies and offices at the embassy are represented in the country team and it affords an opportunity to discuss how every office can contribute to our reform plan.

As a career Foreign Service officer, I understand the importance of recognizing and rewarding the work of outstanding officers. If confirmed, I will use the evaluation process and award system to recognize superior performance.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and Egypt, including those facing internal political pressure, who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to meet regularly with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the United States and Egypt who would welcome such meetings.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Egypt has provided $3.1 million to the National Democratic Institute (NDI), $2.8 million to the International Republican Institute (IRI) and $3.9 million to International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to promote domestic election monitoring; provided training and technical assistance to Egyptian political parties; and worked with civil society organizations advocating for political and electoral reform. Since 2006,

USAID has provided $800,000 to Freedom House to link Egyptian civil society advocates with counterparts throughout the Arab world through training, technical assistance, mentoring, professional fellowships, small grants and regional coalition building, and protection strategies. Also, the Middle East Partnership Initiative is providing $2 million to the International Labor Organization to undertake efforts to strengthen independent labor unions. If confirmed, I will continue to support these programs.

In addition to support for United States' NGOS, USAID provides direct support for Egyptian NGO's that foster civil society. These programs have already produced a large cadre of several hundred election monitors. Through grants to Egyptian NGOs, we continue to support innovative Egyptian reform initiatives in political and electoral reform, increased political participation, civil society strengthening, civic education, human rights, women's rights, community development, independent media, and transparency.

Question. If confirmed, how would the United States embassy monitor Egypt's compliance with the Leahy Law prohibiting United States assistance to foreign military units if there is credible evidence of human rights violations? Will you affirm that any Egyptian security force unit that is credibly alleged to be engaged in gross human rights violations is ineligible to receive United States assistance or to train with United States forces?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that the United States embassy in Egypt continues to fully comply with the Leahy Law. Currently, all prospective training participants are rigorously vetted for suitability by the embassy, and appropriate offices at the State Department, including the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and the Political-Military Bureau review the names. If any Egyptian security force unit is credibly alleged to be engaged in gross human rights violations, it is ineligible to receive United States assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act or Arms Export Control Act.

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

Answer. As a political officer in Jerusalem, Kuwait, and Iraq, as Deputy Chief of Mission in Yemen and Riyadh, and Chief of Mission in Syria, the advancement of human rights and democracy has been a significant priority in all of my assignments.

As Deputy Chief of Mission in Yemen, I found an environment open to United States assistance with democratization. I worked closely with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to prepare Yemen for the 1997 parliamentary elections. I encouraged women's groups to focus on voter registration and turnout—with higher numbers of women voting in 1997 than in 1993. I supported NDI's successful international election monitoring program and approached election commission officials to pave the way and facilitate their cooperation with IFES. In advance of the presidential elections in 1999, I made the rounds of political opposition parties to persuade them to field candidate for president.

In Syria, I did not find an environment open to United States support and assistance to democracy and human rights. Nonetheless, during my year there, I met with a wide range of civil society activists, including those calling for political reform. I pressed the government to allow Iraqi refugees in Damascus to participate in U.N.-sponsored out-of-country voting for the Iraqi parliament in January 2005. To no avail, I urged the government to release well-known political prisoners such as Riad Seif. I also advocated on behalf of the rights of Syrian Kurds.

In Saudi Arabia, most of our human rights efforts focused on religious freedom and women's rights. Both the Ambassador and I frequently raised with senior Saudi officials at the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs specific cases where the Saudi policy of allowing non-Muslims to practice their religion in private was not respected in practice. In addition to having Saudi authorities reaffirm this policy, in all cases that I recall, those Christians incarcerated as a result of their religious activity were ultimately released. Regarding women's rights, as the first woman Deputy Chief of Mission in Riyadh, I promoted a number of large-scale women's events that allowed Saudi women to network more broadly. I advocated frequently, with some success, on behalf of American women who could not depart the Kingdom without their husband's consent.

Progress in human rights and democratization in countries where I have served has been cumulative. I take satisfaction in noting that although it did not happen on my watch, Kuwaiti women now vote and serve in the cabinet, local elections have occurred in Saudi Arabia, and several candidates contested the last Yemeni presidential election.

RESPONSES OF DEBORAH K. JONES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. I have held a variety of positions throughout my 25 year career, not all of them dealing with policy. I have striven, however, in every aspect of my foreign service work—whether processing Somali refugees in Ethiopia, ensuring fair, multi-ethnic hiring practices when reopening our embassy in Baghdad in 1984, ensuring fair and equal treatment to both Lebanese and Syrian visa applicants when we had no visa facilities in Beirut and the Lebanese had to come to Damascus, where I was consular chief, or overseeing a staff of over 16 different nationalities while Deputy Chief of Mission in Abu Dhabi and allowing them a voice in choosing between available programs or benefits—to adhere to bedrock American principles of fairness based on equal treatment under the law and participatory governance, when appropriate.

More specifically, and in more senior positions as Country Director for the Arabian Peninsula and principal officer at our Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey, I was a forceful advocate with foreign government officials for addressing serious human trafficking issues, such as the treatment of young South Asian "camel jockeys" in the GCC countries (specifically, the UAE and Qatar, where the practice has now been largely criminalized and/or abolished in favor of robots), as well as their treatment of foreign laborers in general; I have pressed foreign governments, particularly the Saudis, to adhere to international accords governing child custody and the right of the (often female) custodial parent to take back her abducted children, despite the constraints of Shari'a law, with significant success; and I have marched publicly in Turkey—following the assassination of Armenian activist, Hrant Dink, who was a personal acquaintance and good contact of the Consulate General—in support of tolerance and religious freedom. In addition I have spoken out openly and appeared frequently in public with His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeo, whose diminishing Greek Orthodox community has suffered under unfair property confiscations and other actions at the hands of the Government of Turkey. I hosted, inter alia, a major Alliance of Civilizations gathering at the official residence as well as mixed gatherings of various political and religious groups who had previously avoided interaction; when I departed Istanbul, it was written in the press that I had been a very positive force for tolerance and change in a society undergoing a difficult transition from its secularist, Kemalist roots to a more democratic, albeit Islam-oriented political reality.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Kuwait? Will you commit to make legal protections for the "bidun jinsiya"—the stateless people of Kuwait—and foreign domestic laborers a priority? What are the most important steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in Kuwait? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Kuwait include strengthening democracy, increasing protections to combat trafficking in persons, assisting stateless individuals, and supporting civil society and women's empowerment. The United States Embassy in Kuwait continues to encourage democratic reform and development through exchange and visitor programs in addition to United States Government-funded democratic reform programming. MEPI currently funds programs aimed at improving the professionalism of Kuwaiti journalists, empowering student activists, increasing women's involvement in the political system, and training political and civil society groups.

If confirmed, I will continue United States efforts to encourage sustained Kuwaiti commitment to improve the rights of victims of trafficking and to clarify the status of stateless individuals while working to improve their fundamental rights. The Government of Kuwait has taken some steps to address the needs of vulnerable population within its borders. In September 2007, the Kuwaiti Government opened a shelter for victims of trafficking in persons and in late 2007 the government announced plans to study the legal issues surrounding the bidun jinsiya in an effort to create lasting solutions to their grievances. Unlike in previous years, the MOI issued a limited number of passports to Bidoon that they were allowed to keep. Recently, the Government of Kuwait announced plans to issue a list of bidoon who will receive Kuwaiti citizenship. We eagerly await the publication of this list and additional protections for the bidoon. These are noteworthy efforts; however, much more needs to be done to support the needs of both victims of trafficking and Kuwait's

stateless population, and if confirmed I will continue to raise these issues with appropriate Kuwaiti interlocutors.

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 Kuwait in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. If confirmed, I will endeavor to help Kuwait consolidate and expand those democratic gains to include supporting the development of fledgling, grassroots women's organizations, civil society groups and other activists, and advancing the rights and protections of vulnerable populations living within Kuwait's borders. Kuwait continues to serve as a regional leader on political reform and has developed somewhat accountable democratic institutions, as illustrated by its robust Parliament. Kuwait has enjoyed a number of recent democratic successes including the successful transition of government following the January 2006 death of Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al Sabah, the enfranchisement and participation of women in the political process, and the expansion of media and press outlets. Nonetheless, further reform is critical for Kuwait's long-term stability, and Kuwaiti progress on democratic reform and human rights will serve as a powerful example to the gulf region. Kuwaitis themselves must be encouraged to drive this process toward democratic development, and campaigning for increased participation by women, civil society and the rights of Kuwait's vulnerable populations will remain one of my most challenging obstacles. If confirmed, I will look for outlets to continue United States partnership with Kuwaitis to expand and solidify Kuwait's democratic institutions. Critical human rights issues, including the exploitation of expatriate workers, will continue to be a focus of embassy efforts under my leadership and guidance.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Kuwait is a positive model of United States transformational diplomacy efforts in the gulf. If confirmed, I will work to solidify the groundwork on democratic reform and human rights laid by my predecessors, and I will work to promote United States human rights goals and objectives as an integral part of Embassy Kuwait's activities.

A key element of these efforts will include the use of MEPI and public diplomacy programs and exchanges to energize Kuwaiti citizens toward proactive engagement on critical human rights issues. Embassy Kuwait enjoys a number of robust and effective programming options at its disposal. Examples of current MEPI programming options include the following:

- The Women's Advocacy and Political Participation program launched by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) to support Kuwaiti women's organizations and help them to work as a coalition and increase their political participation.
- The Gulf States Civil Society Organization Law Reform Initiative (ICNL) works with regional and international experts to examine the role of civil society in democratic societies, and the legal framework necessary to enable and protect it. A regional workshop examines samples of existing and draft laws governing civil society from the region, Europe, and the United States, and common components of effective legislative frameworks.

These two programs are examples of the broad range of programming tools available for incubating and developing democratic reform and human rights objectives in Kuwait. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Congress, the Government of Kuwait, as well as international and domestic civil society organizations to support reform efforts in Kuwait.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Kuwait who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If confirmed as Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy Kuwait, I will endeavor to strengthen support for Kuwait democratic institutions as well as encourage further progress on human rights issues. I will work hard to encourage the Government of Kuwait to ease restrictions on nongovernmental organizations and enhance opportunities for the international community to engage with local human rights organizations.

The use of United States-funded programs, while an important tool, must be partnered with regular exchange and dialog with Kuwaiti leaders and activists in order to promote positive change and reform in support of democratic reform and the development of civil society in Kuwait.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2008

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

Grieco, Jeffrey, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development
Guevara, Ana, to be the Alternate Executive Director of the World Bank
Morales, Hector, to be the Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States
Walther, Larry, to be the Director of the Trade and Development Agency

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:36 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Robert Menendez presiding.

Present: Senator Menendez.

Also present: Senators Hutchison and Lincoln.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. This hearing of the Committee on Foreign Relations will now come to order.

Today, the committee meets to consider the nominations of four individuals for key leadership positions in the administration. The President has nominated Hector Morales to be the Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States; Larry Walther to be the Director of the Trade and Development Agency; Jeffrey Grieco to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development; and Ana Guevara to be the Alternate Executive Director of the World Bank.

We congratulate you all on your nominations, and we look forward to hearing from each of you this afternoon.

And we also welcome our colleagues, Senator Hutchison and Senator Lincoln, who are, shortly, going to introduce Mr. Morales and Mr. Walther today.

The United States plays a critical role in promoting economic and social development, trade, political stability, and poverty alleviation around the world. The Organization for American States, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency are parts of the toolkit the United States has to address these challenges.

Each nominee before us, if confirmed, would be expected to play a key role in these organizations' missions and the overall U.S. Government strategy overseas, something that I personally take very seriously.

I look forward to the witnesses' testimonies, and hearing how they might contribute to the U.S. goals in these areas.

Mr. Morales, in—your position, if confirmed, will be to represent the U.S. interests in the premier multilateral forum in the Western Hemisphere. You would be in a unique position to communicate and advance U.S. priorities for the region and represent the United States in an important process of developing consensus among member states. The Americas is a region which, unfortunately, has gone somewhat unnoticed by our efforts in the last several years, at least I've viewed it that way, and, having just taken a trip to Latin American with several of our colleagues, heard much of that throughout our trip. In addition, the OAS is not without its own challenges: management capacity, budget shortfalls, and internal tension over respecting state sovereignty. I look forward to hearing, today, how you would work to reconcile these challenges while advancing our priorities in the region, especially in light of the upcoming Summit of the Americas in 2009.

Mr. Grieco, as I have said before, we are at a decisive moment for the future of USAID, and I strongly believe that, until we get serious about rebuilding USAID, we are not going to get the results that the world's poor and marginalized deserve. A mediocre effort will, at best, yield such results. USAID should be the backbone of our foreign assistance, and be viewed as a heavyweight agency both in Washington and in the field. The Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs has a key role in making the case that USAID is a serious player with serious people who demand serious results.

One good way to weaken an agency in Washington, and in the eyes of Congress, is to give them a weak legislative affairs shop. USAID has a strong tradition of weak legislative affair shops, and I won't, personally, as the subcommittee chairman that handles all of our foreign affairs—foreign—international assistance, I certainly don't want to see that happen.

And so, I believe USAID has a story to tell, and they have a case to make. Of course, if one fails at telling their story, you will lose—but, more importantly, millions of poor and marginalized around the world will lose—and the United States will lose one of the most important tools of soft, but important, diplomacy. So, I look forward to hearing how you intend to proceed to stand in the face of that tradition and make the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs the bureau that it can be and that it needs to be.

Ms. Guevara, as we talked about America's role in international development, we need to recognize that our foreign assistance extends to supporting multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank. I know that this administration's use of the term "multilateral" is often used either in vain or out of necessity, but rarely by choice. They should be using it as a way of strengthening a unified effort, rather than as a last resort. That's why I believe that America must continue to play a leading role in the multilateral financial institutions. Your position, if confirmed, would be partly responsible for setting the tone of the relationship between the

United States and the World Bank, a relationship that is not without challenges. The World Bank needs help, and it needs to be reformed. I look forward to hearing how you propose to work to advance these goals in this—current challenges that the World Bank faces in the areas of corruption, incentives, and results.

Finally, Mr. Walther, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency is one of several agencies that the United States uses to fill an important niche in the mix of programs that we carry out. Just because the agency's budget is not as large as some of the other agencies that this committee has jurisdiction over doesn't mean that that work isn't vitally important, and doesn't mean that Congress doesn't expect to see the same results from USTDA as from those agencies to which we appropriate billions of dollars per year.

So, for all four of you, if confirmed, you would play a vital role in institutions whose work is not trivial and not extracurricular, but work that is at the core of the United States effort to combat the world's most intractable problems—problems that merit our undivided attention. In short, this work matters.

In that spirit, I look forward to hearing your testimony today, and I'll end my comments there.

Seeing no other member before the committee now, please let me turn, then, to Senator Hutchison, who will introduce Mr. Morales.

Senator.

STATEMENT OF HON. KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS

Senator HUTCHISON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate your holding this hearing, because, as you have said, these are very important posts to which I hope we can send American representatives.

I'm particularly pleased to introduce an outstanding Texan, Hector Morales. He has been an advisor and friend to me for many years. And it is for the position of U.S. Ambassador to the Organization of American States. This, too, is a very important organization for our country and for our initiatives, to try to bring in Central and South America to our trade base and our friendships, and to support democracies in Central and South America.

Hector is certainly qualified for this position. He's been confirmed twice by the Senate, as a member of the board of the Inter-American Foundation, in June of 2007, and as an alternate executive director of the Inter-American Development Bank, in December of 2007.

His impressive biography includes a bachelor of arts degree in history from Columbia University in New York, a law degree from the University of Texas at Austin School of Law. He's practiced law in both Houston and Austin, and had a long tenure with Reliant Energy, one of our largest utilities in Texas. He was first an attorney in the International Law Department, and rose to president and general manager of Reliant Energy Argentina, and then as director of project development for Latin America and the Caribbean. Today, he serves as executive director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

He certainly knows this area, and, I think, would be a wonderful representative for America. He also has given so much in service

to our country. I think, if there's one thing that stands out, it is that he has been willing to leave the private sector to give, in public service.

This is going to be a hard job. As you mentioned, the Summit for the Americas is going to be in 2009, and I think it would be wonderful to have him there to help in the planning for that very important summit.

So, I hope that the committee will act expeditiously for his confirmation. And, since he has been confirmed by the Senate before, I hope that it is uneventful.

Thank you very much. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. As do all nominees. [Laughter.]

Thank you, Senator Hutchison.

Senator HUTCHISON. Thank you very much.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me turn to my friend and colleague, who I'm proud to be back with, since I was with her in the House, and now I get to be with her in the Senate.

Senator Lincoln.

STATEMENT OF HON. BLANCHE L. LINCOLN, U.S. SENATOR FROM ARKANSAS

Senator LINCOLN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. And it's great to have you in the Senate, that's for sure. We're delighted to be working with you again.

I am proud to be here today to introduce Larry Walther, who's a fellow Arkansan and a nominee to be the Director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency.

As you know, and have very ably described, USTDA has an impact beyond promoting growth and developing in middle-income countries. They also help American businesses to export their products and services overseas; and, in doing so, they create U.S. jobs.

We, in Arkansas, understand small business. Small business is the engine of the economy for us in this great country, and certainly in States like ours. We also understand that small businesses grow. We have what used to be a very small business in Arkansas that's grown—WalMart comes to mind, but there's many of them—that start as small businesses, and grow tremendously.

Larry brings to this position an abundance of relevant private- and public-sector work experience that will help him pursue USTDA's objectives.

In the private sector, Larry worked for over 30 years for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, and during that time he worked in many positions; among them, he worked closely with governmental and regulatory agencies at the State and Federal level. Larry's also served as the director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development. It's a position that has clear relevance to the work that he would be doing over at USTDA.

As director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, Larry oversaw efforts to encourage business investment in the State from across the world, making many connections in that arena. This is no small order, and the Arkansas economy has made impressive gains in recent time.

This is, in no small part, due to the success of Arkansas's homegrown Fortune 500 companies—I mentioned WalMart; there's also

Alltel and Tyson Foods, Axiom—that have benefited from a favorable business environment.

Given his past professional experiences in the private sector and the work he has done for my home State of Arkansas, I believe Larry has a great understanding of the latent potential that many emerging economies have for companies that are looking for new consumers abroad.

So, I hope you will look favorably upon Larry Walther's nomination for director at USTDA, Mr. Chairman. And I thank you for inviting me, allowing me to come today, to introduce yet another great Arkansan for an opportunity to serve this country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much, Senator Lincoln. For a moment there, I thought you were trying to tell me WalMart was a small business, so——

[Laughter.]

Senator LINCOLN. Used to be.

Senator MENENDEZ. Yeah, used to be. Okay.

Senator LINCOLN. Started that way.

Senator MENENDEZ. All right. Thank you very much.

Senator LINCOLN. Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. And I know that you have a busy agenda, so that if you need, at some point, to excuse yourself, we appreciate you coming before the committee and sharing your insights on Mr. Walther.

As we set you up there, let me just say it's time to turn to the nominees.

We ask that you summarize your statements. Certainly, your full statements, each and every one of you, will be included for the record in its totality.

And we invite you, if you wish, to introduce any members of your family that may be here with you today. We welcome all of them.

And we'll start with you, Mr. Morales.

STATEMENT OF HON. HECTOR E. MORALES, NOMINEE TO BE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. MORALES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the United States Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, and I am grateful to have the support of the President, Secretary Rice, and the privilege of your consideration.

And, with your indulgence and the committee's indulgence, I would like to accept your offer and introduce the members of my family that are here with me today.

First, my wife, Selden Wallace Morales, my sister, Ann Michel Morales, and my brother-and sister-in-law, David and Manar Morales.

For the last 4 years, I have had the honor of representing our country at the Inter-American Development Bank; first, as the alternate executive director, and, for the last 3 years, as the executive director. I have also been honored to serve on the board of the United States agency, the Inter-American Foundation.

The Inter-American Development Bank's mission is to help accelerate economic and social development individually and collectively among the region's countries. During my tenure at the bank, there have been notable accomplishments, including the $150 million replenishment of the Multilateral Investment Fund, the participation of this fund and the Inter-American Investment Corporation with OPIC, and the creation of a $200 million financing initiative for small and medium businesses in Latin America and the Caribbean, and, less than a year ago, a $3.4 billion debt relief package to the poorest countries of the region.

I've also been a strong advocate for greater transparency and accountability. While I've been at the IDB, an Office of Institutional Integrity was implemented, and the board now has an audit committee to improve the vigilance and fiduciary oversight of bank operations.

Latin America and the Caribbean are regions with great economic potential, but they face the formidable challenges that confront most developing countries. We must take advantage of the opportunities that effective multilateralism offer to the United States, working through institutions like the IDB and the OAS, as we pursue goals in key strategic areas, including the promotion of democracy, human rights, economic prosperity, and security.

As we do so, we recognize and reaffirm our commitment, expressed in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, that democracy is essential for social, political, and economic development of the peoples of the Americas.

I've had the opportunity to work multilaterally in the Inter-American system in development. I hope this experience, if I am confirmed, will help the United States in our commitment to work with our partners multilaterally to advance our common interests and values, and to ensure that the OAS remains true to the core principles upon which it was founded, now enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Over recent decades, the Western Hemisphere has undergone profound and positive changes. Democracy prevails in all countries but one—Cuba—and respect for human rights is the norm, not the exception. People throughout the region have made enormous sacrifices to strengthen their democracies, and must now consolidate these gains in the face of very serious challenges. These include poverty, inequality, social exclusion, and the inability of institutions to deliver the goods and services that people need, to take advantage of the benefits of democracy and economic opportunity.

It is also important that the United States remain committed to the summit process, which has enjoyed bipartisan support since its inception, in 1994, under the Clinton administration. President Bush has attended three summits, which have brought significant accomplishments in the areas of democracy, job creation, HIV/AIDS, infrastructure, development, education, and competitiveness. The fifth Summit of the Americas, which will take place in Trinidad and Tobago in the first half of 2009, will be an early opportunity for the next President to build on the accomplishments of prior administrations, and also engage many of the region's leaders for the first time. It is critical that the OAS remain engaged and proactive. And, from the U.S. standpoint, this means enterprising,

multilateral engagement in the Americas to ensure that the OAS and the Summit of the Americas continue to enhance their important catalytic role in advancing our shared hemispheric agenda.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to address these issues and to continue to promote U.S. multilateral diplomacy in the Americas at the Organization of American States. If given the opportunity to serve, I would approach my role as U.S. Permanent Representative with the benefit of having traveled, worked, and lived in the region. I would also bring to this position my deeply held belief in the importance of a robust U.S. engagement with our regional partners to advance freedom, economic prosperity, and social justice for all the peoples of the Americas.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the privilege of appearing before the committee, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the committee might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Morales follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. HECTOR E. MORALES, JR., NOMINEE TO BE U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the United States Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (OAS), and I am grateful to have the support of the President and Secretary Rice and the privilege of your consideration.

With the Committee's indulgence, I would like to introduce the members of my family here today: my wife, Selden Wallace Morales, my sister Ann Michele Morales, and my brother and sister-in-law, David and Manar Morales.

For the last four years, I have had the honor of representing our country at the Inter-American Development Bank; first as the Alternate Executive Director and for the last three years as the Executive Director. I also have been honored to serve on the board of a United States agency, the Inter-American Foundation.

The Inter-American Development Bank's mission is to help accelerate economic and social development, individually and collectively among the region's countries. During my tenure at the Bank, there have been notable accomplishments, including: the $150 million replenishment of the Multi-lateral Investment Fund; the participation of the MIF and the Inter-American Investment Corporation with OPIC in the creation of a $200 million financing initiative for small and medium businesses in Latin America and the Caribbean; and less than a year ago a $3.4 billion debt relief package to the poorest countries of the Region. I have also been a strong advocate for greater transparency and accountability. While I have been at the IDB, an office of institutional integrity was implemented, and the Board now has an audit committee to improve the vigilance and fiduciary oversight of Bank operations.

Latin America and the Caribbean are regions with great economic potential, but they face the formidable challenges that confront most developing countries. We must take advantage of the opportunities that effective multilateralism offer to the United States, working through institutions like the IDB and the OAS, as we pursue goals in key strategic areas, including the promotion of democracy, human rights, economic prosperity, and security. As we do so, we recognize and reaffirm our commitment, expressed in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, that democracy is "essential for the social, political, and economic development of the peoples of the Americas."

I have had the opportunity to work multilaterally in the Inter-American system in the area of development. I hope this experience, if I am confirmed, will help the United States and our commitment to work with our partners multilaterally to advance our common interests and values, and to ensure that the OAS remains true to the core principles upon which it was founded, now enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Over recent decades, the Western Hemisphere has undergone profound and positive changes: Democracy prevails in all countries but one, Cuba; and respect for human rights is the norm, not the exception. People throughout the region have made enormous sacrifices to strengthen their democracies, and must now consolidate these gains in the face of very serious challenges. These include poverty, inequality, social exclusion, and the inability of institutions to deliver the goods and

services that people need to take advantage of the benefits of democracy and economic opportunity.

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It is critical that the OAS remain engaged and proactive. And from the U.S. standpoint, this means enterprising multilateral engagement in the Americas to ensure that the OAS and the Summit of the Americas continue to enhance their important catalytic role in advancing our shared hemispheric agenda.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to address these issues and to continue to promote U.S. multilateral diplomacy in the Americas at the Organization of American States. If given the opportunity to serve, I would approach my role as U.S. Permanent Representative with the benefit of having traveled, worked, and lived in the region. I would also bring to this position my deeply held belief in the importance of robust U.S. engagement with our regional partners to advance freedom, economic prosperity, and social justice for all the peoples of the Americas.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the privilege of appearing before the Committee. I would be pleased to answer any questions you and the other members of the Committee may have.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much, Mr. Morales.

Mr. Grieco.

STATEMENT OF JEFFREY J. GRIECO, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. GRIECO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

On January 22nd, 2008, the President nominated me for the position of Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs at the U.S. Agency for International Development. I'm deeply honored by his confidence in me, and I'm most appreciative of the support that's been given to me during the nomination process.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank my family for their support. Without their love and encouragement, I, frankly, wouldn't be here today. And, with your permission, I'd like to be able to ask my family just to stand up, briefly, if I could: my wife, Susie, of 15 years plus, and my four great kids, Grant, Alexandra, Danielle, who's probably asleep by now, and Joseph, as well. And they're very appreciative for being out of school today, Senator. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. They all look real sharp, too. So——

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRIECO. Thank you.

I would also like to express my appreciation to my parents, Joseph and Theresa Grieco, of Orchard Park, New York, and my brother, Dave, whose wisdom and love and guidance throughout all the years has been very helpful to me.

I'm a long-time student of international affairs. I've received degrees from the Elliott School of George Washington University, as well as the Edmund Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown, where I received my master's in Foreign Service. In addition, I have studied at the American University in Paris, as well as a

short stint at Oxford University's Templeton College on Comparative International Management.

I knew pretty early on that I wanted to get engaged in a career in international affairs. I joined the administration following 9/11, and I've taken this opportunity to serve my country with the utmost of seriousness and respect for those who serve. It's been exhilarating. It's been highly educational for me, not the least because of what I've learned from my responsibilities dealing with Congress and the American public on behalf of the agency.

Throughout my service as the senior deputy assistant administrator for public affairs within the LPA Bureau, and during the past 9 months as the acting assistant administrator at the agency for LPA, I've been struck by the emerging broad consensus for America's international development and foreign assistance activities, and, in particular, about the mission of USAID.

The humanitarian development mission of the United States has, and will continue to be, a moral imperative for this country. Post-9/11, it is also a national security imperative. And, among the most effective means by which this Nation brings about transformational change in the world is through its use of soft power. If confirmed as USAID administrator for legislative—assistant administrator for legislative and public affairs, I will hold the position that is central to the ongoing conversation between the executive and legislative branches, essential to the effective formulation of U.S. foreign and national security policy.

If confirmed by this position, I see my responsibility as helping to explain USAID's missions, USAID's goals, USAID's programs to the Congress and to the American public, and to foreign audiences, as well as to help ensure a timely flow of information between the Congress and the agency.

I intend to ensure that you are fully informed, in a timely manner and with a measurable fashion, about all of our USAID matters that merit your attention, and that your advice, concerns, and questions are immediately conveyed to our agency's senior leadership, including our administrator, Henrietta Holsman Fore, and our Acting Deputy Administrator, James Kunder.

I'm very proud of our LPA team, several of which are here today. They've received three favorable audits in the last 4 years from the Government Accounting Office, recognizing our innovation and our communications techniques and our competencies. More specifically, these reports have highlighted how USAID's overseas public diplomacy activities and the first coordinated use of targeted paid media campaigns, primarily in GWOT countries, have helped to improve the impact of our programming.

We've also received top honors from the League of American Communications Professionals for our Development, Outreach, and Communications Initiative now being implemented at more than 70 USAID missions abroad.

The combination of broad public affairs experience and, during the past half-dozen years, serving at the agency, of legislative experience and work on U.S. foreign assistance, has prepared me for the added responsibilities that I will assume, if confirmed, as assistant administrator for legislative and public affairs.

Should the Senate choose to confirm me for this position, it would be an honor to serve side by side with the 8,000 dedicated USAID employees who, at great risk and personal sacrifice, answer the development challenges around the world.

Just this past month, I helped to supervise the return of the remains of a USAID Foreign Service officer, John Granville, who was murdered in Khartoum, Sudan, on New Year's Day. John was from the town that I was born and raised in—Buffalo, New York. And the sense of outpouring from Buffalonians for the service that John provided to our country and for the service that USAID provides to the poor, the starving, and the hopeless throughout the developing world, was truly inspiring for me.

As I committed to John in my prayers at his funeral, and to his family, we will endeavor to serve them with the same distinction and purpose that John served our country and that our committed USAID employees do for the American people every day at over 80 missions and offices around the developing world.

In closing, I want the committee to know that, if confirmed, I intend to make myself fully available to consult with any interested staff and members on any and all issues at AID that may fall within your purview. It's my strong belief, and my firm conviction, that full and ongoing communications among all of our major stakeholders are critical within our system of government if the U.S. national interest is to be effectively served. I will dedicate myself to carrying out that principle, Mr. Chairman.

This concludes my formal public statement. I now welcome any questions that you or other Senators here today may have for me.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grieco follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEFFREY J. GRIECO, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagel, and other Senators of the Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

On January 22, 2008, President Bush nominated me for the position of Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs at the U.S. Agency for International Development. I am deeply honored by his confidence in me and am most appreciative of the support that has been given me during the nomination process.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank my family for their support. Without their love and encouragement, I would not be here. With your permission Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize my wife of 15 years, Suzie, and our four great-children—Grant, Alexandra, Joseph, and Danielle. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to my parents, Joseph and Theresa Grieco of Orchard Park, NY, and my brother, David Grieco, whose wisdom, love, and guidance has helped me so much over the years.

I am a long time student of international affairs, having received degrees from the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University and the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. In addition, I studied at the American University in Paris, and also for a short time at Oxford University, Templeton College. I knew early on that I wanted a career in international affairs.

Indeed, I have been very fortunate to have had many experienced and well-known mentors and professors over the years including Dr. Jeanne Kirkpatrick, former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Dr. Gaston Sigur, Dr. Alan Goodman, and former USAID Deputy Administrator, Dr. Carol Lancaster.

I joined the administration following September 11, 2001, and I have taken this opportunity to serve my country with utmost seriousness and respect for those who serve. It has been exhilarating and highly educational, not the least because of what I have learned from my responsibilities in dealing with the Congress and public on behalf of USAID.

Throughout my service as the Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs in the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), and during the past 9 months as the Acting Assistant Administrator, I have been struck by the broad political consensus for America's international development and foreign assistance activities and, in particular, about the mission of USAID.

In his National Security Strategy of 2002, the President stated that "including the world's poor in an expanding circle of development—and opportunity—is one of the top priorities of U.S. international policy." Since then, the administration has nearly tripled official development assistance (ODA) worldwide, doubled assistance to Latin America, and nearly quadrupled assistance to Africa. Secretary Rice has reaffirmed his mandate to elevate development. It now plays a key role in our national security architecture as part of the three "D's"—defense, diplomacy, and development—and it is vital to her vision of "transformational diplomacy."

The humanitarian and development mission of the United States has been and will continue to be a moral imperative of this country. Post 9–11, it is also a national security imperative and among the most effective means by which this Nation brings about transformational change in the world through its "soft power."

If confirmed as USAID Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs, I will hold a position that is central to the ongoing conversation between the executive and legislative branches essential to the effective formulation of U.S. foreign and national security policy.

If confirmed for this position, I see my responsibilities as helping to "explain" USAID missions, goals, and programs to the Congress and to the American people and foreign audiences, as well as to ensure a complete and timely flow of information between the Congress and the Agency. I intend to ensure that you are fully informed in a timely and measurable fashion about all USAID matters that merit your attention, and that your advice, concerns, and questions are immediately conveyed to the Agency's senior management including the Administrator of USAID, Henrietta Holsman Fore, and Acting Deputy Administrator James Kunder.

In my professional career, prior to joining the administration, I have had substantial experience in international and public affairs, working in major public affairs firms and managing major international accounts. This has equipped me to participate in and help lead the public diplomacy and outreach efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

I am very proud of our LPA team for receiving three favorable audits by the Government Accounting Office (GAO), recognizing our innovative communications techniques and competencies. More specifically these reports highlighted USAID's overseas public diplomacy activities and the first coordinated use of targeted paid media campaigns combining tailored message targeting and pre- and post-campaign audience impact measurements. We have also received top honors from the League of American Communications Professionals for our new Development Outreach and Communications Initiative (DOC), now being implemented in more than 70 USAID missions abroad.

The combination of broad public affairs experience and, during my past half dozen years service in the U.S. Agency for International Development, legislative experience on U.S. foreign assistance has prepared me for the added responsibilities I would assume as Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs.

Should the Senate choose to confirm me for this position, it would be an honor to serve side by side with the 8,000 dedicated USAID employees who, at great risk and personal sacrifice, answer the development challenges around the world. Just this past month, I helped to supervise the return of the remains of a USAID Foreign Service officer, John Granville, who was murdered in Khartoum, Sudan on New Years Day. John was from the town that I was born and raised, Buffalo, NY, and the sense of outpouring from Buffalonians for the service that John and USAID provide the poor, the starving and the hopeless throughout the developing world, was inspiring. As I committed to John in my prayers at his funeral and to his family, we will endeavor to serve them with the same distinction and purpose that John and our committed USAID employees do for the American people everyday at over 80 missions and offices around the world.

In closing, I want the committee to know that, if confirmed, I intend to make myself fully available to consult with interested staff and members on any and all matters at USAID that may fall within your purview. It is my strong belief that full and ongoing communications among all major stakeholders are required within our system of Government if the U.S. national interest is to be effectively served, and I will dedicate myself to carrying out that principle.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement before the committee. I now welcome any questions that you and the other Senators here today may have for me.

Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much. And I apologize, I thought I had your name—surname right. It's Grieco.

Mr. GRIECO. Grieco, that's right.

Senator MENENDEZ. Grieco. Okay. Thank you very much for your opening statement.

Ms. Guevara.

STATEMENT OF ANA M. GUEVARA, NOMINEE TO BE ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Ms. GUEVARA. Mr. Chairman, I'm grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I'd like to recognize my little godchild, Ian Carr, who is in the back of the room with his little sister, Mary, and my little niece and nephew, who are in Californian history class, watching this on the Internet. I also have a large group of supporters, here, of very good friends and colleagues. And, especially, I'd like to recognize my current boss, Assistant Secretary of Commerce Admiral Sutton, the tall one in the back of the room, and two very good friends and mentors, Ex-Im Bank board member Bijan Kian, and former Congressman Henry Bonilla, from the great State of Texas.

I am honored to have been nominated to serve—

Senator MENENDEZ. That's all? [Laughter.]

Ms. GUEVARA. I am honored to have been nominated to serve as U.S. Alternate Executive Director at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

President Bush said, in his State of the Union Address, that America is leading the fight against global poverty, hunger, and disease, and that America is a force of hope in the world, because we are a compassionate people. I share this belief. And as compassionate people with a unique leadership role in the World Bank, the United States must engender strong partnerships to ensure programs meant to eradicate poverty and create inclusive economic growth are not squandered by corruption and mismanagement. If confirmed, I will have the great privilege and responsibility to represent the United States at the World Bank. I look forward to the opportunity to work with Secretary of the Treasury Paulson and others in our Government, as well as with our partners at the World Bank, to improve its effectiveness and impact.

Catalyzing prosperity in the developing world and post-conflict countries is not just a moral imperative; it helps create local stability and peace, and it creates new markets for America entrepreneurs. Indeed, our prosperity and security is tied to those whom we endeavor to help.

For the past two decades, whether as a businesswoman or a government official, I have gained extensive experience forging strong partnerships and formal agreements with governments and international institutions in Asia and Latin America. If confirmed, I will apply these skills to build coalitions that will foster broad support for U.S. priorities with member countries of the World Bank.

My professional life has focused on increasing trade and developing economic competitiveness, whether by opening new markets, providing capacity-building for modern supply chains, customs pro-

cedures, and cultural and heritage tourism, or by protecting U.S. countries from unfair and corrupt practices overseas, or even by promoting venture capital and entrepreneurism. I have also served as ex-officio board member of the Export-Import Bank, worked with the board of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and overseen the Department of Commerce's participation in the Interagency Working Group on Multilateral Aid.

The most gratifying experience of my professional life, however, has been the community education projects—in Mexico, China, Poland, Ukraine, and rural America—that I was fortunate to be involved with while in the private sector.

In Mexico, I developed a 10-year educational development program, where I learned, firsthand, about the many challenges in implementing a results-oriented project. It allowed me to see how, given the right tools, proper food and nutrition, warm clothes, and a little hope and encouragement, that even the poorest child facing the greatest odds can flourish, exceeding his or her own expectations and transforming a community's quality of life, and, more important, quality of spirit.

In working with the community projects, I also learned how corruption can hurt these programs and the people they are meant to help, when I was forced to turn away one of the communities under consideration because I was not convinced local officials would enforce proper fiduciary controls for project funds.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will use the combination of my experience with the private sector, public sector, and community service to build support for U.S. priorities, such as anticorruption, governance and accountability, transparency, debt sustainability, environmental safeguards, and to improve results. I will seek to help developing countries capitalize on the benefits of globalization and trade, and to promote an inclusive and sustainable prosperity through private-sector development in these countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to answer the committee's questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Guevara follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY ANA M. GUEVARA, NOMINEE FOR UNITED STATES ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT, BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to have been nominated to serve as U.S. Alternate Executive Director at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. President Bush said in his State of the Union Address that America is leading the fight against global poverty, hunger and disease; and that "America is a force for hope in the world because we are a compassionate people." I share this belief. And as compassionate people with a unique leadership role in the World Bank, the United States must engender strong partnerships to ensure programs meant to eradicate poverty and create inclusive economic growth are not squandered by corruption and mismanagement.

If confirmed, I will have the great privilege and responsibility to represent the United States at the World Bank. I look forward to the opportunity to work with Treasury Secretary Paulson and others in our government—as well as with our partners at the World Bank—to improve its effectiveness and impact. Catalyzing prosperity in the developing world and post-conflict countries is not just a moral imperative. It helps create local stability and peace. And it creates new markets for American entrepreneurs. Our prosperity and security is tied to those whom we endeavor to help.

For the past two decades, whether as a businesswoman or government official, I have gained extensive experience forging strong partnerships and formal agreements with governments and international institutions in Asia and Latin America. If confirmed, I will apply these skills to build coalitions that will foster broad support for U.S. priorities with member countries of the World Bank. My professional life has focused on increasing trade and developing economic competitiveness, whether by opening new markets or providing capacity building for modern supply chains, customs procedures and cultural and heritage tourism or by protecting U.S. companies from unfair and corrupt practices oversees, or even by promoting venture capital and entrepreneurism. I have also served as ex-officio board member of the Export Import Bank, worked with the board of the Oversees Private Investment Corporation and overseen the Department of Commerce's participation in the Interagency Working Group on Multilateral Aid.

The most gratifying experience of my professional life, however, has been the community education projects in Mexico, China, Poland, Ukraine, and rural America that I was fortunate to be involved with while in the private sector. In Mexico I developed a 10-year educational development program where I learned first hand about the many challenges in implementing a results oriented project. It allowed me to see how given the right tools, proper food and nutrition, warm clothes—and a little hope and encouragement—that even the poorest child facing the greatest odds can flourish, exceeding his or her own expectations and transforming a community's quality of life and more importantly, quality of spirit. In working with the community projects, I also learned how corruption can hurt these programs and the people they are meant to help when I was forced to turn away one of the communities under consideration because I was not convinced local officials would enforce proper fiduciary controls for project funds.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed I will use the combination of my experience with the private sector, public sector and community service to build support for U.S. priorities such as anti-corruption, governance and accountability, transparency, debt sustainability, environmental safeguards, and to improve results. I will seek to help developing countries capitalize on the benefits of globalization and trade, and to promote inclusive and sustainable prosperity through private sector development in these countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to answer the committee's questions.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Ms. Guevara.

Mr. Walther.

STATEMENT OF LARRY WOODROW WALTHER, NOMINEE TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mr. WALTHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to introduce my wife and soulmate of almost 38 years now, Janice Walther. She's over there. Janice and I have two children, Bill and Mandy. And Bill is a mechanical engineer who works for other Department of Army in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and he and his wife have two children under—let's see, 7 and under. My daughter—her husband is a college professor; they have four children, 8 and under. And so, it was a little difficult for them to travel from central—you know, from Arkansas and from Missouri to be here, but they really wanted to be here.

It is a pleasure to appear before you today as President George W. Bush's nominee to be director of U.S. Trade and Development Agency. If confirmed, I look forward to making a direct impact on the economic growth and development of middle-income and developing countries around the world through the promotion and export of U.S. technology and ingenuity. My career has taught me many things that are relevant to the success leading USTDA, but none may be as important as the impact of the expansion of infrastructure and its impact on economic development and growth.

Before being selected as the President's nominee for USTDA director, I enjoyed a wonderful career in the private sector. I started

as a switching engineer with Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in 1970, and was fortunate to achieve success throughout my career. Ultimately, I concluded 30 years of service with SBC, with is now AT&T, as the vice president for corporate services and chairman of the SBC Foundation. In that capacity, I oversaw a philanthropic organization that managed $67 million in community and charity giving.

More recently, I had the honor of serving as director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development. As the director of ADED, I was responsible for the overall direction and management of the department and for representing the governor and the State on all matters concerning statewide issues of economic development. In so doing, I provided direction and policy advice to the governor, to his cabinet, to the legislature, and regional and local leaders on key issues affecting the economic development and business climate in the State of Arkansas.

As a result of this background, I have a deep appreciation for the essential role of infrastructure, both physical and institutional, in establishing the ideal environment for the private sector to serve as a catalyst for growth. I also understand the role of government in promoting and assisting growth. USTDA trade and development missions reflect this focus. If confirmed, I will look forward to applying my experience in building the—on the agency's outstanding record of success.

As you well know, USTDA's activities position U.S. firms to play key roles in the priority projects in developing countries. Through the strategic use of foreign assistance funds, USTDA seeks to create an environment favorable for trade, investment, and sustainable economic development. The agency accomplishes its mission by assisting early project planning activities designed to promote trade capacity and sector development. In engaging U.S. private-sector expertise early in the project planning process, USTDA helps to ensure that U.S. firms will be competitive during the implementation phase. This model of foreign assistance has created successful mutual economic benefits to both U.S. industry and our partner countries in emerging economies.

On a more personal note, the agency already has a significant focus on promoting the development of information and communications technology around the world. Given my background and the capacity of this sector to serve as a catalyst in the development of other sectors, I would like to reinforce the agency's commitment in this area. More broadly, this unique trade and development mission is one that I am committed to successful leading.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to undertake the role of USTDA director. If confirmed, I will build upon the agency's outstanding reputation of responsiveness, flexibility, and success with the U.S. business community. I intend to continue the agency's long track record of partnerships with exceptional projects, sponsors overseas to foster commercial solutions for their developmental goals. I am deeply honored and humbled that the President has nominated me to serve as USTDA director, and I look forward to working with you and your staff in the future.

I want to thank you, again, very much for holding this hearing today, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Walther follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LARRY W. WALTHER, DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE, U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Thank you very much Chairman Menendez, Senator Hagel and the Members of the Committee.It is a pleasure to appear before you today as President George W. Bush's nominee to be the Director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA). If confirmed, I look forward to making a direct impact on the economic growth and development of middle income and developing countries around the world through the promotion and export of U.S. technology and ingenuity. My career has taught me many things that are relevant to successfully leading USTDA, but maybe none as important as the impact that the expansion of infrastructure has on economic growth.

Before being selected as the President's nominee for USTDA Director, I enjoyed an accomplished career in the private sector. I started as a Switching Engineer for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in 1970 and was fortunate to have achieved success throughout my career. In my professional capacities, a significant potion of my career with SBC was spent in a leadership role in the area of governmental and regulatory relations. Specifically, I had the pleasure of representing the company before all levels of government, the majority of which was working with state regulatory commissions and the legislative and executive branches. I also had a major role within the company in economic analysis and marketing oriented business development.

Ultimately, I concluded 30+ years of service with SBC as the Vice President for Corporate Services and Chairman of the SBC Foundation. In that capacity, I oversaw a philanthropic organization that managed $67.4 million in community and charity giving. As Chairman of the Foundation, I was charged with the responsibility for developing and refining the Foundation's strategic plan, implementing that vision, and ensuring it met the goals of the SBC Foundation's directors and the Chairman of SBC. In supporting various philanthropic organizations, I had to evaluate and identify those programs that best met the goals of the Foundation, and had a high likelihood of success, ensuring I was a good steward of the Foundation's funds.

More recently, I had the honor of serving as Director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED). As the Director of the ADED, I was responsible for the overall direction and management of the Department and for representing the Governor and the State on all matters concerning statewide issues of economic development. In so doing, I provided direction and policy advice to the governor and his cabinet, the legislature, and regional and local leaders on key issues affecting the economic development and business climate of Arkansas. I formed significant relationships with top level management within the private sector, addressing the economic conditions and business and investment opportunities in the State. In addition, I led numerous economic and trade development missions to the Far East and Europe, actively pursuing investment by foreign companies into the Arkansas economy.

As a result of this background, I have a deep appreciation for the essential role of infrastructure, both physical and institutional, in establishing the ideal environment for the private sector to serve as a catalyst for growth. I also understand the role of government in promoting and assisting growth. USTDA's trade and development missions reflect this focus. If confirmed, I look forward to applying my experience in building on the agency's outstanding record of success.

As you well know, USTDA activities position U.S. firms to play a key role in priority projects in developing countries. Through its strategic use of foreign assistance funds, USTDA seeks to create an environment favorable for trade, investment, and sustainable economic development. The agency accomplishes its mission by assisting early project planning activities designed to promote trade capacity and sector development.

Fundamentally, USTDA provides access to U.S. technology, expertise and ingenuity in meeting developmental challenges. This access serves as the basis of the public-private partnerships that are a hallmark of the agency's success. Often, USTDA investments are matched by contributions from U.S. firms that share the agency's and project sponsor's commitment to a development priority.

By engaging U.S. private sector expertise early in the project planning process, USTDA helps to ensure that U.S. firms will be competitive during the implementation phase. This model of foreign assistance has created successful mutual economic

benefits for both U.S. industry and our partner countries in emerging economies. USTDA has an impressive record of achievement in carrying out this mission. Since 1981, USTDA has been associated with more than $28 billion in U.S exports. This amounts to approximately $39 in U.S. exports for every $1 invested by the agency.

USTDA also has a strong record of support for U.S. small businesses. In fact, the agency contracts exclusively with small businesses in evaluating the funding proposals that the agency receives. These contracts help to provide small businesses with important international experience that they can apply in competing for other business opportunities.

In recent years, the agency has placed considerable emphasis on activities that advance U.S. policy objectives. Priority areas have included the promotion of global energy security, the application of environmental technologies, ensuring secure and safe trade, and enhancing regional integration. In doing so, I believe the agency has significantly leveraged its resources, and magnified its impact, by focusing on areas that complement efforts by other U.S. Government agencies.

In addition, USTDA has targeted its program on developing countries' trade capacity. This area now accounts for half of the agency's obligations worldwide. Recognizing the capacity of trade to unleash the dynamic power of the private sector as an engine for growth, these activities are designed to enhance countries' ability to efficiently and effectively participate in the global economy.

In these ways, USTDA rightly recognizes that for the infrastructure to reach its fullest potential, the institutional capacity also must be in place for the private sector to succeed. By helping to create both the infrastructure and the environment for U.S. firms to compete overseas, USTDA is opening new markets to U.S. goods and services around the world.

USTDA has a unique trade and development mission, and I am committed to that mission. I am also interested in exploring additional efforts that the agency can make as an integral part of advancing larger U.S. policy priorities. I seek and welcome the guidance and support of the Congress in these efforts. The agency already has a significant focus on promoting the development of information and communications technology around the world. Given my background and the capacity of this sector to serve as a catalyst for the development of other sectors, I would like to reinforce the agency's commitment in this area.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to undertake the role of USTDA Director. If confirmed, I will build upon the agency's outstanding reputation for responsiveness, flexibility and success with the U.S. business community. I intend to continue the agency's long track record of partnerships with exceptional project sponsors overseas to foster commercial solutions to their development goals. Moreover, I will consult regularly with this committee and its counterpart in the U.S. House of Representatives. I also plan to continue USTDA's close coordination with other U.S. Government agencies through the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, and with other agencies that possess technical expertise and other resources that can be applied in increasing the effectiveness of USTDA's programs.

I am deeply honored and humbled that the President has nominated me to serve as USTDA Director and look forward to working with you and your staff in the future. Thank you very much for holding this hearing today. I am happy to answer any questions that you have.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Walther.

Thank you all.

And let me start a first round of questioning. We'll put up 7 minutes, and, unless we get other members, I'll continue thereon.

So, let me start with you, Mr. Morales. I appreciated what you said in your opening statement. I want to know what you think the role of the OAS should be. I know what it is, but I want to know what you think the role of the OAS should be in the Americas.

Mr. MORALES. Mr. Chairman, I think the role of the OAS is extremely important. I mean, clearly its mission to help promote and consolidate democracy is fundamental. I think that we need to continue to support that. But it also does quite a bit in the area of development. Both of these are critical if we're going to have the kind of stability, I think, that we want to see in the region. I believe that you have to have democracy in order to really have effective programs that are going to alleviate the challenges that I out-

lined in my statement—poverty, social exclusion—because that—hopefully, that will lead to economic and social development. They mutually reinforce one another. So, the role of the OAS is critical to that, and that's what I believe.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you. We are the largest contributor to the OAS. How do you see our role in the process of developing consensus among member states? And, before you answer that, you know, we have a challenge in the hemisphere. I spent a lot of time on focusing in the hemisphere when I was in the House, as well as now, in the Senate, and just came from a visit there, of five countries. You know, we have a challenge in the hemisphere. We see authoritarian—what I consider to be authoritarian rule, guised under the cloak of constitutions, such as in Venezuela. We see a movement toward the populace of many countries who do not believe that democracy has brought good things to life and/or open markets. And we see a rising tide of anti-Americanism.

In that context, how do you see us working with the other countries of the OAS to bring common cause to what you describe as your own vision of what the role should be?

Mr. MORALES. I think that consensus-building is very difficult. I—the work that I've had the pleasure to do at the Inter-American Development Bank—while not similar to the OAS in terms of "one vote, one country," the work there is very much based on a consensus spirit. So, what that means is, advocacy, a willingness to listen, and a willingness to engage—and I think that that is—I would imagine—I don't know what the OAS is like, but I have spoken to colleagues who have worked there and are working there, and it is, I think, critical that we send a signal that—one, that we care about the institution. I think the regional members have—and the observers—have a real interest in the success of the OAS. So, I think our active participation is a way of manifesting our commitment to the goals of the—to the OAS, as well as our commitment, more broadly, to the region.

So, I think that—while there are clearly many different voices, I think what we have to signal is that, if these are democratic governments, we need to be prepared to work with them across ideological lines, across party lines, and that's the signal that we should send. Hopefully, they'll want to work with us, but I think we have to be willing to say that this is what we're prepared to do.

I think, in terms of the budget, we do offer more than 60 percent of the budget, but we're also providing assistance in a number of other programs. I think that the fact that it's not percentage-based allows, I think, the other countries to feel that their vote is just as important. And it is. Every vote in that institution is important. But, it also means that we have to be very active and engaging, and be strong advocates.

Senator MENENDEZ. What do you think is the biggest challenge the OAS has? And, after defining it, how would you work to meet that challenge, to overcome that challenge?

Mr. MORALES. The—clearly, I think, the challenges—among the largest challenge is how democracies can help to provide the benefits and goods that people expect that type of government to offer. And I think that the OAS, through many of its programs, whether it's through the human rights—the work of the Human Rights

Commission, whether the electoral observation missions that it's doing—all of these programs, I think, are designed to show that a democratic and pluralistic form of government is the best way to ensure that these challenges that exist can be addressed, and addressed effectively.

I think that how I would go about it, if I were to be confirmed, would be to continue to underscore the importance of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, to work, not only on the reinforcement of democracy, but, as I said earlier, also on the development program. Economic and social programs are critically important to the—to democracy. So, that, if I were to be confirmed, would be how I would approach the position.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you for your answer. If you are to be confirmed, I would urge you to look at legislation, that Senator Martinez and I have, creating a fund for the Americas. I think it's incredibly important. And we certainly would be looking for some vigorous advocacy at the OAS. We think our country needs it in the hemisphere, and this is our front yard, our closest neighbors. And—many of us believe that the only time we pay vigorous attention is when we have a problem—and when we have a problem, it's late in the process. We need to engage, early on. So, I'm happy to hear some of your answers.

Mr. Grieco, let me ask you—you and I had a chance to talk, in private, about some of the challenges of the department, as you know. I know that both AID and the State Department have complained about a number of congressional directives, about limitations, about holes on reprogramming. And, as I talk to my colleagues, that happens because they feel they don't get the right consultation—not information, not notification, because that's just telling me what—something is happening; doesn't engage me in the process of working toward a decision. So, notification is one thing. A lot of that is by statute, and necessary, so it's not a question of whether you have the discretion. Engagement and consultation is another. And so, hence, I think you've seen a rise of congressional directives on limitations and holes in the reprogramming.

How would you, in your role—now, you've been acting in this role for 9 months. So, now the question is—now—and, I believe, largely, you've had authority, but now, with the absolute confirmation of the Senate, presuming that happens, how would you work to improve this relationship with Congress, number one? And, number two, would you commit—responsiveness is part of our challenge, getting responsiveness to questions posed, both orally and in written form—how would you commit—would you commit to a timeline for responsiveness to congressional inquiries? And, if so, what would that timeline be?

So, first, how would you seek to make the relationship more constructive, more engaging, more responsive? And, certainly, in terms of inquiries, what would you be willing to commit yourself to?

Mr. GRIECO. Well, I think—if I can start with the latter, I think what we'd like to try to do—since I've been involved in—as an acting assistant administrator in the bureau right now, we've gotten our congressional response rates for written requests down to 90 percent, or at a 2-to 3-week average right now. I think we can improve that even more, frankly.

In addition to those written responses, what we have talked about within the agency—and we've had several new assistant administrators now confirmed, that have now joined us in our African Bureau, Latin America Bureau, and so forth—there is a big interest on behalf of our assistant administrators to come up and do more regular consultations on our programming, with the committee and with our appropriators committees, as well. We're anxious to do that.

We are seeing, now, I think, a more active approach from our assistant administrators to come out to Congress and testify on various issues. We just had an assistant administrator, Kate Almquist, up, this week, on Kenya. We hope to have more assistant administrators in our functional bureaus also testifying in the next few weeks, as well. And I think we'd like to see an aggressive positioning of the agency, especially on its programming budget, on its operating-expense budgets, to come up and talk to Congress, and get Congress's ideas, too.

We talked, yesterday, a little bit about the congressional budget justification, some of the frustrations that you've experienced with that, and I think we're more committed than ever, and we're fairly optimistic, that the long version of that CBJ, which you're doing to receive, hopefully, in the next few weeks, is going to have much greater detail for your requests. We'll offer datasets from us to you, providing greater congressional interest——

Senator MENENDEZ. So, I'm going to get country——

Mr. GRIECO. You're going to get countries——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Or the committee——

Mr. GRIECO [continuing]. And sectors.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Country-by-country projects?

Mr. GRIECO. Plus sectors, as well. And I'm—if I can just—if you would oblige me for one second, we also added to the CBJ this year, specifically at this committee and other committees' request, you will receive sector and element representations in charts that break it out, not just by the countries, but also, now, by some of the biggest issue areas that you've raised with us—trafficking in persons; maternal and child health will now have its own page; HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB will be broken out; family planning and reproductive health; and basic ed—just to name a few. So, that—we believe that it's going to be better than last year's version. We're listening to Congress, and we're responding to Congress. We think we can make it better. We're in the middle of a process in this, and we hope that, with your guidance and your consultation, that it can be what you want it to be.

Senator MENENDEZ. How about performance data?

Mr. GRIECO. Performance data is based on a separate system, so we have FACTS, which is a new foreign assistance measurement system, which is tied to our performance analysis, and that is—we're going to be offering the staff a briefing on that, I understand, within the next week or so. That's a newer system, and it's ready to roll out formally, I believe, to the Hill, and we're looking forward to doing that.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I see no other member before the committee, so I'm going to continue. If a member comes in, I will yield to them.

How does the budget of the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs compare to that of the H Bureau at the Department of State and the legislative shop at the Millennium Challenge Corporation?

Mr. GRIECO. AID is fairly small, sir, in comparison. AID's got about eight leg officers. My understanding is State's got approximately 100, with admin staff included; MCC, I think, between four and six on the leg side. Our bureau has about 80 people, total, when you add——

Senator MENENDEZ. Millennium Challenge has between four and six?

Mr. GRIECO. Just on the leg side, yeah.

Senator MENENDEZ. And you have what?

Mr. GRIECO. I have about eight leg liaison officers, for us. And we——

Senator MENENDEZ. What's your budget, compared to the Millennium Challenge budget?

Mr. GRIECO. I've never been asked, or privy to, the MCC's budget on their leg side, but I—if the committee requests, I'd be happy to try to provide that information.

Senator MENENDEZ. Yeah, well, we would like to see it. AID has a very important role, and I appreciate what the Millennium Challenge Corporation does, but it sounds like that's a disproportionate leg shop, compared to what you do.

Let me ask you this. How would you describe the overall capacity of the Legislative and Public Affairs Bureau at AID?

Mr. GRIECO. Compared to MCC——

Senator MENENDEZ. Just—the overall—your overall——

Mr. GRIECO. Oh, I think——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Capacity.

Mr. GRIECO. I think that we have tremendously dedicated people. Several of our staff—career staff have been in the bureau for more than 20 years, and are experts—really, I think, the U.S. Government's experts—on an appropriations process on our foreign assistance budgets. Our public affairs staff is equally dedicated, and we—as I said, the GAO reports have validated that we have unique competencies here that, I think, can be expanded. We're looking—the administrator, when she arrived, the first thing she did was, we need to rebuild LPA staffing. She's getting us several more legislative staffers, that are in process now. We have several more public affairs staffers coming in. A new chief of public liaison just arrived yesterday. And we're doing aggressive replanning on both the staffing and resource side for us. And we have a very small program budget within the bureau, which we implement the strategic ad campaigns, which we talked about in our doc program overseas.

But, there is some program money that we received previous, under the Biden Pell Grant, for domestic education, about what development does for U.S. interests, for us to talk about to the domestic audience. And, unfortunately, that's been capped at only about $25,000 a year. We would love to see that cap removed, so that we could do more aggressive outreach to the American public about what foreign assistance does for their own security and does for U.S. national interests.

Senator MENENDEZ. You're capped at 25,000?

Mr. GRIECO. 25,000.

Senator MENENDEZ. To communicate to the American people why——

Mr. GRIECO. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. We spend what we spend, and what's their——

Mr. GRIECO. For development——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Interest in it?

Mr. GRIECO [continuing]. Education portion, yes. Now, I have a $1.7 million budget for the whole bureau, which includes my staffing, my leg staff, my public affairs staff, and outreach activities, generally.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. Well, that answers part of that question I was going to provide to you. If you had more money, what you do differently, in terms of the public perception, here domestically, about the importance of AID and our foreign assistance, in general?

Mr. GRIECO. This would be program money, so the program money that we would receive for that purpose would have to—you know, I'm very cognizant that, in the past, Congress has had a number of problems with the agency, over many decades, with some of that money being provided for domestic audience education that was used for other purposes. And I think that's one of the problems, in the past, that's put some constraints on the agency.

Since I've been there, more 7 years, we're very focused on targeting our work, providing Congress with initial analyses of what we're trying to achieve, and then doing post-event performance reviews, and providing you with the information show what our audience reach was, did we move the audience awareness ticker? And I think we can show you a model that works, because we're doing it now throughout the developing world, as well.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, let me—before I turn away from you—I would like to pursue that a little bit more, but—okay.

State wants the record to reflect that they only have 70, not 100 employees. [Laughter.]

Mr. GRIECO. Sorry. I stand corrected, and I'm sure I'll hear from Mr. Bergner later about that. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. No, no, no. You were giving your best estimate. You didn't have the numbers before you. We can't hold you responsible for it. I just wanted to get proportionality, here——

Mr. GRIECO. All right.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Get a sense.

So, the record is reflected, now, for the State Department, that they don't have 100, they have 70. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. Which means that I'm still going to get my requests a lot quicker, now that I know they have 70. Let me just——

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me just ask you one thing. You were very good in giving me an answer about how you're trying to improve the timelines, but you didn't make a commitment to what the timelines would be, in terms of responding to inquiry—congressional inquiries. Is it 2 weeks? Is it 3 weeks? What would it be?

Mr. GRIECO. Here is the issue, that we spoke about a little bit, briefly. If the request requires us to go out to our missions overseas, it automatically adds time for us, because our staffing at the missions is so tight, and they're doing, many of them, two and three different jobs at the mission, and with——

Senator MENENDEZ. So, let's bifurcate it.

Mr. GRIECO. So——

Senator MENENDEZ. Let's say it doesn't go out——

Mr. GRIECO. If it doesn't require——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. The request doesn't require—go outside. What would you commit yourself to?

Mr. GRIECO. I'll commit myself, sir, to 2 weeks, at the outset; and if we can improve upon that, in practice, that's my goal.

Senator MENENDEZ. And if it is outside—or you have to go through the bureaus outside, what would you think would think would be an appropriate timeframe?

Mr. GRIECO. Again, it's going to depend on whether the information is going to require us, in the field, to undertake actions to extract the information from our local partners or our local NGOs or host governments, but——

Senator MENENDEZ. What do you think is a reasonable timeframe?

Mr. GRIECO. Within a month?

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay.

Ms. Guevara, let me ask you a couple of questions. You're going to be—you know, "alternative executive director" sometimes sounds like, well, doesn't really matter, until—it's like being Vice President, you know, you're there and waiting. I look at the alternative executive director in a little bit different way, much more proactively, and have—and certainly, as we have seen—if Mr. Morales gets confirmed, he's going to be leaving a position that the all—you know, there's going to be alternatives to—alternates to. So, you know, it can—you can ultimately function in the position, itself. So, I'd look at the alternate as very important in our decisionmaking.

And so, the World Bank—there's an area—two areas that I want to explore with you. One is, middle-income countries can now borrow from the private capital markets at pretty competitive interest rates. So, what's the incentive for poor countries to borrow from the World Bank? And, in essence, how—what do you see the comparative advantage is for the World Bank—to borrow from the World Bank versus—you know, from middle-income countries versus, largely, the market that they can achieve in the private marketplace, without the World Bank's constraints?

Ms. GUEVARA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The World Bank has a mission that is not only just to loan money, but one of the things that it brings is its ability to have capacity-building and provide technical assistance. This is the one thing that it has over a regular bank that might be lending money to developing countries or to middle-income countries, is that the World Bank could provide capacity-building, could help with helping countries meet their environmental safeguards and other social safeguards.

Senator MENENDEZ. So, you think that that is the singular nature—that it's the capacity-building essence of it, that gives the bank the desirability—the people the desirability—countries, I should say—the desirability to go to the bank?

Ms. GUEVARA. I certainly think it's one of the best incentives. If the countries can go to the private sector and don't need that help, then there's no need to go to the bank.

Senator MENENDEZ. So, how do you think the bank should charge for those activities?

Ms. GUEVARA. I think the poorest countries—if we're looking at Africa, those services should not be charged, necessarily, for those countries. If you're looking at more middle-income countries, depending on the service, then you could look at what that capacity-building and technical assistance would be.

Senator MENENDEZ. Is that—well, what does the bank do now in that regard, do you know?

Ms. GUEVARA. I don't have a lot of information on that, but——

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask——

Ms. GUEVARA [continuing]. I'll be glad to find out.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. You this. What do you think is the main mission of the bank? Is it economic expansion or is it poverty alleviation?

Ms. GUEVARA. It's eradication of poverty. And to the extent that it's promoting economic growth, it should do it in an inclusive manner.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. You gave me the words "inclusive manner." Give me a little bit of meat on that bone.

Ms. GUEVARA. Yes, sir. We've heard a lot about global prosperity, especially in the last years, and globalization, and the point is that not everybody has been able to partake in that growth and in that prosperity. And what the World Bank does is ensure that this prosperity includes all people, even those that perhaps don't have the natural ability to partake in it.

Senator MENENDEZ. And the reason I pursue that with you is because we can have economic expansion, but that does not guarantee poverty alleviation or elimination.

Ms. GUEVARA. I agree.

Senator MENENDEZ. And so, we look forward to seeing our leadership on the bank move in a direction that, maybe, can have economic expansion, but is also about significant poverty alleviation, at the end of the day.

Let me ask you this. The World Bank, as with so many institutions, particularly of this size, has—suffers from some of the problems that plague large bureaucracies: it has entrenched interests, it has turf wars, it has competing ideologies, power, and, of course, money. In my mind, the most obvious, and, frankly, in my view, the most absurd, tradition at the World Bank is the instinctive structure—the way in which the bank promotes its recognition for bank personnel is based on pushing money out of the door, rather than on the results their programs demonstrate. I know that—from your discussion of your private-sector experience, I'm sure you didn't achieve success by pushing—just simply pushing money out the door. If you did, I—tell me the company, so, when I retire, I can go try to work there. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. So, point is, Do you think that's a good way to run an agency?

Ms. GUEVARA. I think it's vitally important for the effectiveness of the World Bank to have a focus on results-based measurements, and that it's not just about how much money you pushed out the door, but following that project and making sure that results on the ground were made, and, further, in having incentive to countries who show that they are showing results in the way that their loans and their credits are given to them.

Senator MENENDEZ. What would you do to—then, if you are confirmed, would you do to change that present standard at the bank?

Ms. GUEVARA. Well, if I was confirmed, I would work with the USCD. Again, I think, coalition-building and building support from different countries is very important, and working with President Zoellick to see what sorts of internal policies could be changed to move in that direction.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you one last set of questions. Give me a sense of the governance structure of the bank. Who has the power within the bank? And who makes the majority of the funding decision? Who decides where the money goes and what it's used for?

Ms. GUEVARA. The bank is run by the board of directors that are representatives of the member states, and it's the board that votes on where the funding will go.

Senator MENENDEZ. And how does that directorship—is it weighted, or is it—is it equal votes?

Ms. GUEVARA. Yes, sir, it's weighted, depending on how large a share the member has.

Senator MENENDEZ. So, therefore, it's not just that the directors have a vote, but, since it's weighted, there's obviously a universe in that structure that has a pretty big say about where that funding goes, right?

Ms. GUEVARA. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Walther, let me ask you—I thought I heard this in your opening statement. I think it's a good thing, but I just—let me ask you. Many people, when they're confirmed at the late stage of an administration, try to scramble and put their mark on the agency, and sometimes propose changes, reorganizations, a refocusing of the mission. Sometimes they can be good, sometimes it can be chaotic, because it cannot be executed within the timeframe of the appointment. So, how—what would be your agenda for the next 10 months or so, if you were to be confirmed by the Senate?

Mr. WALTHER. That's very—a very good question, Mr. Chairman.

I have observed——

Senator MENENDEZ. I'm looking for a very good answer. [Laughter.]

Mr. WALTHER. I'm going to get——

Senator MENENDEZ. You have to have some humor in this process, I think. [Laughter.]

Mr. WALTHER. Touche.

I have observed this agency from afar for some time. I've had friends—two people who were former directors, and people that have worked within the agency—so, I've observed it for some time.

And this agency is very unique. It's small. It's very nimble. It uses its resources very conservatively and wisely. And the staff, from my observation, is very professional. I have had some discussions with the senior staff, only. But, I am very, very encouraged and very—the level of expertise and the way they conduct themselves is extremely professional. I can see no changes like that at all. They've got a wonderful mission. They're accomplishing their mission. And I would like to continue to aid them in doing that, and in aiding these countries, also.

Senator MENENDEZ. Good. Let me ask you—you just described a very nimble agency. It's a niche agency, as well.

Mr. WALTHER. Right.

Senator MENENDEZ. It requires its interrelationship with other agencies, to some degree, to perform its mission. How do you see yourself working to facilitate that coordination?

Mr. WALTHER. I have a history, in jobs that I've had in the past, including as director of the Department of Economic Development, of being a team player. I like to work with other agencies. I've always done that. And there's a—when you can work together for the same goal, you can pool your resources and really accomplish more together than you can apart. And so, I see us working with the State Department, with the U.S. Trade Representative, with other agencies, with the Ex-Im Bank and others. And I will—they do that—I will continue to do that, and I will look forward to those relationships.

Senator MENENDEZ. One final question. The agency aims to promote U.S. enterprise and support at the same time—economic development in developing countries, through its activities. Of the two—export promotion or development assistance—which do you believe should be prioritized at TDA?

Mr. WALTHER. The notion is that they should be balanced equally. And there's a—there is, actually, a third thing, and that is the United States trade policy or foreign policy. So, we need to balance all three of those.

I'm—I've always been involved in economic development. I like to see the creation of jobs. And so, I am anxious to see our results in the area of creating jobs within the United States. But, on the other side, this is a unique way of providing international aid to developing and middle-income countries, where we both are partners, and we will equally benefit, and we should—in both the jobs, the exports, and the infrastructure in the foreign country.

So, I would hope that it would be a balanced approach to aid to foreign countries.

Senator MENENDEZ. Equal parts——

Mr. WALTHER. Equal parts.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. At every TDA event?

Mr. WALTHER. That's the objective. We—you—I mean, and you can't—it's hard to measure that. I mean, you know, you put—you help them—convince them that a power plant's the right thing to do, and then we get the—we get the export, they get the infrastructure. So, it's—you know, hopefully, they think that they get a fair result from our partnership, and so do we.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Morales, one last question. The—you mentioned it, and I think it's incredibly important, and we talked

about it privately; I just want to get you on the record on this—the Inter-American Democratic Charter. In recent years, the member states have debated whether to more clearly define what constitutes—what conditions constitute a violation of the charter, and what automatic responses might be included in the charter to help the OAS deal with violations of its principles. How do you believe we can work to strengthen the charter?

Mr. MORALES. Mr. Chairman, the charter is not a treaty, it's not a convention; so, it doesn't have, for example, sanctions associated with noncompliance. There are provisions in the charter that call for the review—for example, if there are conditions going on in one of the member states that raises concern, that those can be looked into, but they do require consent of the country.

Having said that, the—these issues can be raised to the Permanent Council; and, in fact, there have been a number of initiatives that have been presented, I believe, in the last three general assemblies, to try to help countries implement the principles that are enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter. And, I believe, as recently as last year, Secretary Insulza has presented different—or, some initiatives to try to strengthen the charter. So—but, clearly—because it's not a treaty, it doesn't have those sanctioning provisions; but, ultimately, I think, the force of the charter, the strength of it, depends on the ability for all of the 34 member countries of the OAS to believe in it, to try to implement it in their countries and in their democracies.

Senator MENENDEZ. Wasn't Venezuela recently an example of which, just by saying no, the will of the OAS was largely aborted, in terms of having—I don't know if it was observers are in certain violations, or a rapporteur, or something to that effect?

Mr. MORALES. The case that you're referring to is with regard to RCTV, and there was a concern raised about the ability for freedom of expression. And, in fact, this is an issue that Secretary Rice raised at the general assembly in Panama. Our Alternate Permanent Representative sent a letter to Secretary Insulza, requesting that the matter be looked into under, I believe, it's article 18 of the charter. But, as I indicated earlier, the charter also provides that—to be able to do that, it requires the consent of the country in question, and Venezuela did not provide its consent.

Senator MENENDEZ. It seems to me that if the charter is going to be meaningful, at the end of the day, other than an aspirational document, we need to get the member states to come around, to have some teeth to it; otherwise, it's—it is a fine aspirational document, but it just remains that, at the end of the day. It would be something I would look forward to, when you're there, hearing about what ground exists for moving in that direction.

Let me—we've tried to explore, on behalf of the committee, both your views as—on some of the critical issues, your capabilities to perform the job. Let me thank all of you for testifying, for your willingness to serve our country in these important positions.

However, the record will remain open until the end of the day tomorrow so that committee members may submit additional questions for the record.

I ask that each nominee respond expeditiously these questions. Obviously, we need your answers to them before we can move—the

Chairman can move, when he chooses to do so, to a final business committee meeting.

And since I have no other members here and no additional comments, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:45 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF ANA GUEVARA TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. Corruption and lack of transparency in the natural resource sector severely hampers development and poverty alleviation in less developed countries. The World Bank has made a commitment to combat corruption through adoption of the Governance and Anti-Corruption Strategy. What should the U.S. Government do to ensure that this strategy is meaningfully implemented and mainstreamed into World Bank interventions?

Answer. Fighting corruption has become a top priority for the Bank. In March of 2007, the board approved the Governance and Anti-Corruption (GAC) Strategy, and in September the Bank released its final implementation plan. Implementation of the GAC will likely have tremendous resource and operational implications for how the Bank does business, and it is still developing appropriate ways to integrate governance and anticorruption efforts into all levels of Bank engagement. The United States has actively engaged management on the implementation of this strategy at the policy, country strategy, and project levels. Moving forward, it will be important to provide incentives to Bank staff to (1) engage more proactively on the ground, (2) incorporate concrete good governance objectives in projects, (3) develop stronger results frameworks, (4) increase early involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, and (5) strengthen synergies with other international actors at the global level, such as it has with the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI). If confirmed, I will commit to strongly pursue this top priority of the United States.

Question. What actions should be taken to ensure that the World Bank effectively tackles natural resource corruption and adopts a more focused and coherent approach to natural resource management?

Answer. The World Bank has adopted several initiatives to tackle the natural resource corruption issue. For example, it is a strong supporter of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, which promotes transparency in resource rich countries through the reporting and publication of company payments and government revenues from oil, gas and mining. It has also worked on a set of indicators that can be used to measure and track countries' overall fiscal transparency. But more could be done to encourage a broader comprehensive and systemic approach for natural resource management. Among other initiatives, the Bank could (1) incorporate the GAC implementation principles consistently into all natural resource Bank projects, (2) ensure natural resource programs are supported on the ground by governance and law enforcement programs specific to its sector as well as with those that are nationally focused, (3) incorporate strategic partners, civil society, and indigenous people in project development and oversight to ensure human rights, economic, and environmental goals are strategically met, (4) develop projects that promote equitable economic and social development, and (5) strengthen synergies with other international actors at the global level, particularly those that fight money laundering. If confirmed, I would have the opportunity to obtain more information about these challenges once inside the World Bank, and would urge the World Bank management to strengthen its efforts.

Question. The forestry sector is at particularly high risk for corruption, with a long history of illegal logging fueling conflict and poor governance from Cambodia to Liberia. The World Bank has funded several failed forestry projects, for example with the Bank's inspection panel reporting last month that its forestry initiative in the Democratic Republic of Congo broke several internal procedures and ignored the rights of local people living in the forest areas. What concrete benchmarks to combat corruption in the forestry sector will be developed so that the Bank does not repeat these mistakes? How should the United States promote these efforts?

Answer. Good governance in the forestry sector is critically important because it can help improve the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of poor people in developing

countries and because forests provide a global public good supplying carbon storage services.

As part of its efforts to attack corruption and consistent with the broader U.S. Government's results agenda, the Bank should consider applying governance benchmarks for the forest sector. While it would be necessary for me to have access to more detailed information at the Bank before making specific recommendations on benchmarks in the DRC, or other countries, benchmarks could generally focus on ensuring Bank projects include (1) transparent practices and engagement with local communities and civil society groups in project development, management and oversight, (2) participatory and sustainable land use planning that includes environmental and social safeguards, and (3) strengthened law enforcement capacity and improved management of artisanal logging. The United States has been engaged on the Bank's forest sector activities, as reflected in the U.S. statement on the inspection panel case. If confirmed, I look forward to opportunities to engage with Bank management to underscore the seriousness that the United States attaches to this issue, and to work closely with Treasury and other U.S. Government agencies to make sure that the U.S. interests in forest sector governance reflected in that statement are fully addressed by the Bank in its future operations.

Question. How should the World Bank actively support the efforts of civil society groups, including their ability to operate freely and without intimidation?

Answer. Unfettered input from civil society is an important component of the development process. It plays an especially crucial role in post-conflict countries. The World Bank has several mechanisms to actively support the efforts of civil society groups both at the country programming and project levels. It also holds hundreds of learning programs for civil society each year. Inclusion of civil society in Bank activities often gives the poorest people a voice without fear, and the ability to hold the Bank and local governments accountable. While the Bank cannot control the policies of host governments, these mechanisms lend legitimacy to civil society groups and help create political space for their activities. If I am confirmed, I will use my voice on the board to encourage the Bank to maintain and strengthen its mechanisms for engaging with civil society.

Question. The Governance and Anti-Corruption strategy highlights the importance of meaningful civil society engagement and consultation in World Bank efforts to combat corruption—what steps should the World Bank take to build up the capacity of civil society groups to monitor the natural resource sector and public financial management and to hold governments to account on these issues?

Answer. Civil society groups can provide an important check on government abuse and Bank projects, as we recently saw in the DRC Inspection Panel. In its March GAC report and the September implementation plan, the Bank committed to working with a wide array of stakeholders, including civil society groups, to combat corruption. A fundamental course of action for success that the Bank has identified is to strengthen transparency so the groups can be better informed. The Bank should also continue its trend of increasing civil society participation in country programming and projects, as well as its capacity-building seminars on building strong civil society organizations. These activities will be essential for holding governments accountable in the natural resource sector and public financial management. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Executive Director, other Bank Executive Directors and key Bank staff to strengthen civil society engagement and consultation as part of the overall effort to combat corruption.

RESPONSES OF ANA M. GUEVARA TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Relationships with other development partners: Do you currently have relationships with senior officials at USAID, the Department of Treasury, and the other multilateral financial institutions in Washington like the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund? If so, please describe the nature of these relationships. If confirmed how will you build upon and draw on these relationships to help advance the United States's role at the World Bank?

Answer. Yes, I do have relationships with senior officials at USAID, the Department of the Treasury, Department of Commerce, Inter-American Development Bank, Export-Import Bank, and Oversees Private Investment Corporation. The nature of the relationships vary from professional to personal. If confirmed, I will build upon and draw on these relationships in three ways:

- Learn from their personal experience what strategies have been most successful.
- Leverage their relationships to build new strategic partnerships at the World Bank.
- Pursue opportunities to create greater synergy with those institutions to help advance U.S. priorities.

An example might be working with USAID to create greater coordination with educational projects like the Education for All Fast Track Initiative, which is a World Bank initiative, but for which USAID has the lead in the U.S. Government. Another example might be working with IADB to garner "bloc" support for U.S. positions at the World Bank. Or even, to use the Department of Commerce's broad global network to promote U.S. priorities by urging Bank members in their capitals to adopt strong procurement practices.

Question. U.S. reputation with the World Bank: The World Bank has tremendous convening power, with the decrease of the United State's reputation for "playing fair" in multilateral environments, how are you going to improve the United State's credibility inside an institution whose staff increasingly views the United State's role with skepticism rather than optimism?

Answer. Improving U.S. relationships within the World Bank is essential for attaining desired results and will be my priority. I will work with the U.S. Executive Director and other U.S. Government colleagues to strengthen American leadership and advance our country's interests, while demonstrating consistent respect for multilateral engagement. I hope to achieve this by focusing on five key strategies:

- Identifying far-sighted strategies where the United States can take the lead and shape the agenda. This is important in order to shape consensus early prior to country positions being solidified;
- Incorporating other country's national interests into the justification of our position. This requires research up front to use hard data to relieve their concerns and invalidate their alternatives. It will also allow them to support U.S. positions without appearing to be submitting to U.S. pressure.
- Building broad coalitions by cultivating bilateral relationships with our key allies and developing countries that play influential roles. This will require head-to-head advocacy, including visits with key decision makers in capitals, and officials from small countries that are well respected and wield extensive personal influence. This is important in order to avoid opposition simply because an initiative appears to be American made.
- Promoting the importance of multilateral diplomacy and the work of the Bank through think tanks, educational institutions, policy makers, Congress, and young people. This will build public support for continued engagement.
- Ensuring that colleagues at the Bank understand the reasoning when the United States must take a position on its own. And ensure that others do not misrepresent the U.S. position.
- By being part of the process and the solution, the United States can foster increased respect and optimism. Engaging in consistent multilateral diplomacy will expand our influence and make it easier when we have to stand alone.

RESPONSES OF JEFFREY J. GRIECO TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. If confirmed, would you commit to a timeline for responsiveness to congressional inquiries? If so, what would that timeline be for written inquiries? What would the timeline be for phone calls placed to USAID?

Answer. I would like to affirm the response I provided during my SFRC hearing that, should I be confirmed, LPA will commit to timelines for written Congressional member inquiries as a measure of our responsiveness. These timelines would be:

- Standard correspondence: Two weeks should be a reasonable standard for correspondence which can be answered in Washington.
- Field input correspondence: One month for letters that require major inquiry or research in the field involving our missions, in-country partners, and/or host governments. Needless to say, if confirmed, I intend to strive to do better in both cases.
- Interim response commitment: I also recognize that in some rare cases we may have no choice but to exceed those standards for a complete or comprehensive response. In those cases I commit to a timely interim response and/or other appropriate communication with the subject congressional office.

Receipt and processing of congressional correspondence: We would also like to affirm that all correspondence is time stamped upon date of receipt by our congressional correspondence unit. This is important since all USAID mail is routed via a terrorist screening center and there are some significant delays in receipt of correspondence sent via regular mail. For this reason, we also maintain a direct facsimile capability for member letters to be transferred to USAID at (FAX) 202–216–3237. Lastly, to speed up response times, we encourage members to call us directly to arrange pick-up. Upon receipt of this call to our congressional correspondence unit at 202–712–4462, a USAID legislative liaison officer will come by and pick up the letter.

Question. If confirmed, what improvements would you suggest for the management of staff and communications of the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs?

Answer. As noted at my hearing, I would like to focus on two sets of improvements critical to the Bureau—one set operational and one set strategic. My first set of improvements would be "operational" to support LPA mandated activities including:

- Staffing improvements: In helping to make the Agency better informed about the role, responsibilities, and needs of the Congress, it is valuable for us to find ways in which we can communicate more systematically and proactively to the Congress on Agency plans, programs, and issues. To do significantly better on this objective is conceptually easy, but harder in practice. With currently only seven congressional liaison officers and potential impending departures, to address the usual high demand for information from congressional members and staff, it is difficult to sustain significantly proactive communications efforts to Congress. I am already hard at work improving the staffing/hiring of open personnel positions within the Bureau, both of a career and noncareer nature. I will continue to make the case for further legislative staff in Washington and more targeted communication (specialists) staffing both in Washington and the field.
- Maintaining resources: We have been able to maintain the LPA operating expense budget at consistent levels but we need further support for improving our program allocations for (a) domestic development education activities so as to build a wider constituency for U.S. foreign assistance and development activities abroad (e.g., by removing the cap on Biden-Pell grants), and (b) encouraging wider program support for our successful targeted country-based ad campaigns which show dramatic and specific increases in host country awareness of USAID implemented foreign assistance activities.
- Better information sharing with congressional staff: We will further this through continued improvements to our correspondence unit and more assistance with CODELs and StaffDels. Note, USAID does not receive directly any list of CODELS and StaffDels to our more than 80 countries—this being very important to our efforts to improve support for member trips and planning. If these lists are provided to me I commit that we would secure the information on a classified system only.
- Intra-agency communications about legislative affairs:
  - There are numerous measures we have undertaken and will undertake to improve internal communication, including frequent and regular staff meetings, more systematic linkages between congressional liaison officers and press and public affairs officers, Bureau and office off sites for team building and communication, the creation and maintenance of an online congressional calendar and it's continual cross checking with the administrator's strategic scheduling activity; the weekly Strategic Communications Group (SCG) meetings.
  - Among the ways in which we have sought to improve sharing congressional priorities with our Agency staff is to assign congressional liaison officers and press officers to support specific Bureaus, and expect their close and intimate participation in the work of those Bureaus, beyond simply attending their staff meetings.
  - In addition, we have asked the Bureaus to designate, and intend to strengthen, a roster of "gate keepers" whose principal function is a close liaison with LPA.
  - We also plan to expand our LPA provided training to the rest of the Agency on congressional operations, and possibly to expand opportunities for USAID employees to perform details and other Hill assignments as a firsthand way of familiarizing more Agency employees with how the Congress works.

My second set of improvements would be Agency-wide imperatives or "strategic improvements" which may have a significant impact or reliance on LPA including the following:

- Operating expense plus up for USAID staffing: LPA will continue to seek approval from Congress for the operating expense increase for USAID which would allow 300 plus new Foreign Service officers and civil servants each year for next 3 years and would dramatically improve our training float for the Agency. This initiative, spearheaded by the administrator, is entitled the "Development Leadership Initiative" which LPA has already briefed some SFRC staff on its importance in revitalizing USAID.
- Focus on new diversity recruitment strategies: At the administrator's initiative, USAID is reformulating it's new human capital resources strategy for 2009–2013: LPA serves on the administrator's new diversity recruitment working group and is especially active in seeking new strategies to increase Hispanic and underrepresented minority recruitment.
- Securing agreement from Congress for the President's program budget request for USAID: LPA will work closely with Congress on the fiscal year 2009 proposed budget, as well as in consideration of any future action on the fiscal year 2008 supplemental and future fiscal year 2009 supplemental. We recognize the supplemental(s) are very important to Congress, especially in consideration of humanitarian assistance priorities contained therein.
- GDA and Administrator Fore's commitment to major expansion of USAID's public-private partnerships: In fiscally tight budget circumstances increased use of public-private partnerships only makes sense in order to maximize use and leverage of limited foreign assistance budget dollars. Today, of total resource flows to the developing world the vast majority are private—a reversal from 20 years ago. USAID needs to take advantage of this and LPA needs to help communicate the importance of this trend to key audiences.

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2008

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

Barrett, Barbara McConnell, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Finland
Ghafari, Yousif Boutrous, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia
McEldowney, Nancy, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria
Urbancic, Frank, to be Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus
Volker, Kurt, to be the U.S. Permanent Representative on the Council of NATO

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Barack Obama presiding.

Present: Senators Obama, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Lugar, Voinovich, and Barrasso.

Also Present: Senator Kyl.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BARACK OBAMA, U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Senator OBAMA. This hearing of the Committee on Foreign Relations will now come to order. Today, the committee meets to consider the nomination of five important diplomatic positions.

The President has nominated Barbara McConnell Barrett to be Ambassador to the Republic of Finland, Yousif Boutrous Ghafari to be Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia, Frank Urbancic—did I say that correctly?—to be Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus, Nancy McEldowney to be Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria, and Kurt Volker to be the U.S. Permanent Representative on the Council of NATO.

I want to congratulate all of you on your nomination. I look forward to hearing from each of you this afternoon, or this morning.

I also want to welcome my colleague Senator Kyl, who has joined us to introduce Ms. Barrett today. And I understand that Senator Casey will be joining us a little later to introduce Mr. Volker.

Senator Levin, who regrets he cannot be here, he has got this little thing he has got to do right now, chairing the Armed Services Committee hearing of General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker. But he asked me to note his support for Mr. Ghafari's nomination

to be Ambassador of Slovenia. His statement of support will be included in the record.

[Senator Levin's statement appears at the end of this hearing in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section.]

And I just want to welcome our esteemed colleague and the ranking member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Lugar.

I am very pleased to welcome each of our nominees today. Without exception, you bring an impressive range of talents and experience to your assignments, and I look forward to discussing the challenges you are likely to encounter and how you intend to strengthen our Nation and its allies in the course of your service.

Your nominations come at a critical moment in the history of American diplomacy. The challenges we face are formidable—securing our country, revitalizing our alliances, bolstering young democracies, and confronting the common threats of the 21st century, including terrorism and nuclear weapons proliferation, climate change and poverty, genocide and disease.

Turning these challenges into opportunities will require renewed American leadership. It will also require ambassadors who exemplify the principles that make our Nation great. Upon confirmation, each of you will work with countries that are close partners of the United States and share our common faith in the value of self-determination, accountable governments, collective security, and human rights.

And Mr. Volker, if confirmed, will serve as the United States Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO is the most powerful and most successful military alliance in the history of the world. No organization has done more to promote peace and stability in Europe or to create the protective shield that has allowed the democracies of the North Atlantic to grow into a free and prosperous community.

But as we saw at last week's summit in Bucharest, NATO is not as strong, as capable, or as united as I believe it should be. Afghanistan, NATO's first major mission beyond the borders of Europe, has been overlooked and undermanned by many members of the alliance, including the United States. Success in Afghanistan, I believe, is critical to American national security and to the security of the entire world. And a failure there would not only endanger our Nation and global stability, it would cast serious doubt on the ability of NATO's military and political architecture to uphold our security in the 21st century.

Some new troop commitments to Afghanistan were made in Bucharest, and that is good news. But neither the administration nor our allies have yet done enough to muster the resources that would win the war there and prevent Afghanistan from reemerging as a safe haven for the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The Bucharest summit also left out one of three candidates for membership and failed to provide the young democracies of Georgia and Ukraine with membership action plans.

Mr. Volker, you are a professional diplomat of the first order, and I have confidence that you will represent the United States ably in Brussels. However, ensuring that NATO retains its rightful place as the cornerstone of the Euro-Atlantic alliance will require that

we do more to enlarge NATO to include worthy European democracies and focus more resources on the fight against the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Doing so will require adroit diplomacy at NATO headquarters, but it will also mean making the case directly to the citizens of Europe that we must all increase our commitment to global security. We succeeded in coming together to confront the greatest challenges of the second half of the 20th century. We cannot succeed in confronting the challenges of the 21st century unless we do so together.

Mr. Urbancic, if confirmed, you will be serving in Cyprus at a time of new optimism in the long struggle to bring an end to the estrangement of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. After three decades, last Thursday's opening of the Ledra Street crossing in downtown Nicosia was a tangible indication of goodwill on both sides of the island to forge a settlement between two peoples who share a common home, a common history, and a common destiny.

I hope that the day of Cypriot reunification comes in the course of your ambassadorial service and that you will do everything in your power to help the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot community reach a just and lasting peace.

Slovenia has been on the cutting edge of democratic change in Eastern Europe. Since its early success gaining membership in NATO and the European Union, it has been a model for the progress of the Balkans. Despite its small size, Slovenia currently leads the nations of the European Union while it occupies the EU's Presidency. Its citizens are helping to set the agenda for an entire continent.

Slovenians are focusing Europe's attention on the unfinished business of bringing peace and prosperity to the Balkans. The people and Government of Slovenia will need the help of the United States and other partners as they consolidate their democratic gains and seek to extend those gains throughout the region.

Mr. Ghafari, as an immigrant who has truly lived the American dream, you represent the strength found in our country's diversity. Similar strengths should characterize life in the Balkans. In some parts of the region, including Slovenia, it already does. I hope your story and your service will resonate with people throughout the former Yugoslavia.

After a difficult transition from communism and setbacks in the 1990s, Bulgaria has made impressive economic strides in recent years. As a potential hub for oil and gas distribution, the country could play an important role in Europe's future energy security. However, Bulgaria continues to struggle with corruption and the corrosive influence of organized crime. Any failure to address these challenges could jeopardize the country's future cooperation with the European Union and, with it, much of the progress that has occurred in the recent past.

Ms. McEldowney, you will need to work aggressively to assure that the democratic backsliding, which has happened in some other parts of Eastern Europe, does not occur in Bulgaria. The country's institutions and judicial system will need your support and assistance in order to help Bulgaria remain on course toward full Euro-Atlantic integration.

In recent years, the United States has dramatically reduced its financial assistance to Bulgaria, so you will have to be creative. But your exemplary record as a member of the Foreign Service bodes well for your work on these critical tasks.

And finally, Ms. Barrett, you have a different task, as you will represent America in a country that has traveled further down the path of democracy and prosperity. Finland is a world leader in technology and innovation and even outranks the United States in some measures of development. But it still faces challenges in its relationship with Russia and its long-standing position outside of the Euro-Atlantic security institutions.

At some point soon, Finland may move toward membership in NATO. Should the Finnish people and Government choose to pursue that objective, I hope you will be their biggest booster.

All of you are coming before this committee at a defining moment in America's story. Now is not a time for half-hearted diplomacy. We need to raise the bar for our allies, and that must begin with raising the bar for ourselves. Together, with our partners in Europe, I am confident that we can make whole a world that is in need of repair. And I look forward to a more detailed discussion of the challenges and opportunities that await you.

I want to acknowledge that Senator Voinovich has joined us, as well as Senator Cardin. I will now turn it over to Senator Lugar for his opening statement, and I will then allow for brief opening statements from Senator Voinovich and Senator Cardin. We will then turn it over to Senator Kyl for his introduction of Ms. Barrett, and I know he has other things to do as well.

So, Senator Lugar.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

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

I would like unanimous consent that a statement by our Ranking Member, Senator DeMint, be placed in the record at this point.[Senator DeMint's statement appears at the end of this hearing in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section.]

Senator OBAMA. Without objection.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I thank you very much for calling and chairing this timely hearing. The need for ambassadors in each of the posts that are represented here today is imperative, and the timeliness of this hearing is extremely important. And we are delighted that our colleague, Senator Kyl, is here today to introduce a candidate, Ms. Barrett, for Finland.

Let me just focus short remarks and really in the spirit in which you have addressed the Bucharest summit, Mr. Chairman. I am disappointed about the lack of progress made at the summit. While additional troop commitments for Afghanistan were secured, it is unclear if any of the national caveats that constrain troop deployment were removed at this point.

And while agreement was found on missile defense, it appears that the cost included the refusal to proceed with membership action plans for Ukraine and Georgia. Lastly, the Greek veto of Macedonia's membership bid is extremely unfortunate and a strategic blunder for European security, in my judgment.

Mr. Volker, you will bear the brunt of many of these questions as we come to you in the lineup at this point. And you are a veteran of the trail, having spent a lot of time with Members of Congress thinking about summits in the past. But I would just say that I have enjoyed working with you over the years. You will make a great ambassador to NATO, but I still am concerned about the progress of the 2006 summit at Riga as well as last summit, and I just will query what lessons were learned at Bucharest that can be applied to next year's 60th anniversary summit.

It appeared to those of us in the Senate the diplomatic spade work got started very late in the process this year, and that by the time the President gauged on the matter, most issues may have been decided by some members. In hindsight, I will query whether you believe it was a wise decision for President Putin to be invited to the summit. He accused the alliance at that point of demonizing Russia. Imagine what he would have said if the alliance had supported Ukraine and Georgia's MAP plans.

I read some press accounts about President Putin's refusal to sign the NATO-Russia communique. Is it your understanding this refusal was linked to NATO's pledge that Ukraine and Georgia will one day join NATO?

I have concluded that Germany's opposition to Ukraine and Georgia's receiving of the MAP plan has been largely based upon Russia and energy. A number of NATO members are currently dependent on Russia for energy. Do Russia's energy reserves provide a de facto veto of NATO's activities?

And I will pose a question to Ms. McEldowney about Bulgaria in due course. Sofia's January 2008 agreement with Russia to host a portion of the South Stream energy pipeline was truly a setback to an independent and secure European security strategy. What was Bulgaria's motivation in concluding this deal? And what role do you believe the lack of progress on the Nabucco pipeline played in the South Stream decision?

Do you believe that there is time or opportunity to convince friends in Bulgaria to change course or, for that matter, for those of you who are serving in Europe to be instrumental in reviving Nabucco as opposed to South Stream?

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity for a preview of some of the issues and questions, and I look forward to participating in this vital hearing.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much.

I would like to acknowledge that we have been joined by Senator Casey, as well as Senator Menendez. What I would like to do is let them, let all of the other members of the committee make a brief opening statement, and then turn it over to Senator Kyl so that he can provide his introduction of Ms. Barrett.

Let us start in the order of people who showed up, with Senator Voinovich.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator VOINOVICH. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate your holding this committee meeting and thank Chairman Biden for

putting all of these people before us so that we can get on with their appointments.

My first observation is, Mr. Urbancic, you should be going to Slovenia. [Laughter.]

Although, Mr. Ghafari, you and I have met, and you will do well in Slovenia. Slovenia has a role. It is president of the European Union, and it is very much engaged, as you know, in what is going to happen in Kosovo and really understands the need to make sure that it gets done right.

Mr. Volker, you are going on to NATO, and NATO has got some real challenges with operations in Afghanistan, and whether the members are going to come onboard and send troops or lie back. How is that going to work? You have got the KFOR forces in Kosovo right now, the relationship with that, and also the issue that the chairman just brought up about NATO enlargement.

I would be interested to know if our Government is going to take the position of trying to work things out between Greece and Macedonia, and where you think that issue is going, if anywhere.

And Finland—Ms. Barrett, Finland is now in charge of the OSCE ministerial lines, and there are a couple of members of this Foreign Relations Committee that are very interested in the OSCE, particularly in the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Because that is the organization that deals with the issue of Muslim xenophobia and also deals with anti-Semitism.

And right now, the OSCE is at a crucial point because it is going to be appointing a new person to head up ODIHR, and we really would like to make sure that this new person really knows what he or she is doing and is committed—particularly to our issue of anti-Semitism, they call it "the tower incident," and on discrimination.

Mr. Urbancic, you have got to face the issue of Cyprus and Turkey and how is that all going to work out with the prospect of Turkey joining the European Union?

And, of course, Bulgaria. How is that issue coming? We were successful in getting Bulgaria into NATO. We felt that that would move things along. How are the Bulgarians doing in terms of their niche capabilities, and how are some of the human rights and other changes that need to be made going in there?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much, and thank you, Senator Voinovich, for setting a good example of brevity.

Let me turn it over to Senator Cardin, and if we can try to keep our remarks to 5 minutes or less so that Senator Kyl is not too further delayed and that we have an opportunity to ask as many questions as possible.

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

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you. And I thank you for your convening this hearing so that we can move forward on these important positions for the United States in Europe.

I first want to just thank all of the nominees for their public service, their willingness to serve, and I thank your families for al-

lowing this participation and helping our country. And we know it is a family sacrifice. So we thank you all for that.

Europe is very important to the United States. I want to follow briefly on what Senator Voinovich said in regard to the OSCE. I have the honor of being the Senate chair of the OSCE, and there are several issues of concern within the countries that are represented by the nominations today on OSCE issues. You have already mentioned Kosovo, which is—I would be interested in pursuing that.

We have minority issues. In Bulgaria particularly, there is a concern about the Roma population, as well as the Turkish minority. I would be interested to hear your perspective on that. We have the concerns of human trafficking in several of the countries that are represented here. So I look forward to those questions.

And then NATO, I am concerned about the Bucharest summit as to the influence Russia has on the expansion of our NATO allies, and I would be interested in pursuing that during the question period.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you.

Senator Menendez.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be even briefer.

I appreciate the service of all of the nominees. My particular questions, when we get to that point, will be for Mr. Volker and Mr. Urbancic as it relates to Greece and the Macedonia, the firearm issue, as well as Cyprus. And they are, I think, in my view, important countries. There are some significant issues that are outstanding there, and I will be looking to see your insights on them as it relates to my support for your nominations.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I think I have had the greatest model of expediency.

Senator OBAMA. You have done outstanding.

Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I am going to be very brief. I am going to be offering, in a few moments, opening remarks by way of introduction to Mr. Volker. So I will defer until then.

But thank you very much.

Senator OBAMA. Good. Well, it is now time to turn to the nominees. I will ask that each of you deliver your statements in the order that you were introduced. You will each have 5 minutes for your statements, and if you are summarizing a statement, the text of your entire presentation will be included in the hearing record.

Also, if you would like, please feel free to introduce any members of your family that are with you here today because, as Senator Cardin noted, I know that this is a family affair, and we are extraordinarily grateful for their service, as well. And we would like to welcome them all to the committee. I know this is a great occasion for them.

So what I would like to do is to allow Senator Kyl to introduce Ms. Barrett. And then, Ms. Barrett, we will go with your statement.

Senator Casey, I am sorry. Who were you going to be introducing?

Senator CASEY. Mr. Volker.

Senator OBAMA. Mr. Volker. So, Mr. Volker, you are down at the end. So I will make sure that Senator Casey has occasion to introduce you before your testimony.

Senator Kyl, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF HON. JON KYL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM ARIZONA

Senator KYL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Got it. Thank you very much for your courtesy in allowing me to formally introduce Ms. Barbara Barrett to you. I want to assure you that mine is more than the obligatory introduction of a constituent.

I calculated that I have known Barbara Barrett for almost 40 years, and we have been good friends during that entire time. And I would also note that Senator McCain strongly endorses her nomination and confirmation, and we have submitted a statement for the record from Senator McCain, as well.

[Senator McCain's statement appears at the end of this hearing in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section.]

Ms. Barrett has a resume, which I can't do justice to, and frankly, in the interest of time, I am just going to highlight a couple of matters from it. But I think it is important to also get a measure of the individual, and I will really close with what I think are her most important attributes in terms of representation of the United States in an important country abroad.

She has served as—nationally, for example, as vice chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board here in Washington, Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration. In Phoenix, she was a partner in a prominent law firm there. She has served in our community in numerous ways, and I do encourage you to look at the resume to see the breadth of her experience there.

She has also represented interests in Washington, DC, and internationally, as well. She has been a teacher as a fellow at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. She served as president of the International Women's Forum. She was Chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, which looked very hard at U.S. efforts at public diplomacy and had some significant recommendations to make in that regard. She was senior advisor to the U.S. mission to the United Nations.

One of her current passions, which I really admire—and incidentally illustrates that her travel schedule is, frankly, more robust than mine, and I go home almost every weekend—is working with the Thunderbird School of Management and the U.S. Afghan Women's Council on a program to work with and mentor and train Afghan women as entrepreneurs and effective members of their communities. I know this is a passion because I have talked to her about it on numerous occasions.

I could go on about her resume, but I really want to just tell you about the kind of person that Barbara Barrett is. I can't think of anyone who could more effectively represent the interests of the United States Government in a foreign embassy. She is obviously highly intelligent, has a broad background of experience, great skills, a tremendous personality, huge energy. I talked about her travel schedule. She will work at it very hard. But most importantly, she has the diplomatic skills to represent the United States in an important post abroad.

And so, I urge you to take as quick action as you can in this committee to confirm these nominees and enable full representation of the United States in these important posts around the world, beginning with my long-time friend, Ms. Barbara Barrett.

Senator OBAMA. Well, that is a wonderful introduction, and I would note that my understanding is it is colder in Finland than in Phoenix. So I don't know if you have gone shopping yet, but——

Senator KYL. Anything to sacrifice for the United States. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you. Thank you very much, Senator Kyl, for the very gracious introduction.

Ms. Barrett, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA McCONNELL BARRETT, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

Ms. BARRETT. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I consider it an extraordinary privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to the United States ambassador role to Finland. I am grateful to President Bush and to Secretary Rice for their trust.

If confirmed, I intend to demonstrate that their trust is well placed by building upon the excellent existing relationships between our countries and by advancing American interests in Finland.

I thank Senator Jon Kyl for introducing me today and Senator McCain for his written record.

I recognize that it is a demanding responsibility to serve the public as an ambassador of the United States of America. Thirty-three years ago this spring, I began my journey in public service as an intern at the Arizona State legislature. My respect and admiration for government leadership was inspired by observing then-Senate Majority Leader Sandra Day O'Connor. She was a leader among her colleagues, an advocate for transformative legislation, and a champion of meaningful causes.

During my legislative experience, I learned the importance of serving constituents and making practical improvements to people's lives through public service. Meanwhile, in business, I was an executive of two Fortune 500 companies, chairman of the board of a small bank, CEO of the American Management Association, a fellow at Harvard's Institute of Politics, and on the boards of two aircraft manufacturers and an airline. Tangential to business, I learned to fly a plane and shoe a horse.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, if confirmed as ambassador, I will advance the priorities of the United States mission to Finland. The first priority of our embassy is continuing

high-level bilateral cooperation with Finland to combat terrorism. In 2006, Finland was one of the first countries to sign the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, an effort co-established by the United States and the Russian Federation. Additionally, Finland has actively participated in counterterrorism and nonproliferation initiatives sponsored by the United Nations and the European Union.

The Finnish civil aviation authority has fully implemented the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's security directives regarding air carriers operating to the United States. I understand the sensitivity of these aviation cooperation efforts because I am a pilot, and I served on the Phoenix airport boards and the Civil Aeronautics Board and was second-in-command at the FAA.

Serving today at the governance level in defense, technology, and engineering companies, I work with some of the world's most pressing national security issues, starting with terrorism. Ensuring the welfare and safety of American citizens at home and abroad would be among my highest priorities. So, if confirmed, I will continue to advance our high level of coordination between Finland and the United States to deter, detect, and defeat terrorism.

A second mission priority is our cooperation with Finland on peacekeeping and regional stability, especially in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Finland, a long-time advocate for Kosovo, has been instrumental in mustering international support for this new nation and has deployed more than 400 troops with NATO forces there.

In Afghanistan, too, Finns are part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force. Finland demonstrates its long-term commitment to Afghanistan, not just by contributing troops, but also through development assistance, poppy eradication, and other counternarcotics efforts.

My work with the U.S. Afghan Women's Council inspired Thunderbird's Artemis Project, a program, as Senator Kyl mentioned, that trains and mentors Afghan women entrepreneurs. Working with Afghan students, doctors, business leaders, and American troops on the ground in Afghanistan makes me respect and profoundly appreciate Finland's support.

Having observed circumstances, both in the Balkan States and in Afghanistan, and having met with government officials in both places, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that Finland's important contributions to peace and stability in Kosovo and Afghanistan continue and receive our recognition.

The missions third priority is promoting pro-growth innovation for energy security and the environment. During 2008, as was mentioned, Finland is chairing the OSCE, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. And Finland is also a global leader in biofuels and renewable energy with a quarter of its total energy consumption derived from renewable resources.

As a sister of a liquefied natural gas supertanker captain, I understand the disparate distribution of petroleum and other fuel reserves and the resultant urgency of diversifying fuel sources. On this and many other topics, Finland and the United States will mutually benefit from an exchange of information gained from research, innovation, and thoughtful leadership.

Through the years, I have instigated, organized, and chaired countless international symposia, large and small. If confirmed, energy and environment will be topics of my focused attention.

Another priority for the mission is to enhance mutual understanding and protect and promote U.S. interests. Finland is a true friend of the United States and a transatlantic advocate for beliefs that we share. As Chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, chairman of Thunderbird School for Global Management, and past chairman of the International Women's Forum, I have led delegations to China, Russia, South Africa, Israel, Jordan, and a number of other important nations. I have lectured at the Moscow School of Politics. I have spoken at college campuses and visited medical clinics and elementary schoolrooms in rural villages on six continents.

I know the importance of academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges. And if confirmed, I will foster and sustain our relationship with Finland by energetically engaging personally with the Government and people of Finland to advance our shared values and interests. And I will do my utmost to lead by example and support our embassy's efforts to expand communication and engagement through vigorous public diplomacy.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, my personal interest, my professional experience in defense, international business, aviation, and public policy and law prepare me well for ambassadorial duties. My life experience has been strengthening political and economic ties with other nations and achieving results through mutual understanding, communication, and collaboration—in short, diplomacy.

If confirmed, I pledge to do everything I can to lead the embassy that represents the finest values of the United States, and I will do my level best to advance American interests by strengthening the bonds between the United States and Finland.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Barrett follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA MCCONNELL BARRETT, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this committee, I consider it an extraordinary privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Finland. I am grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust. If confirmed, I intend to demonstrate that their trust is well placed, by building upon the excellent existing relationships between our countries and by advancing American interests in Finland.

I thank Arizona Senator Jon Kyl for introducing me today.

I recognize that it is a demanding responsibility to serve the public as an Ambassador of the United States of America. Thirty-three years ago this spring, I began my journey in public service as an intern in the Arizona State Legislature. My respect and admiration for governmental leadership was inspired by observing then-Senate Majority Leader Sandra Day O'Connor. She was a leader among her colleagues, an advocate of transformative legislation, and a champion of meaningful causes. During my legislative experience, I learned the importance of serving constituents and making practical improvements to people's lives through public service.

Meanwhile, in business, I was an executive of two Fortune 500 companies, chairman of the board of a small bank, CEO of the American Management Association, a fellow at Harvard's Institute of Politics and on the boards of two aircraft manufacturers and an airline. Tangential to business, I have learned to fly a plane and shoe a horse.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, if confirmed as Ambassador, I will advance the priorities of the United States mission in Finland. The first priority of our embassy is continuing high-level bilateral cooperation with Finland to combat terrorism. In 2006, Finland was one of the first countries to sign the Global Initiative To Combat Nuclear Terrorism, an effort coestablished by the United States and the Russian Federation. Additionally, Finland has actively participated in counterterrorism and nonproliferation initiatives sponsored by both the United Nations and the European Union. The Finnish Civil Aviation Authority has fully implemented U.S. Federal Aviation Administration security directives regarding air carriers operating to the United States.

I understand the sensitivity of their aviation cooperation because I am a pilot and served on the Phoenix airports board and the U.S. Civil Aeronautics board and was second in command at the FAA. Serving today at the governance level of defense, technology, and engineering companies, I work with some of the world's most pressing national security issues, starting with terrorism. Ensuring the welfare and safety of American citizens at home and abroad would be among my highest priorities. So, if confirmed, I will continue to advance our high level of coordination between Finland and the United States to deter, detect, and defeat terrorism.

A second mission priority is our cooperation with Finland on peacekeeping and regional stability, especially in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Finland, a long-time advocate for Kosovo, has been instrumental in mustering international support for this new nation, and has deployed more than 400 troops with NATO forces there. In Afghanistan too, Finns are part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Finland demonstrates its long-term commitment to Afghanistan not just by contributing troops, but also through development assistance, poppy eradication, and other counternarcotic efforts.

My work with the U.S. Afghan Women's Council inspired Thunderbird's Project Artemis, a program that trains and mentors Afghan women entrepreneurs. Working with Afghan students, doctors, business leaders, and American troops on Afghan soil makes me respect and profoundly appreciate Finland's support. Having observed circumstances both in the Balkan states and in Afghanistan and having met with government officials in both places, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that Finland's important contributions to peace and stability in Kosovo and Afghanistan continue—and receive our recognition.

The mission's third priority is promoting pro-growth innovation for energy security and the environment. During 2008 Finland is chairing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Finland is also a global leader in biofuels and renewable energy with a quarter of its total energy consumption derived from renewable sources. As a sister of an LNG supertanker captain I understand the disparate distribution of petroleum and other fuel reserves and the resultant urgency of diversifying fuel sources. On this and many other topics Finland and the United States will mutually benefit from an exchange of information gained from research, innovation and thoughtful leadership. Through the years I have instigated, organized, and chaired countless international symposia, large and small. If confirmed, energy and the environment will be topics of my focused engagement.

Another priority of the U.S. mission is to enhance mutual understanding and protect and promote U.S. interests. Dating back to John Morton, a United States immigrant from Finland and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the Finnish people have proven that they understand and share our core values, including an abiding belief that all people deserve freedom, democracy, and human rights. Finland has been recognized for its lack of corruption, respect for democracy, and its consistently high quality, universal education. Finland is a true friend of the United States and a transatlantic advocate of beliefs we share.

As Chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, Thunderbird School of Global Management, and the International Women's Forum, I have led delegations to China, Russia, South Africa, Israel, Jordan, Ireland, Chile, El Salvador, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Ecuador, and other important nations. I have lectured at the Moscow School of Politics, spoken on college campuses, and visited medical clinics and elementary schoolrooms in rural villages on six continents. I know the importance of academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges. If confirmed, I will foster and sustain our relationship with Finland by energetically engaging personally with the Government and the people of Finland to advance our shared values and interests. And I will do my utmost to lead by example and support our embassy's efforts to expand communication and engagement through vigorous public diplomacy.

A final priority element for the United States mission in Finland that I will mention is expanding economic opportunities for bilateral trade and investment. The potential is vast for enhanced economic cooperation between the United States and

Finland and through Finland to other parts of the European Union, the Baltic States, and Russia. Finland is a leader in research and development with leading edge advancements in technology, biotechnology, telecommunications, and equipment. While practicing law in Arizona, I was Chairman of the Arizona District Export Council, the Arizona World Affairs Council, and the U.S. Secretary of Commerce's Export Conference. I worked to advance the market for American goods and services by hosting and leading trade missions, seminars, and other trade advancement efforts. During the Uruguay round of GATT, I was a trade advisor involved in efforts to improve global protection of intellectual property. At the Civil Aeronautics board, I participated in bilateral and multilateral negotiations between the United States and nations in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. If confirmed, I will continue Ambassador Ware's efforts to create opportunities for U.S. companies by expanding our trading and investment relationships.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, my personal interest and my professional experience in defense, international business, aviation, public policy, and law prepare me well for ambassadorial duties. My life experience has been strengthening political and economic ties with other nations and achieving results through mutual understanding, communication, and collaboration—in short, diplomacy. If confirmed, I pledge to do everything I can to lead an embassy that represents the finest values of the United States, and I will do my level best to advance American interests by strengthening the bonds between the United States and Finland.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much, Ms. Barrett.

Next, Mr. Ghafari.

STATEMENT OF HON. YOUSIF BOUTROUS GHAFARI, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Mr. GHAFARI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for recognizing my immigrant status, and with that, I disclose forgive me for my accent.

I would also like to acknowledge this morning the presence of my wife, Mara Ghafari, for 30 years, the mother of our three children; our son, Peter Ghafari, who is here today. Our two daughters are graduating very shortly from college. They could not be here, and you would be happy to know, Senators, they both will be taxpayers very shortly, with a smile.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to appear before you today as President Bush and Secretary Rice's nominee to represent the United States in Slovenia. I am privileged that they have selected me to represent our country as Ambassador to Slovenia and honored that this committee is willing to consider my nomination.

I believe that my presence here today is a testament to the power of American democracy. I can think of no other country in which the opportunities for education, economic success, and personal accomplishments are so great. I have been extraordinarily fortunate. I came here as a young man with very little means and no family connections. Yet I had the opportunity to receive a good education and establish successful businesses. We are living the American dream. And now I have come to that point in my career where I hope to be granted the privilege of serving my country.

Our bilateral relationship with Slovenia is strong and vibrant, particularly now since Slovenia holds the European Union presidency for the first half of 2008. It is a relationship enriched by generations of Slovene Americans and the enduring ties they maintain with their land of origin, including your honorable colleague, Senator George Voinovich. Thank you for being here, Senator.

As the first of the former Yugoslav republics to gain independence, Slovenia plays a key role in the Western Balkans. It has worked long and hard to stabilize the entire Southeast Europe region, was the first of the former Yugoslav States to gain membership in NATO and the European Union, and actively contributes to regional security by deploying more than 350 troops to Kosovo.

In its role as European Union president, Slovenia played a remarkable role in coalescing European support for resolution of Kosovo's status and recognized Kosovo soon after its declaration of independence. The United States and Slovenia share the goal of European Union expansion in the Balkans, believing that it will further regional stabilization and development. As a strong, stable, and economically prosperous member of the Union, Slovenia recognizes that it has both a responsibility and an interest in aiding Western Balkan nations to move toward greater European and transatlantic integration and has undertaken several initiatives to achieve this goal.

One of Slovenia's notable initiatives is the International Trust Fund for demining and mine victims assistance, ITF. Since its inception in 1998, the ITF has raised more than $220 million in donations, and as of October 2006, the fund had cleared nearly 70 million square meters of mines and aided more than 900 mine victims.

We have also worked side-by-side with Slovenia in the struggle against terrorism. Slovenia has contributed forces to the international missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and elsewhere, recently deployed more than 11 percent of its armed forces abroad. It recently increased its troop contribution in Afghanistan and has contributed equipment and ammunition to the Afghani Armed Forces.

If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to promote continued strong bilateral cooperation in the fight against terror and to encourage the Slovene Government to increase its participation in NATO missions.

Slovenia's strong economy presents many opportunities for United States businesses. There are approximately 40 United States companies with investments and/or sales offices in Slovenia, and it is estimated that United States investment totals more than $490 million. We should continue to encourage the Slovenian Government to strengthen its market economy through privatization and increase foreign direct investment.

If confirmed, I will work to increase opportunities for U.S. companies and further expand our trade and investment, resulting in benefits to both our peoples.

Finally, if confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to continue to foster and sustain our close relationship by personally reaching out to the Slovene Government, people, and media to explain the United States perspective, to promote United States policy interests, to remind young people of America's constant support for peace, freedom, and human rights in Southeastern Europe and throughout the world. I will continue to support our embassy's efforts to expand academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges, all of which will serve to bring our peoples closer together.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, the people of America are diverse in origin, religion, and education. Yet they are almost universally inclusive and generous. Our way of government, even in the harsh light of an imperfect reality, is fair and welcoming and enables its citizens to live in safety and prosperity.

I hope, as a personal mission, even in a small way to serve as a testament to the inclusive and generous spirit of the American people and our way of life. I thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ghafari follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. YOUSIF BOUTROUS GHAFARI, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to appear before you today as President Bush and Secretary Rice's nominee to represent the United States in Slovenia. I am privileged that they have selected me to represent our country as ambassador to Slovenia, and honored that this committee is willing to consider my nomination.

I believe that my presence here today is a testament to the power of American democracy. There is a reason the opportunities that are possible in this great country are referred to as the "American dream." I can think of no other country in which the opportunities for education, economic success, and personal accomplishments are so great. I have been extraordinarily fortunate; I came here as a young man with very little means and no family connections, yet I had the opportunity to receive a good education, establish successful businesses, marry, and raise a family. We are living the American dream. And now, I have come to that point in my career where I hope to be granted the privilege of serving my country.

Our bilateral relationship with Slovenia is strong and vibrant, particularly now since Slovenia holds the European Union Presidency for the first half of 2008. It is a relationship enriched by generations of Slovene-Americans and the enduring ties they maintain with their land of origin.

As the first of the former Yugoslav Republics to gain independence, Slovenia plays a key role in the Western Balkans. It has worked long and hard to stabilize the entire Southeast Europe region, was the first of the former Yugoslav states to gain membership in NATO and the European Union, and actively contributes to regional security by deploying more than 350 troops to Kosovo. In its role as European Union President, Slovenia played a remarkable role in coalescing European support for resolution of Kosovo status and recognized Kosovo soon after its declaration of independence.

The United States and Slovenia share the goal of European Union expansion in the Balkans, believing that it will further regional stabilization and development. As a strong, stable and economically prosperous member of the Union, Slovenia recognizes that it has both a responsibility and an interest in aiding Western Balkan nations to move toward greater European and transatlantic integration and has undertaken several initiatives to achieve this goal.

One of Slovenia's notable initiatives is the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance (ITF). Since its inception in 1998, the ITF has raised more than $220 million in donations from various countries, the European Union, the U.N. Development Program and more than 70 private companies. More than $100 million of this total has come from the U.S. Government as part of a program mandated by Congress that matches nearly all donations made by other governments, individuals, and corporations. As of October 2006, the fund had cleared nearly 70 million square meters of mines and aided more than 900 mine victims, most of them coming from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Both the Slovene Embassy in Washington and the United States Embassy in Ljubljana have been involved in fundraising efforts for ITF.

We have also worked side-by-side with Slovenia in the struggle against terrorism. Slovenia has contributed forces to the international missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and elsewhere, and recently deployed more than 11 percent of its armed forces abroad. It recently increased its troop contribution in Afghanistan and has contributed equipment and ammunition to the Afghani Armed Forces. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to promote continued strong bilateral cooperation in the fight against terror and to encourage the Slovene Government to increase its participation in NATO missions, particularly in Afghanistan, where it could offer an Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team.

Slovenia's strong economy presents many opportunities for United States businesses. There are approximately 40 United States companies with investments and/or sales offices in Slovenia and it is estimated that United States investment totals more than $490 million. We should continue to encourage the Slovenian Government to strengthen its market economy through privatization and increased foreign direct investment. If confirmed, I will work to increase opportunities for U.S. companies and further expand our trade and investment, resulting in benefits to both our peoples.

Finally, if confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to continue to foster and sustain our close relationship by personally reaching out to the Slovene Government, people and media to explain the United States perspective, to promote United States policy interests, to remind young people of America's constant support for peace, freedom, and human rights in Southeastern Europe, and throughout the world. I will continue to support our embassy's efforts to expand academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges, all of which will serve to bring our peoples closer together.

Mr. Chairman, the people of America are diverse in origin, religion, and education, yet they are almost universally inclusive and generous. Our way of government, even in the harsh light of an imperfect reality, is fair and welcoming, and enables its citizens to live in safety and prosperity. I hope, as a personal mission, even in a small way, to serve as a testament to the inclusive and generous spirit of the American people and our way of life. I thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much, Mr. Ghafari.

Mr. Urbancic and Ms. McEldowney, Senator Casey, I think, may be constrained by his schedule. So I hope you don't mind if we go a little bit out of order, allow Senator Casey to introduce Mr. Volker and allow Mr. Volker to go ahead and make his statement. And then we will go back to you guys. Okay.

Senator Casey.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and I do want to thank the other nominees who are here for this courtesy.

Mr. Chairman, it is my distinct pleasure this morning to introduce Mr. Kurt Volker to the committee. Kurt with his family appears before the committee as the nominee for one of our most important diplomatic postings, the United States Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, we know as NATO.

The NATO alliance just completed a major summit in Bucharest, Romania, where the alliance agreed to accept two new members, Croatia and Albania, and took action on other issues, including bolstering force levels in Afghanistan. NATO, almost 60 years old following its founding, remains the anchor of the relationship between the United States and Europe. I believe Kurt Volker is the right person to represent the United States at our NATO mission in Brussels.

Kurt was born and raised in Hatboro, PA. He is a proud graduate of Hatboro-Horsham Senior High School. Following high school, he chose to remain in Pennsylvania and attended Temple University in Philadelphia. Following college graduation, he moved to Washington, DC, to earn a master's degree in international relations from the George Washington University.

Kurt then entered the United States Foreign Service as a career officer in 1988, where he served with honor and distinction ever since. I want to note that Kurt is married to Karen Volker, another

Foreign Service officer, and is the proud father of two daughters, Sonja and Katja. Did I pronounce those correctly?

Mr. VOLKER. Very close.

Senator CASEY. Okay. [Laughter.]

Help me.

Mr. VOLKER. Sonja and Katja.

Senator CASEY. Sonja and Katja. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, you have Kurt's CV in front of you, as well as other members of the committee, so I won't recite every detail. But I want to quickly run through some of the highlights of his career, which demonstrate how rapidly Kurt has risen through the ranks of the Foreign Service.

First of all, he served as a special assistant to the United States envoy for negotiations in Bosnia during the 1990s; then as the deputy political counselor at the United States embassy in Budapest, Hungary, from 1994 to 1997; the senior advisor to then-NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson at the beginning of this decade; next, the director on the National Security Council responsible for NATO in Western Europe from 2001 to 2005; and today, Mr. Volker serves as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe and Eurasian Affairs at the State Department.

He serves as second-in-command for this key regional bureau at State and is focused on U.S. relations with NATO, the European Union, and key European States. Looking at his background, you recognize that Kurt's entire career has helped prepare him for this moment, to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to NATO. He recognizes that NATO retains an enduring value, even though the cold war is a distant memory and that when NATO acts in a unified manner, the entire world benefits.

I am also proud that Kurt represents the very best of the U.S. Foreign Service. A seasoned diplomat who advances the interests of his country without regard to politics or partisanship, Kurt has proudly served four presidential administrations during his career. He played a valuable role in helping Hungary prepare for NATO accession during the Clinton administration, but also was instrumental in spearheading NATO's next two rounds of expansion during the Bush administration.

Mr. Chairman, for all these reasons, I heartily endorse Kurt Volker, a distinguished native of the State of Pennsylvania, to be confirmed as the U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO, and I thank you for allowing me to speak this morning on his behalf.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much, Senator Casey.

Given that wonderful introduction, I think it is best if, Mr. Volker, you go ahead and proceed. And if you want to introduce—as a father of two daughters, I am a little biased here. But feel free to introduce those exceptional young ladies, as well.

STATEMENT OF KURT D. VOLKER, NOMINEE TO BE U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. VOLKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator. After an introduction like that, I think it is best if I don't say anything at all.

But I would like to introduce my wife, Karen, who is here, and my two daughters, Sonja and Katja. Karen—Mr. Chairman, you will be interested—attended Occidental College from 1979 to 1981.

Senator OBAMA. We overlapped.

Ms. VOLKER. We had friends in common.

Senator OBAMA. That is wonderful.

Mr. VOLKER. Friends in common. And my oldest daughter, Sonja, began school in Brussels when I was working for Lord Robertson at NATO and was born there.

Senator OBAMA. Wonderful.

Mr. VOLKER. It is an honor to be here before this committee as the President's nominee to serve as Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and a particular honor also to be introduced by Senator Casey from my home State, Pennsylvania. And I am grateful that you would take the time and offer such words of encouragement. Thank you.

I am also delighted, I should say, to see so many friends from the Diplomatic Corps from European countries here today, and I just want to point out Ambassador Gianni Castellaneta from Italy, who is a good friend. Thank you for being here and for your support.

I have a longer statement I would like to enter into the record. Mr. Chairman, I am especially pleased to be nominated to serve as Ambassador to NATO because I have dedicated my career to building a healthy, secure, democratic transatlantic community. In 20 years in the Foreign Service, I have served four administrations working on our NATO alliance from many angles—the executive branch, I spent a year here in the Senate as a legislative fellow, and at NATO in some of our allied countries.

I have worked closely with this committee and its staff on a variety of issues over the years. And I am grateful for the close cooperation that we enjoy today between the committee and the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, which I represent. This career-long commitment to NATO and to our transatlantic partnership with Europe stems from my commitment to the founding principles of our Nation—the values of individual liberty, democracy, market economy, human rights, and the rule of law—which transcend our national borders and define the best hopes of humanity.

We and the other members of NATO are part of a single transatlantic democratic community based on these shared values. We view challenges in the world from this shared perspective, and we need to work together if we are to deal with these challenges effectively and advance these values in the world.

The fact that the cold war is over does not mean that threats to our democratic community have gone away. They have changed from the threat of ground attack in Europe to threats such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the consequences of failed States. And NATO has done a remarkable job securing the freedom of this community for nearly 60 years while transforming itself as threats have changed. It has added new members, taken on critical operational missions, built partnerships with nations around the globe. NATO is now a frontline alliance dealing with the challenges of the 21st century.

The just-concluded Bucharest summit further advanced the transformation of NATO, renewing our commitment to operations in Afghanistan and in Kosovo, inviting new members, strengthening partnerships, and focusing on the defense capabilities needed for the future. We got a lot done at Bucharest. I think we have a lot more to do as well, and I think we need to keep working on some of the issues that you and the other Senators have raised.

The United States is deeply committed to the effort in Afghanistan and to all NATO missions. We have made enormous investment, suffered serious losses. I honor the service of our men and women in uniform, as well as our diplomats and civilians in the service of NATO.

And I also want to pay tribute to the contributions and sacrifices of our allies and partners. Several allies are fighting hard in Afghanistan and have suffered fatalities. Denmark and the U.K. in recent days. Canada, in particular, has suffered significant losses. And the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Australia as a non-NATO ally. Indeed, all 26 members of NATO and 14 partners have made sacrifices and are making meaningful contributions in Afghanistan.

Though we still need more forces and greater flexibility in the deployments of some, it is important to stress that we respect and honor all of these contributions to our common efforts. At the Bucharest summit, allies and partners such as France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and others came forward with contributions to our operations.

NATO faces serious challenges on the ground in Afghanistan, but also in maintaining the political solidarity and the defense contributions needed for a strong and healthy alliance. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to NATO, I will focus my efforts on strengthening support and understanding in Europe for two fundamental ideas. That the prosperity and well-being of our democratic societies still depends critically on security, so we must invest in security. And that the security of Europe and North America remain fundamentally linked, so we must face our modern-day security challenges together. These are the challenges NATO must tackle in the coming years.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. If confirmed, I will do my very best to serve my country with distinction, and I look forward to working closely with you and this committee in the process. I would be pleased to hear your views and answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Volker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KURT D. VOLKER, NOMINEE TO BE U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

It is an honor to come before this committee as the President's nominee to serve as the United States Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I am grateful for the confidence expressed by President Bush and Secretary Rice through this nomination.

I am joined here today by my wife, Karen, also a career member of the Foreign Service. I am also delighted to see friends here from the diplomatic corps and others with whom I have worked to transform NATO. Their support means a great deal

to me, and I thank them for being here. I am also grateful for the support of my family and others who cannot be here today.

Mr. Chairman, I am especially pleased to be nominated to serve as Ambassador to NATO because I have dedicated my career to building a secure transatlantic community, based on shared democratic values.

In 20 years in the Foreign Service, I have served four administrations, advancing our agenda for NATO—at our embassies in the United Kingdom and Hungary; as a legislative fellow here in the United States Senate; at the U.S. Mission to NATO and in the NATO Secretary General's Private Office; at the National Security Council; and currently as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. In this latter capacity, I am proud to have worked closely with this committee on a variety of issues and am grateful for the close relationship between the committee and the European Bureau.

I am committed to NATO and to our transatlantic partnership because I am committed to the founding principles of our Nation—the values of individual liberty, democracy, market economy, human rights, and the rule of law. These are principles which transcend our national borders and define the best hopes of humanity. We and the other members of NATO are part of a single transatlantic community, based on these shared democratic values.

Those of us who are a part of this community view security challenges in the world from the shared perspective of our values. We know that we need to work together if we are to deal with these challenges effectively, and to continue to advance these enduring values in the world.

NATO's defense of freedom helped to end the cold war. Yet the end of the cold war did not mean the end of threats to our democratic community. The strategic landscape has changed and NATO has changed with it. To be sure, NATO's core mission remains the collective defense of its members. But the means by which NATO goes about this mission have changed dramatically over time.

NATO is now in the process of learning how to defend our transatlantic community against new threats and challenges that are often global in scope—threats such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the consequences of failed states.

In its nearly 60-year history NATO has served as:

- Our defense of freedom against the Soviet threat, leading eventually to the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the birth of a Europe whole and free.
- The military force that ended ethnic cleansing in the Balkans and kept the peace so democratic governance could emerge.
- The driver for democratic progress in Central Europe, admitting 10 new allies since the fall of the Berlin wall—and deciding to admit still more at the Bucharest Summit last week.
- A core security organization building partnerships with dozens of nations around the world.
- A front-line alliance in dealing with the 21st century challenges of terrorism and extremism—for example, by conducting counterterrorism operations in the Mediterranean, or running the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan.

The Bucharest Summit further advanced NATO's transformation, by renewing our commitment to operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, inviting new members, setting a vision of future membership for others, strengthening partnerships across the globe, and focusing on the defense capabilities needed for the future, including missile defense.

NATO's most important operational challenge is in Afghanistan. The United States is deeply committed to the long-term effort in Afghanistan. We have made enormous investments in blood and treasure. I honor the service of our men and women in uniform, as well as our diplomats and civilians. I respect enormously the families who sacrifice so their loved ones can contribute to meeting these important challenges.

I also want to pay tribute to the contributions and sacrifices of our allies and partners in Afghanistan. They are fighting hard, especially in the East and South, and have suffered significant casualties—Denmark and the U.K. in recent days, but also Canada, the Netherlands, Australia, and others. All 26 allies, along with 14 non-NATO partners, have troops in Afghanistan. All are playing a vital role, and all are determined to see this mission through to success.

At the Bucharest Summit, allies endorsed a strategic vision for Afghanistan that reaffirms their long-term commitment to build an enduring, stable, secure, prosperous, and democratic Afghan state, free from the threat of terrorism. Many allies backed up these words with deeds by announcing new force contributions.

Most notably, though by no means alone, President Sarkozy announced that France will send a new battalion to Eastern Afghanistan, freeing some United States troops to do more to help allies in the South. In addition to the French contribution and the temporary addition of 3,500 United States Marines, United Kingdom, Polish, Czech and other additions bring the total to about 6,000 new forces so far in 2008.

That said, all allies must do still more to provide the combat troops, helicopters, and trainers crucial to winning this counterinsurgency fight. Allies must also make serious efforts to ensure their citizens understand that the mission matters, success is within reach, and humanitarian assistance is possible only in a secure environment.

NATO faces real challenges, operationally on the ground, as well as politically in Europe. Violence levels are up, particularly in southern Afghanistan where opium production is also largest. Many Europeans are skeptical about the Afghanistan mission—people either believe it does not matter to them, that success is out of reach, or that humanitarian assistance alone should be enough. We are working with our NATO partners to clarify the mission and its importance. As agreed in the common vision statement issued at the Bucharest Summit, we are building a shared NATO counterinsurgency strategy that provides for population security, real economic development, and progress in governance. Civil-military coordination can and should be better, and we welcome the naming of a new U.N. Special Representative, Kai Eide, who will bring greater coherence to our international civilian efforts. The narcotics trade fuels the insurgency and fosters corruption, making all other efforts an uphill struggle. NATO allies can do more to help the Afghans lead their own counternarcotics strategy.

In acknowledging the serious challenges, we also must recognize our achievements. Working with our Afghan allies, NATO forces thwarted the Taliban's much-hyped "spring offensive" last year. Allies and partners are helping the Afghans build capacity so they can improve good governance and increasingly stand themselves at the forefront of security operations.

It is easy to forget the gains made since 2001. Under the Taliban, there were only 900,000 kids in school—none of them girls, because it was illegal. Only 8 percent of the population had access to medical care. There were only 50 kilometers of paved roads. The Taliban imposed a dark and severe regime on the people of Afghanistan, while terrorists were allowed to train and export their violence and extremism to other countries.

Today, there are nearly 6 million kids in school—over 1.5 million of them girls. Over 65 percent of the population has access to medical care, and there are over 4,000 kilometers of paved roads. The government was elected by 8 million Afghan voters, on the basis of a constitution approved through an open process, a Loya Jirga.

To be sure—the challenges in Afghanistan are great, and success will take time. But we are doing the right thing in Afghanistan, we are making progress, and we should continue.

NATO's other major operation is in Kosovo, where NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) remains the ultimate guarantor of peace and stability for all people in Kosovo, with nearly 16,000 personnel from 35 allied and non-NATO troop contributing nations. It was NATO that ended ethnic cleansing not only in Kosovo but in the wider Balkans, and it has kept the peace that has enabled democratic governance to emerge.

At the recently concluded Bucharest Summit, NATO recommitted itself to helping ensure a safe and secure environment and declared its intention to play a key role in the establishment of a new, multiethnic Kosovo Security Force and a civilian agency to oversee it.

NATO has played, and will continue to play other vital operational roles-from its role in securing peace in Bosnia (which has now been passed on to the European Union), to counterterrorist naval operations in the Mediterranean, to offering support for African Union forces in Darfur and transporting humanitarian supplies to Pakistan after a major earthquake, and Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina.

One of the fundamental principles of the alliance is that the door to membership is open to those European democracies who wish to pursue it. The enlargement process has been and remains a driving force for countries to focus on difficult reforms. The United States must continue to provide leadership and clarity of purpose in expanding the alliance to advance the goal of a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

NATO enlargement has been a historic success—securing freedom, democracy, and burgeoning prosperity for 100 million people in Central and Eastern Europe, and strengthening NATO in the process.

In Bucharest, allies reiterated the importance and success of NATO's open door policy. Membership invitations were issued to Albania and Croatia, marking an his-

toric occasion for security and stability in the Balkans. Allies also determined that Macedonia is ready to receive an invitation as soon as the name issue is resolved. We hope this is done as quickly as possible. We look forward to working in close cooperation with the Senate as we seek its advice and consent to the ratification of the protocols of accession for each of the invitees, which are to be signed by July 2008.

Allies provided an unprecedented commitment to Ukraine and Georgia, stating unequivocally that these countries will become members of NATO. They welcomed their request to participate in the Membership Action Plan (MAP). Allies recognized that the MAP process will benefit reform efforts and authorized foreign ministers to review and take decisions on their MAP participation in December 2008. We must continue to support their aspirations.

Allies also invited Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro, to begin an intensified dialog relating to their membership aspirations and conveyed their desire to develop a closer relationship with Serbia. NATO's cooperation with these countries will further increase stability in the western Balkans.

To further secure freedom and democracy, NATO is also strengthening its relationships with partners across the globe and the developing of new capabilities, such as missile defense, energy security, and cyber defense.

When the wall fell in 1989, NATO was an alliance of 16 members and no partners. Today, NATO has 26 members—with 2 new invitees, prospective membership for others, over 20 partners in Europe and Eurasia, 7 in the Mediterranean, 4 in the Persian Gulf, and others from around the globe.

Through the creation of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace, NATO provided the political and practical cooperation necessary to help the newly independent nations of Europe integrate into the transatlantic community.

NATO has also established the Mediterranean Dialog and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative to reach out to the Middle East, and reached out to new partners around the world on the basis of shared security interests and democratic values. Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and now Singapore are making valuable contributions to NATO operations, especially in Afghanistan, and the alliance decided at Bucharest to remain open to developing relationships with additional countries.

It is also vital that NATO work effectively with international organizations such as the European Union and United Nations. A capable and united European Union is in NATO's interest. We recognize the value that a stronger and more capable European defense brings, providing capabilities to address common challenges, and support NATO and the European Union working closely together. We also need to work as closely as possible with the United Nations, particularly in U.N.-mandated, NATO-led operations as in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

In Iraq, NATO provides leadership training to Iraqi Security Forces to help establish a more secure environment. The NATO training mission in Iraq is looking to broaden its training mission in response to Prime Minister Maliki's requests. Allies have also agreed to proposals for a structured cooperation framework to develop NATO's long-term relationship with Iraq.

NATO is committed to building a relationship where NATO and Russia can work together to address common interests such as nonproliferation, counterterrorism, and border controls and counternarcotics with respect to Afghanistan. We welcomed Russia's most recent offer of a mechanism for transiting nonmilitary freight through Russian territory in support of ISAF.

On other issues such as Kosovo, missile defense, and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE), serious differences remain. On CFE, NATO has endorsed the U.S. parallel actions package, which we believe can ensure the viability of this important security regime.

We are working hard to develop the capabilities needed for a new century-the NATO Response Force, the C–17 consortium, the Special Forces coordination, and steps toward NATO missile defenses. At Bucharest, allies recognized that ballistic missile proliferation poses an increasing threat; that missile defense forms part of a broader response to counter this threat; and that the U.S. system will make a substantial contribution to protecting alliance territories and populations. NATO will continue its work on missile defense, and also with Russia as well, in order to provide more effective defenses for all alliance territory.

A NATO Cyber Defense Policy, endorsed at Bucharest, enhances our ability to protect our sensitive infrastructure, allows pool experiences, and come to the assistance of an ally whose infrastructure is under threat. I thank Senators on this committee for focusing attention on this issue following the cyber attacks against Estonia.

NATO's role in energy security, noted at Bucharest, will help address threats to energy infrastructure and in order to better safeguard the security interests of the allies. I appreciate the leadership of Senators on this committee for their involvement in energy security and believe NATO is building a response to the concerns you have raised.

NATO faces genuine challenges, as it always has. The strength and enduring character of the alliance comes from our ability to face these challenges together. As Winston Churchill said, "the only thing worse than fighting with allies is fighting without them."

If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to NATO, I will work to strengthen support and understanding in Europe for two fundamental ideas:

- That the prosperity and well-being of our democratic societies still depends critically on security, so we must invest in security.
- That the security of Europe and North America remain fundamentally linked, so we must face our modern-day security challenges together.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. If confirmed, I will do my very best to serve my country with distinction and to work closely with you and this committee.

I look forward to listening to your views, and to responding to any questions you and the members of the committee may have.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much.

Mr. Urbancic.

STATEMENT OF FRANK URBANCIC, JR., NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

Mr. URBANCIC. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me say, too, that I today am honored to be supported here by my wife and lifetime partner, Michelle; our two children, Frank and Arlette; and most importantly perhaps, my father and mother from Indianapolis, who have driven here to join us today. So we are very honored to have the presence of Senator Lugar.

It is also a great privilege for me to be nominated by the President to serve as the next Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Cyprus. And if confirmed, I will do everything in my power to justify that trust as well as that of Secretary Rice in sending forward my nomination.

At the outset, I would also note my intention to heed an admonishment of the ancient stoic philosopher from Cyprus, Zeno of Kition, who said famously that the reason we have two ears and one mouth is that we may listen more and speak less. I will keep my comments brief.

May I also say that I am honored to be here Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for calling us here to speak about our countries.

I personally have spent 27 years in the Foreign Service, deepening my understanding of the issues in the basin of the East Mediterranean and the risks that its people face. I have a deep and abiding interest in Cyprus, and from this background, I have a keen awareness of the role that the United Nations in Cyprus can play and that what a positive role multilateral diplomacy can play in bringing about healing of deep political divides.

In graduate school, I specialized in Byzantine studies, with a particular interest in Orthodox Church history. From that study, as well as my work in the region, I have come to understand the unique position that Cyprus has always held throughout its own history.

There was a time when I could translate Aristotle. Those days are gone, unfortunately, but I will try to get them back. And my time in Istanbul has also given me the opportunity to speak another great language of this region. If confirmed, I intend to use this familiarity with the languages of both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to support efforts to reunite the island.

We need to establish there and—we need to work with the leadership of that island to create a bizonal, bicommunal federation. Reunification of Cyprus under these long-agreed principles will allow its communities to realize the full potential of their own history.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with all members of the committee, and your views are very important to me. And I would like to work closely with you in the future to deepen United States-Cypriot—the United States-Cypriot relationship, building upon the work of my predecessors, of course.

The United States and Cyprus have many shared interests and ties. I have learned that Cyprus, for example, is one of the, if not the largest per capita participant in the Fulbright program anywhere in the world. Cyprus was the first European Union country to sign a shipboarding agreement with the United States under the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Our countries are working together to safeguard Cypriot cultural heritage, prevent pillaging, and stop the illegal trafficking in the sale of antiquities. I look forward to seeking new opportunities to expand our partnerships and to further our mutual understanding.

If confirmed, I realize I will be accredited to one government. That is the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. The United States does not recognize any other state on the island. That said, we need to engage the Turkish Cypriot community. We need to help them prepare for reunification by strengthening their NGOs and reducing economic disparities across the island. We also need to urge them to combat money laundering and to counter possible terrorist threats. If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. assistance program continues to support one overarching aim, and that is reconciliation between the two communities and reunification.

If confirmed, I will pursue one of the administration's policy priorities—a comprehensive Cyprus settlement. The de facto division of that country pains Greek Cypriots and it pains Turkish Cypriots, and it damages United States strategic interests in the region. The dysfunctional and unacceptable status quo also threatens effective NATO-European Union defense cooperation, and it remains an obstacle for Greek-Turkish relations.

Currently, though, there is room for guarded optimism. Many see 2008 as a year of opportunity for Cyprus. Both community leaders state that they want the same thing. They have the same goal. They want a bizonal, bicommunal federation, and the U.N., with strong American support, is considering reinvigorated settlement efforts.

Negotiating the details of a bizonal, bicommunal federation will be a difficult task, of course. Both sides will need strong leadership, and they undoubtedly will have to make hard decisions and settle for some probably painful compromises. A federation, however,

with a single international sovereignty enjoying European Union membership, peace, and prosperity is achievable, and I hope to help advance it, if confirmed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Urbancic follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRANK URBANCIC, JR., NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to be with you here today. It is my great honor to be nominated by President Bush to serve as the next Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Cyprus, and, if confirmed, I will do everything in my power to justify that trust, as well as that of Secretary Rice in sending forward my nomination.

At the outset, I would note my intention to heed an admonishment of the ancient Stoic philosopher from Cyprus, Zeno of Kition, who said, "The reason we have two ears but only one mouth, is that we may learn more and speak less." I will keep my comments brief. May I also say that I am honored to be supported here today by my wife and lifetime partner, Michelle, our two children, Frank and Arlette, and my parents visiting us from Indiana.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent 27 years in the Foreign Service, deepening my understanding of issues in the basin of the east Mediterranean and the risks that its people face. I have a deep and abiding interest in Cyprus, its people, and the politics and history of the region. I served at the U.S. mission to the United Nations during the first gulf war, and, in addition, I was Senior Adviser in that mission for Eastern European Affairs after my return to the United States from the second gulf war. From those experiences, I have a keen awareness of the role of the United Nations in Cyprus and the role that multilateral diplomacy can play in bridging deep political divides.

In graduate school, I specialized in Byzantine studies, with a particular interest in Orthodox Church history. Because of that study, as well as my work in the region, I have come to understand the unique position that Cyprus has always held throughout its history. Cyprus has long played a role as a multicultural crossroad of history and civilization, and this remains true today. There was a time when I could translate Aristotle, and my time in Istanbul has also given me the opportunity to speak another great language of this region. I intend to use this familiarity with the languages of both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to support efforts to reunite the country into a bizonal, bicommunal federation. Reunification of Cyprus under these long-agreed principles will allow its communities to realize the full potential that history has long foreseen for this beautiful and historically rich island.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with all members of the committee. Your views are important to me, and I would like to work closely with you to deepen the United States-Cypriot relationship, building upon the work of my predecessors.

The United States and Cyprus have many shared interests and ties. I was pleased to learn that more than 3,000 Cypriots have studied in the United States under U.S. Government-sponsored academic exchange programs, including the Fulbright Program—one of the largest, if not the largest, per capita rate in the world. Cyprus was the first European Union country to sign a ship boarding agreement with us under the Proliferation Security Initiative—a significant provision given that Cyprus has the eleventh largest merchant fleet in the world. Our countries are working together to safeguard Cypriot cultural heritage, prevent pillaging, and stop the illegal trafficking and sale of antiquities. I also expect that the nearly 15,000 American citizens who transited Cyprus in the summer of 2006, as they were evacuated from Lebanon, will long remember the generosity and gracious reception they were given by the Cypriot people. I look forward to seeking new opportunities to expand our partnerships and further our mutual understanding.

If confirmed, I realize I will be accredited to one government, that of the Republic of Cyprus. The United States does not recognize any other state on the island. That said, we need to engage the Turkish Cypriot community. We need to help them prepare for reunification by strengthening their NGOs and reducing economic disparities across the island. We also need to urge them to combat money laundering and counter possible terrorist threats. For all our programs, I will ensure U.S. assistance continues to support one overarching aim—reconciliation and reunification.

If confirmed, I will pursue one of the administration's policy priorities—a comprehensive Cyprus settlement. The de facto division of the country pains Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and damages United States strategic interests in the re-

gion. The dysfunctional and unacceptable status quo also threatens effective NATO-European Union defense cooperation and remains an obstacle for Greek-Turkish relations. Furthermore, I am sure both communities would agree that Turkey, a key NATO ally, would be better off anchored to Europe through European Union membership. Yet the continued impasse on Cyprus negatively affects all these considerations. Many outside observers have increasingly asserted that in the absence of a settlement in the near future, the world will accept a de facto division ad infinitum. This would be a bad outcome, and one we should all strenuously seek to avoid.

Currently, though, there is room for guarded optimism. Many see 2008 as a year of opportunity for Cyprus. Both community leaders state they want the same goal—a bizonal, bicommunal federation, and the U.N., with strong American support, is considering reinvigorated settlement efforts. Negotiating the details of a bizonal, bicommunal federation, such as governmental structure, administrative and territorial jurisdictions, security considerations, and property disputes will be a difficult task. Both sides will need strong leadership and undoubtedly have to make hard decisions and settle for some possibly painful compromises, but the goal will be worthwhile—a federation, with a single international sovereignty, enjoying European Union membership, peace, and prosperity. That goal is achievable, and I hope to help advance it, if confirmed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to answering any questions.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you.

Ms. McEldowney.

STATEMENT OF NANCY E. MCELDOWNEY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Ms. MCELDOWNEY. Good morning. I am very pleased to state that I am joined today by family members who have traveled to visit me all over the world in the course of my Foreign Service career. They have also traveled here to Capitol Hill from Philadelphia today. My sister and brother-in-law, Heidi Hayes and Richard Johnson, their son, Nicolas Johnson, as well as family friend, Elaine Jones.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next American Ambassador to Bulgaria. I am grateful for the confidence expressed by President Bush and Secretary Rice through this nomination, and I ask today, with respect and humility, for your confidence, as well.

If I am confirmed, I pledge to validate your trust by advancing our Nation's interests in Bulgaria and throughout the region. I also pledge to work closely with this committee and your congressional colleagues in pursuing our common objectives and shared agenda.

My appearance before this committee today is the culmination of more than two decades of public service as an American diplomat. Patriotism and service to Nation have shaped my life and the lives of my entire family. My father was a member of the United States Marine Corps. My husband served 26 years as a pilot in the United States Air Force. And my younger brother, now a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, recently concluded a deployment to Afghanistan.

I have spent my entire adult life working to protect and advance our country's interests as a professional diplomat. I have served overseas in Europe, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union. Here at home, I have worked in the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and on the staff of the National Security Council.

I have served as deputy chief of mission in two embassies and have frequently functioned as acting chief of mission. These experi-

ences have helped prepared me for the responsibilities and challenges that I will face if confirmed for this position.

Since this committee voted 3 years ago to confirm our current ambassador, a number of important developments have taken place. Bulgarian and American soldiers are now exercising together inside Bulgaria, and we are now deployed side by side in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Bulgaria is now a member of both the European Union and the NATO alliance, following the achievement of important domestic reforms and sustained economic growth, fueled in part by the generous assistance allocated by this Congress as well as by the active involvement of United States companies.

These are impressive accomplishments, and they illustrate the vibrancy and potential of our bilateral relationship. But as many members of this committee have noted, there is still more to be done. Bulgaria still suffers from pervasive corruption and organized crime that undermines public confidence in its institutions. The Balkan region is still burdened with instability. European energy supplies still lack sufficient diversity and security. And there is still more that the United States and Bulgaria can do together to advance our common strategic interests.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my top priority will be to protect the security of the United States and our citizens, including American facilities and personnel in Bulgaria. I will work together with a talented team of civilian and military professionals at our embassy in Sofia to advance American interests in five key areas.

We will deepen our cooperation in combating terrorism, proliferation, and other forms of transnational crime. We will advance stability throughout the Balkans to help this long-troubled region enjoy peace and prosperity as part of an undivided Euro-Atlantic community. We will promote the security and diversity of energy supplies, building upon Bulgaria's strategic location as a key transit route across the European continent. We will catalyze unfinished legal and judicial reforms, supporting the Bulgarian Government's own efforts to combat corruption and promote the rule of law. And finally, we will expand our trade and economic cooperation, increasing commercial opportunities for U.S. companies.

This is an ambitious agenda. But I believe it is one that can be achieved through concerted effort and joint action. Bulgaria is a government that is firmly committed to the principles and practices of democracy and free market economy. It has made significant progress in domestic reform in international engagement and is determined to continue these efforts.

As a bilateral partner, a NATO ally, and a genuine friend to the United States, Bulgaria is a country of great importance and bright promise. Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will do my utmost to maintain the distinguished record of service by the men and women who held this position before me. I will strive unceasingly to advance American interests and promote American values.

I thank you again for the honor of appearing before you today, and I look forward to answering any questions that you may wish to pose.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McEldowney follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NANCY E. MCELDOWNEY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next American Ambassador to Bulgaria. I am grateful for the confidence expressed by President Bush and Secretary Rice through this nomination. I ask today, with respect and humility, for your confidence as well. If I am confirmed, I pledge to validate your trust by advancing our Nation's interests in Bulgaria and throughout the region. I also commit myself to work closely with this committee and your congressional colleagues in pursuing our common objectives and shared agenda.

Mr. Chairman, my appearance before this committee today is the culmination of more than two decades of public service as an American diplomat. Patriotism and service to the Nation have shaped my life and my family. My father was a member of the United States Marine Corps. My husband served 26 years as a pilot in the United States Air Force. And my younger brother, now a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, recently concluded a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

I have spent my entire adult life working to protect and advance our country's interests as a professional diplomat. I have served overseas in Europe, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union. Here at home, I have worked in the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and on the staff of the National Security Council. I have served as Deputy Chief of Mission in two embassies and have frequently functioned as Acting Chief of Mission. These diverse experiences have helped prepare me for the responsibilities and challenges that I will face if confirmed for this position.

Since this committee voted 3 years ago to confirm our current ambassador, a number of important developments have taken place:

- In April 2006, the United States and Bulgaria signed a defense cooperation agreement authorizing United States military units to train at specified Bulgarian bases. The first exercise under this agreement took place in September 2007. This summer, approximately 1,000 United States and Bulgarian land forces will train together. Over the next 12 months, the U.S. Air Force will conduct three training events with approximately 250 U.S. service members each.
- In January 2007, Bulgaria became a member of the European Union. This followed Bulgaria's entry into the NATO alliance in March 2004. Taken together, these represent the culmination of a process of democratization and reform that began over 19 years ago with the fall of communism and single party rule in 1989.
- Bulgaria is a member of the coalition in Iraq and a contributor to the NATO effort in Afghanistan. Bulgarian soldiers are deployed side by side with us at Camp Ashraf in Iraq; and in ISAF operations in Kandahar, Kabul and Herat, Afghanistan. Bulgarian soldiers also participate in NATO, European Union and U.N. peacekeeping operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Liberia, and Ethiopia.
- With the support of United States assistance monies generously allocated by this Congress, Bulgaria has accomplished important reforms in economic development, local governance, and national institutions, including the establishment of the American University in Bulgaria and the National Institute of Justice, one of the premier Eastern European training centers for judges and prosecutors.
- Trade and investment between the United States and Bulgaria has surged, as the Bulgarian economy has grown more than 5 percent annually for the past 5 years. In 2007, bilateral trade totaled almost $1 billion and cumulative investment by American companies is estimated at more than $5.5 billion.

These are impressive accomplishments that illustrate the vibrancy and vast potential of the bilateral partnership between our two countries. But there is still more to be done. Bulgaria still suffers from pervasive corruption and organized crime that undermines public confidence in its institutions. The Balkan region is still burdened with instability, as we have seen recently in Serbia and Kosovo. European energy supplies still lack sufficient security and diversity. And there is still more that the United States and Bulgaria can do together to advance our common strategic interests.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my top priority will be to protect the security of the United States and our citizens, including American facilities and personnel in Bulgaria. I will work together with the talented interagency team of civilian and military professionals at our embassy in Sofia to advance American interests in key areas:

- We will broaden and deepen our cooperation in combating terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trafficking in persons and narcotics, and other forms of transnational crime.
- We will work to advance stability and security throughout the Balkans, to help this long-troubled region enjoy peace and prosperity as part of an undivided Euro-Atlantic community.
- We will promote the security and diversity of energy supplies, building upon Bulgaria's strategic location as a key transit route across the European continent.

We will catalyze unfinished legal and judicial reforms, supporting the Bulgarian Government's own efforts to combat corruption and organized crime, and to promote good governance, public trust, and the rule of law.

- We will expand our trade and economic cooperation, increasing commercial opportunities for United States companies and stimulating sustainable growth in the Bulgarian economy.

This is an ambitious agenda but one that can be achieved through concerted effort and joint action. Bulgaria is a country that is firmly committed to the principles and practices of democracy and free market economy. It has made significant progress in both domestic reform and international engagement, and the government is determined to continue these efforts. As a bilateral partner, a NATO ally and a genuine friend of the United States, Bulgaria is a country of importance and promise.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will do my utmost to maintain the distinguished record of service by the men and women who held this position before me. I will strive unceasingly to advance American interests and promote American values.

I thank you again for the honor of appearing before you today. I would be delighted to answer any questions that you may wish to pose.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much, all of you, for your opening statements.

What I would like to do now, we have approximately an hour, and we have six Senators present. So what I would like to do is allocate 7-minute rounds to each Senator. And if we have sufficient time afterwards, then we can maybe go to a second round, if that is agreeable to other members of the committee.

Well, let me start with you, Mr. Volker. Obviously, a lot of your work is in the newspapers or will be in the newspapers. People are paying a lot of attention to what is happening in NATO right now.

Secretary Gates said in February that lingering European anger over Iraq has undermined our efforts to marshal allied support to win the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Obviously, we made some—the President was able to make some progress in Bucharest, but as Senator Lugar noted, some of the constraints that continue to be placed on the operations there are of continuing concern.

Certainly, we appreciate all the work that has been done by our NATO allies. But it does appear as if we continue to be resource-strapped in Afghanistan. I am curious, do you agree with the assessment of Secretary Gates that Iraq still is causing turbulence within the NATO alliance and our actions in Afghanistan? If so, do you have any thoughts on how we might correct that?

Mr. VOLKER. Thank you, Senator. Yes, I share Secretary Gates's view that public opinion in Europe, I think, has in some ways conflated the conflict in Iraq and the conflict in Afghanistan. They see the violence. They see the extremists, the terrorist attacks, IEDs, suicide bombers, and they do see that this is a terrible thing to be involved in. And I think that it is difficult for many of our European allies and their governments to build and sustain public support for their participation in Afghanistan.

That said, I would say the resources dedicated to Afghanistan have grown considerably as NATO has expanded the mission. In

2003, NATO took over ISAF when it was only in Kabul and only about 4,000 people. We currently have ISAF throughout the whole country with about 47,000 people. So every time we have expanded the mission, we have expanded the requirements, and then NATO allies have contributed more toward meeting those requirements. We have never made 100 percent, but we have seen a significant progress over time.

I think that what is critical is to remind people that Afghanistan has its own storyline that is an important and compelling one, and that the security and the well-being of our societies actually depends upon what we do in Afghanistan. And the Afghan people want us there and want us to help. The last poll I saw showed 75 percent of Afghans supporting the presence of foreign troops there to help provide security so they can get on with the business of building a stronger, more stable country.

And then, finally, we are making progress in Afghanistan, and I think that is visible. So when you look at health care, education, road building, the economy, there has been a lot of progress made in Afghanistan since the Taliban was in power. We faced daunting challenges in Afghanistan with the insurgency, with narcotics, with governance. We have to focus on these, and we do need more resources and to work more with the allies. But I think we need to recapture and reexplain the storyline a little bit about what is going on with Afghanistan and why it is critical that our mission there succeed.

Senator OBAMA. While I think that Senator Lugar is probably going to pursue this further, because I know he mentioned it in his opening statement, I would like for you also to just comment on the apparent or potential influence, at least, of Russia in putting a pause button on MAP for two important actors in the region. Can you comment at this point in terms of how you see that playing itself out? Do you get an impression that the other NATO members will be more open to the moving forward of those two countries next year?

Mr. VOLKER. Well, let me state clearly up front that we strongly support a membership action plans for Ukraine and Georgia and work very hard within the alliance to try to gain consensus on that. There wasn't consensus in NATO. There were some allies who objected to that, and we were concerned about the very issue that you and Senator Lugar are raising, that Russia somehow is either exercising a veto or at least intimidating NATO out of making decisions.

So there were two things that NATO did, I think, to make clear that we reject that idea of a Russian veto. The first was in the NATO communique that was issued at Bucharest. There was a clear statement that decisions on enlargement are for NATO itself to make and made that very clear. The second thing is that while not offering a Membership Action Plan, NATO made an unprecedented statement simply to say that Ukraine and Georgia will become members of NATO.

And as someone who has worked on previous rounds of NATO enlargement—the Madrid summit in 1997, Prague in 2002—we had always reserved our position about invitations until the actual moment. And in order to make clear that Russia is not exercising

that kind of influence, the alliance decided that it would state very forthrightly that Ukraine and Georgia will become members.

Senator OBAMA. Good. My final question I am going to direct to you, Ms. Barrett. And that is, as we noted, Finland—although there is extraordinary cooperation between the two countries and they are a strong ally—is one of the few countries that is in the European Union, but not in NATO. And I am wondering if you want to comment on where the NATO debate in Finland stands now? Should the United States be trying to move or encourage Finland's membership in NATO or off the status quo? What is your take on that?

Ms. BARRETT. The Americans with great respect for NATO, we think it would be beneficial for Finland and for NATO for Finland to be a part of it. But it will be a choice of Finland and the people of Finland whether or not they would become a part of NATO.

It is something that the Finns have demonstrated some attention to. We think it would bring greater strength to NATO if they were a part of it.

Senator OBAMA. Okay. Mr. Volker, do you have any comments on that?

Mr. VOLKER. I would just add to what my colleague said. Finland is making substantial contributions to NATO missions already. They are very valuable contributions. I think if the Finns chose to become allies, they would make great allies. But it is a choice for the people and Government of Finland to make.

Senator OBAMA. Good. Okay. I will actually give up 15 seconds just to set a good example.

Let me turn it over to Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Urbancic, I am delighted that you have strong Hoosier representation here today and great Hoosier roots. And therefore, I will direct my first questions to you.

You are a veteran of service on Cyprus. You very carefully in your statement said that you were accredited to one government there. But at the same time, you pointed out the imperative that you would pursue the administration's goal of trying to bring about a comprehensive Cyprus settlement.

Since this is not a new subject for you and your entire career has informed you, really, of the dilemmas here, how do you intend to proceed? Really, what are the avenues that might lead you to optimism that during your tenure these objectives might advance?

Mr. URBANCIC. Thank you, Senator. And yes, I am a very strong Hoosier, and we still live there, and I am really glad that my parents were able to join us. We take the kids back as often as we can.

I think that the great thing is that we are truly at a point where there may be a true opportunity for a final settlement of this terrible problem. Yes, there is one government, which is recognized internationally, and that is the government that the United States deals with. But there are two communities, and it is those two communities that have to overcome their own estrangement, one from the other.

The truly great story is that they are doing that. They are doing that on their own because it is important to them and because reunification is something that they think is in their interests. And

I think that the best that we can do and what I would certainly do, if confirmed, is to continue to support that effort, them directly, then the United Nations supporting them. And the United Nations is, as you know, undertaking an assessment right now to see how the U.N. can best contribute. And then us, with our other allies, supporting that U.N. effort.

But the most important thing is that the two sides themselves are intimately engaged. There will be times when our own good offices, I think, will be valuable. And at those points, I will hope to have established good relationships with the leadership on both sides to allow them to make the tough decisions that they are certainly going to have to make on behalf of their two communities.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I hope in those good offices that you will encourage appropriate citizens in the United States to be helpful to you, obviously including the State Department, Members of Congress, and others. This is an important objective, both for Cyprus as well as for our ongoing relationships with Greece and with Turkey.

This is well known to you, but I just wanted to take this opportunity at the confirmation hearing to underline the importance for all three countries—Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. We look forward to your leadership in that regard.

I wanted to ask you, Mr. Ghafari, to follow up on an important point that you made, and that is that recently Slovenia has deployed more than 11 percent of its armed forces abroad. This is an abnormal percentage for most European countries. As a matter of fact, many of us have visited with NATO allies and regretted that they have such a small expeditionary force. And therefore, even as we exhort them to do more in Afghanistan or elsewhere, the wherewithal to do so in terms of personnel quite apart from logistics is not present.

What explains this? Why this boost to 11 percent? And is this a special reach-out to the rest of Europe, to the United States, or how would you explain this activity?

Mr. GHAFARI. Senator, thank you for this question. I believe that the reason Slovenia—and that is my understanding at this point, is that they really want to be a good example for the rest of the region. And I think they have demonstrated that economically and fiscally, and what they have done with the armed forces, I think, is just an extension of that.

They are a strong ally of ours. They believe in the global agenda, the issues we face as it relates to terror and what that has to do with the world. And I think that is what they have tried to do with expanding their troops to the 11 percent that you just mentioned, Senator.

Senator LUGAR. A year ago, the Aspen Institute congressional seminar was held in Slovenia. We had an opportunity to note the point that you have made that 40 United States companies are now operating in Slovenia. While it is a fairly small country in terms of population and size, $490 million ha been invested there as you mentioned. Has there been a special outreach either way by Slovenia to Americans or Americans to finding very talented people there in that country?

Mr. GHAFARI. If I am confirmed, that would be one of my top priorities.

Senator LUGAR. Yes.

Mr. GHAFARI. I understand that there is some reform that has taken place. There is more to be done in that regard, and I understand that now that they are preoccupied with the European Union Presidency, that maybe had they waited a little from that economic reforms. They have elections coming up this fall, and hopefully that will become an agenda item that we as an embassy and myself can work on to help expand the business entry between our two nations.

I have to date, in preparing for my departure, talked to my colleagues in the business, and I said we have this wonderful friendly country. What can we do together? And they all are expressing interest and are impressed by the success they have made to date. They are impressed by the quality of the people, the Slovenian people, and their technical capabilities. So that would be something that I will definitely put on the top of my list to do.

And at the same time, I think I am going to encourage and we have got some—actually some leads on there that the Slovenes are willing to come here and invest, as well. With the strength of the euro, they need to manufacture in this country for some of their customers. So that would be a two-way deal that, hopefully, we can work on together.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I think we all hope with your business background, you will be very successful.

Mr. GHAFARI. Thank you very much.

Senator LUGAR. And we applaud that.

Mr. GHAFARI. Thank you.

Senator LUGAR. Ambassador Volker, let me ask you a quick question. You mentioned that NATO's commitment in the Bucharest Communique that Georgia and Ukraine will join NATO at some point in the future has led to some speculation that action extending membership action plans to Tbilisi and Kyiv at the upcoming foreign ministers meeting of NATO representatives. Describe really how that procedure works so that Americans understand how that type of momentous decision could occur.

Mr. VOLKER. That is correct, Senator. The summit leaders, when they got together and agreed a formal NATO statement expressing NATO's position, said not only that Georgia and Ukraine will become members of NATO, they also welcomed their aspirations for participating in the membership action plans and stated in the declaration from NATO itself that the foreign ministers are authorized to decide on this issue when they meet in December of 2008.

Senator LUGAR. And so, December of 2008 is the approximate time in which all of this might arise again?

Mr. VOLKER. Yes, indeed. We will be certainly pursuing and encouraging their aspiration for Membership Action Plans, and we hope that we can reach a consensus within NATO to grant that to them.

Senator LUGAR. Well, we will be cheering you on at that point.

Mr. VOLKER. Thank you.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ghafari, you mentioned that you had some concern about the investment by the United States in Slovenia. My suggestion to you would be to spend some time with the Slovene Diaspora here to try and get them involved, and they have talked about it, but they really have never done it.

I brought Goodyear to Slovenia a long time ago, and since that time, the government has been reluctant about privatizing some of their—in fact, they are slower than most in that region. And it might be something that you could try to nudge them on.

Mr. GHAFARI. Thank you, Senator. One of my things I would like to do before I leave to Slovenia is to visit with the American Slovenian community in Cleveland and maybe a couple of other places around the country just to get the pulse of what is going on there and get a better understanding of what they would like to do with that country, as well. Thank you.

Senator VOINOVICH. Bulgaria is in an area that is right now, I think, most people are not aware, will be affected if the election goes the wrong direction in May in Serbia. That would be a real setback for the whole region.

One of the things that I suggested is to—and hopefully, you will be there—is to try to get Bulgaria and Romania and some others that belong to the European Union to get over to Serbia to talk about how important European Union membership is to the future of Slovenia. Are you updated on that issue on where we are and how thin the situation is?

Ms. MCELDOWNEY. Thank you very much, Senator. I have, indeed, been following the issue and, in particular, have been watching the Bulgarian Government try hard to work both with the Serbs, as well as with other neighbors in the region, to try to moderate Serbian policy, to try to bring about an outcome that will advance stability throughout the region.

If confirmed, this is one of the issues that I look forward to making a priority as we go forward and face this very key election, and as Kosovo's independence proceeds and Bulgaria continues to serve as a moderating, stabilizing force throughout the region.

Senator VOINOVICH. And Mr. Volker, one of our problems in Afghanistan is that many of the countries that are involved have these national caveats, and many of us are concerned that they are still in effect. Some of our allies are saying that if some of those countries don't remove take them, then they will be more reluctant to participate. We have taken a position, I think, of publicly knocking some of them that haven't done what they are supposed to do.

I would be interested to know your perspective and how you, through your great diplomatic skills, are going to try and work this out.

Mr. VOLKER. Well, thank you, Senator. We are very concerned about the issue of caveats on the forces deployed in Afghanistan and anywhere in NATO operations. That is a matter that we raise privately with the governments concerned and also we have discussed publicly.

I do want to say that the contributions that allies make are valuable, all of them. So those countries that have caveats are, none-

theless, performing important roles where they are in Afghanistan or elsewhere. But it does create problems.

It creates problems for the commander on the ground, who has less flexibility in his ability to use forces where they are most needed. And it creates political dissension within NATO. Those countries who are taking on the hardest burdens and fighting and facing casualties, and those countries that are operating in relatively safer areas with limitations on the deployments that will keep them in safer areas.

So we have to chip away at this problem. We have been working at it. We have seen, around the time of the Riga summit, some caveats lifted. We have not seen much more progress on it since then. It is something we need to stay focused on.

I would say in terms of addressing this there is one critical thing that we need to do, and this is what I discussed when answering the chairman's question about getting the story right in Afghanistan. Reassuring European publics that we are there for the right reasons and doing the right things, and that their forces that are contributing in Afghanistan are in a good cause and, therefore, should be fully part of the NATO mission and fully contributing as equal allies, sharing the burdens equally.

Senator VOINOVICH. Do you share the opinion that we need to bring more of our troops into Afghanistan to help out?

Mr. VOLKER. I do. I do. I know that Secretary Gates and the President, have announced our intention to deploy about 3,500 Marines, and that was announced in advance of the Bucharest summit. We are the leader of NATO. We need to be making a substantial contribution to alliance operations to ensure their success. And in doing so, we need to encourage other allies to increase their contributions as well.

We currently have a situation where of about 47,000 troops within ISAF, the United States is contributing less than half of that. I think we need to be doing our share in leading the charge and then encouraging the allies to make their contributions.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you.

Ms. Barrett, you—I mentioned that you are working with Finland, and you know that the Ahtisaari plan, he was president of Finland, and so they are real interested in Kosovo.

Ms. BARRETT. Absolutely.

Senator VOINOVICH. But the issue that I am concerned about is the issue of this Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. I don't know whether you are familiar with it, but I will tell you this, that there are many people here in this Congress that worked very hard to get the Office of Nondiscrimination and Tolerance on the core budget of the OSCE.

And right now, we are in the midst of hiring someone to take the place of a man by the name of Christian Strohal, and I would really appreciate your looking into it. And I would like to spend some time with you on the phone talking about perhaps a role that you might play because Finland is in charge of that ministerial effort right now. I think if we don't do that, we may lose a wonderful opportunity to continue to make a difference in the area of dealing with discrimination.

Ms. BARRETT. Mr. Chairman, Senator Voinovich, I would look forward to working with you on that. I also consider it an urgent matter in the limited time during which the Finns will be in the leadership role would be an important time to make good things happen there.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you.

Senator OBAMA. Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Volker, let me follow up a little bit on first Afghanistan and then Georgia and Ukraine. In regards to Afghanistan, OSCE does have a mission there. And NATO, of course, is the lead group as far as international involvement with the United States, but we do have OSCE. There is an important mission on the border. And of course, Afghanistan is a partner within OSCE.

Just curious as to your views as to whether we cannot—couldn't expand OSCE's mission, which would broaden European participation in dealing in Afghanistan?

Mr. VOLKER. Thanks, Senator. Yes, we agreed with the other members of the OSCE to launch the border training and development effort that the OSCE is putting in Afghanistan. We deliberately decided to start small to make sure that it could get in there effectively, that it could operate in the environment in Afghanistan, and to see whether it could bring about a success in its developments training on the border.

And presuming that that is successful, then we would look toward expanding the mission depending on the resources that nations are able to bring. But we do think that is a possibility based on success in the initial phases.

Senator CARDIN. And I look forward to continuing to work with you on that. I do think it is just in our interests, the United States interests to broaden the participation, and OSCE gives us an opportunity to do that.

I do want to compliment you on your diplomatic skills and your response on the question regarding Georgia and Ukraine. I was only aware of two steps that could be taken. One was the membership action plan. The other was being admitted. You have now given us a third level, I guess, of moving forward.

I would just be interested as to whether you see a change that we can get NATO expansion in countries such as Georgia and Ukraine without a changed position with some of our NATO allies on Russia's influence here?

Mr. VOLKER. Well, clearly, we did not succeed in getting a membership action plan approved for Ukraine and Georgia, something that we sought. Membership action plan, you will recall, was launched at the Washington summit in 1999 at a point when NATO was not ready to offer invitations to countries in Central and Eastern Europe, and so we said, well, we are not going to just say no. We are going to help you. We are going to create a plan to work with you so that you can present a stronger candidacy in the future.

What happened——

Senator CARDIN. Which seems to be what should have been offered as the U.S. position was——

Mr. VOLKER. Yes.

Senator CARDIN [continuing]. With regard to Georgia and Ukraine. I guess my question is, will we be able to get to that point with countries such as Ukraine and Georgia without a changed relationship between our NATO allies and Russia?

Mr. VOLKER. I believe that we can. I believe that the statement that was made about these countries will become members of NATO—a very forceful, clear statement—sort of cuts right through the heart of the membership action plan question. It is kind of ironic that the debate about offering a MAP was, well, is this going too far? And then we make a strong political commitment that goes even further.

So I think that, based on that, we should be able to do the diplomatic work underneath, then proceed with the Membership Action Plan and get a consensus within NATO for that.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you, and again, I look forward to working with you on that.

Let me follow up on Senator Voinovich's point in regards to the OSCE's mission not just in fighting discrimination, but also on the human rights agenda. The four countries that are represented at the table all have important issues involving commitments to the OSCE.

In regards to Bulgaria, as I mentioned earlier, the issues concerning minorities, whether it is the Turkish or the Roma population, is a major concern to us. On human trafficking, there are—Bulgaria is a Tier 2 country. There is a problem in Cyprus. They are on the watch list because of concerns as a recipient state to human trafficking. Slovenia has a problem with the Muslim community that just recently mushroomed. And of course, as pointed out, Finland has the chair in office.

I would welcome brief responses as to your concerns in regards to these issues, and I certainly look forward to working with each of you in making progress in these countries. Who would like to start?

Ms. MCELDOWNEY. I would be happy to start. Thank you very much, Senator.

I appreciate you highlighting those issues. Those are issues of concern—both human rights and the issue of vulnerable populations. You mentioned the Turkish minority. The Turkish minority in Bulgaria, which represents just under 10 percent of the population, is well represented in the political process, but there are still concerns. The Roma, which you mentioned, is a smaller minority, approximately 4 to 5 percent. This is a vulnerable population. It is a group that much of the U.S. Government's assistance monies have been focused on trying to provide services to, but we still need to do more.

Human trafficking is also an issue of great concern. The Bulgarian Government has taken a number of steps, including the establishment of a national antitrafficking commission as well as some targeted efforts to set up centers in the tourist areas along the Black Sea coast where trafficking is most prevalent. But we need to do more. And we are working in partnership with the Bulgarian Government to try to do that. I welcome your advice and the involvement of members of the committee as we go forward and try to make those things happen.

Senator CARDIN. And I think we do have now regional strategies to deal with this, and we look forward to your active work in that regard.

Ms. MCELDOWNEY. Yes. Excellent. Thank you very much.

Mr. URBANCIC. Senator, the same thing for the United States role in dealing with Cyprus. Cyprus is more on the receiving end, but it is a country where trafficking in persons is something of very great concern. We have engaged the Cypriots on this, and certainly, if confirmed, I will continue to make it a priority.

They understand U.S. law, and they understand the implications that this has for them. So it is a human rights question, which is of very great interest and profound concern for us.

Senator CARDIN. The issues in Slovenia are a little bit different. There is some concern about lack of sensitivity with the Muslim community, and I would just urge you to be mindful of this as we go forward.

Mr. GHAFARI. Thank you, Senator. I look forward to working with you on that. And I am very sensitive. With my ethnic background, I think I could help in that regard.

Senator CARDIN. I think so.

We already talked a little bit about Finland, and Finland has had a real leadership role in regards to the OSCE, and we look forward to continuing to work with you in that regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be rather brief.

I did want to note something I should have mentioned before—that Barbara McConnell Barrett is also a Pennsylvania native. I appreciate that, and I also heard that in Ms. McEldowney's reference to her family, we have got family from Philadelphia here today.

I hate to keep coming back to a commercial for my State, but I think it is important to do that. But I will be very brief.

I wanted to direct my broader general question to Mr. Volker. With regard to the relationship between NATO and Russia, you spoke to it before. I wanted to broaden that a little bit.

The NATO-Russia Council, which was established in 2002 and is the principal forum for NATO to engage Russia. But we know from the recent history and the news just in the last couple of months, that the relationship faces a lot of challenges when you think about democracy and human rights, missile defense, energy, Kosovo, or the CFE treaty—all of those.

I guess I wanted to ask you, though, just in a broad sense, can you give us a sense of the state of play between Russia and NATO and anything you think we could do constructively to engage and to be cognizant of that important relationship?

Mr. VOLKER. Thank you for the question, Senator. We have been disappointed in the NATO-Russia Council ourselves. We launched this in 2002 with hopes of overcoming suspicions, division, sense of concern, mutual concern between NATO and Russia, and it has not developed in the positive, cooperative, strong way that we had hoped at the time.

I think the most important thing that we can do is to undermine, to cut, to remove any kind of zero sum mentality that still exists.

The idea that there is a zone of, sphere of influence in Europe, this is part of the Russian fear of influence or any gain for NATO, that any NATO enlargement is somehow a threat to Russia or that missile defense is somehow a threat to Russia.

We need to put aside these kind of cold war notions within Russia, within Europe, and instead say that the fundamentals—building democratic societies, market economies, rule of law, integration of countries into a larger community—these don't threaten anybody. And they build a healthier community and they are good neighbors and good neighbors for Russia.

So if we can develop that sense that we are actually creating a common good through NATO enlargement, through security, through missile defense—we want to work together with Russia. We certainly don't want to be putting ourselves in a position of confrontation and conflict with Russia, even though we have serious disagreements with Russia. What we want to do is try to work together on areas where we find common ground.

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much.

I will conclude with this. I want to commend all of the nominees who are here for your service prior to this and your willingness to take on another assignment. And we wish you all of Godspeed in your families as well.

Thank you.

Senator OBAMA. Senator Menendez

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, I appreciate all of your service. And now that I know that in order to be an ambassador you have to live in Pennsylvania——

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. I will maybe cross the border in the future. Who knows?

Let me focus my questions on a certain line that I am interested. Mr. Volker, I have seen that Greece has always taken a position that they seek to find a mutually acceptable solution before NATO accession. And I am glad to see, at least as I read it, that the NATO summit communique basically has that same position as well. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. VOLKER. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. It is. Let me ask you with reference to that, what do you see the role of NATO in trying to—working, of course, with our own U.S. ambassador in the region, but what do you see the role of NATO in trying to bridge that gulf and come to a successful resolution?

Mr. VOLKER. In the first instance is the United Nations. The U.N. negotiator, Matt Nimitz, has the lead in trying to reach a negotiated settlement to the issue of the name. Beyond that, we have tried, as the United States and through our ambassador to NATO and through Assistant Secretary Fried and through others, to encourage both countries to work together and try to reach some solution.

We did some fairly extensive diplomatic work in advance of the Bucharest summit, trying to get the point where they could reach an agreement. They were unable to reach an agreement, and so NATO did leave the issue open, as you indicated, hoping that they

would reach a mutually acceptable solution as quickly as possible, at which point Macedonia could then be invited.

NATO itself I don't see playing an active role in trying to facilitate negotiations. I see that as something we can do diplomatically, and I see that as something the U.N. has the lead on.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you a different question. There has been some reports that as it relates to Afghanistan, NATO—some of our NATO allies have been less than willing to engage in a way that makes me concerned about picking and choosing.

My understanding of one of the strengths of NATO is that upon its decision to enter into an engagement, all member countries are committed. And yet in Afghanistan, we have seen reports of some of the member countries balking at that commitment. That is a slippery and dangerous slope, is it not?

Mr. VOLKER. It is. I agree with that, Senator. This is the issue of caveats that has come up repeatedly. Every NATO ally is contributing in Afghanistan. Every contribution is important. We need the forces there, whether it is in the north, the west, and so on.

But we are concerned that some allies place limitations on the use of their forces, which has, in the first instance, an operational effect. It reduces the flexibility of the forces and puts the commander in a more difficult position and actually increases the requirement for more forces if he needs them in places where those forces won't go.

It also has an effect of creating political dissension within NATO, as allies are concerned that the burdens aren't being shared equally. And some allies, who are fighting hard in the south of Afghanistan have had casualties, look at others who have not done that and say that this is not fair. And they want to see greater solidarity.

So our effort, as we work on this, and we will need to continue to work on this, is to increase the political solidarity that allies put into the mission—that is one mission for all of us—and to increase the operational flexibility that they give their forces on the ground so they could be used most effectively.

Senator MENENDEZ. That is critical if the alliance is to truly achieve its goals.

Mr. Urbancic, let me ask you a couple of questions about Cyprus. First of all, I appreciated your opening statement, and it was very diplomatic. I understand about listening more than speaking, and I guess it served you well. Let me try to explore with you a little bit more some of your thoughts in that regard.

You know, since 1974 when Cyprus was invaded and has been divided, since then, we have sought to promote a bicameral, bizonal federation. I want to get a sense from you whether you think the solution—and I know there is a lot of optimism right now, a new administration in Cyprus. But do you believe that solution emanates from the Cypriots or emanates from the U.N.? How do you see that happening?

Mr. URBANCIC. I think it emanates from a history of experience between the two communities, and I think that this is their realization that this is where they best think that their island can become a fully functioning, reunified state. It is not from the U.N. in that the U.N. is imposing it. It certainly is not from the United States

in that we are imposing it, but I think it is where they realize they are going to have to find that common ground.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, so there are those who believe in Cyprus and received an overwhelming rejection that the Annan plan was an imposition versus a negotiated agreement between the parties that deserved support. So is it our view, as an American Government, that we are seeking to have this solution come from the Cypriots?

Mr. URBANCIC. Yes, sir. Absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you this. In that respect, we have an incredible militarized element in Cyprus. Yet we have had nearly 13 million crossings since 2003, back and forth without incident. There was an attempt recently in good faith to open the Ledra Street crossing, and it ended up being closed on the same day it was opened because of the Turkish military intervened in the occupied zone, and the agreement was not to do that.

Are we going to be more direct? If we want to have a solution here, we can't have the Turkish military imposing itself between Greek and Turkish Cypriots?

Mr. URBANCIC. Senator, I think the good news is that that crossing is open. And there are going to be hiccups no matter what happens and no matter who goes forward and whose plan it is, but they will do it themselves. They were able to do it themselves. They have done it themselves. And I think that is where we have to focus from now into the future.

Senator MENENDEZ. But clearly, the Turkish military has engaged here in a way that is beyond the civilian powers that exist. Is that a concern for us?

Mr. URBANCIC. The military presence is a concern for everybody, and it is going to have to be part of a comprehensive solution that they are going to work out among themselves, first of all, the Cypriots. But of course, they have partners, and they have supporters, and they will have to be part of that solution.

Senator MENENDEZ. Finally, there is, as you aptly put when you would be accredited if you were to be approved by this committee and by the Senate, only one country for which we both, as a Nation as well as the international community recognizes, which is the Government of Cyprus. And in that respect, there is a concern, and as the subcommittee chair on all of our foreign assistance, I am concerned about our engagement of foreign assistance, particularly on the Turkish Cypriot side, without the appropriate consultations of the Government of Cyprus.

Do you not believe that it is appropriate—now consultation doesn't mean that the Government of Cyprus dictates anything as far as I am concerned. No one dictates anything to us in terms of our assistance abroad. But do you not believe that significant consultation in order to pursue the ultimate goal of reunification with the Government of Cyprus is appropriate?

Mr. URBANCIC. Yes, sir, I do. I think that the entire aid program is designed to support reunification and to support the establishment of a single state. I absolutely agree that our aid program must be transparent to both sides. There should be no surprises in this subcommittee. There should be no surprises on the Hill. And

there should be no surprises to the Government of Cyprus or to Turkish Cypriots.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I personally believe that we should have a memorandum of understanding with the Greek Cypriots, and I will be pursuing that in the days ahead with the States Department. As the very possible next ambassador there, I hope that you will engage actively with us in that regard.

Mr. URBANCIC. Senator, I am always available. Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Senator Barrasso.

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

I want to congratulate each and every one of you on these nominations. I would like to follow up with Senator Menendez's questions, specifically Mr. Volker. Senator Menendez talked about the picking and choosing that goes on by our NATO allies in Afghanistan.

I have just returned from Afghanistan. I wanted to thank the Wyoming troops who are there. We heard from them exactly how they felt things were going and also talked to our own ambassador as well as other leaders.

In your statement, you mentioned that many Europeans are skeptical about the Afghanistan mission, and my question is what can you tell them to demonstrate that Afghanistan is very important in this war against terrorists?

Mr. VOLKER. Yes, thank you, Senator. I think that is a critical issue, in fact, to build public support and understanding for the mission in Afghanistan. Several things, I think, are important to lay out. One of them is that the security and the well-being of our societies depends on success there.

If you look at the September 11 attacks on the United States, they were applauded in Afghanistan. If you look at the bombers who were arrested in Barcelona in January of this year, they had their financing and their training on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area, and they were planning to spread out throughout Europe to attack buses and subway systems. So there is a direct impact on our own security.

There is also a drug impact, so that 90 percent of opium reaching Europe is coming out of Afghanistan. So there is a direct interest in that.

I think one of the things that they see is the images of twisted metal and bloody bodies that they see in the media of the fighting in Afghanistan and terrorist bombers and improvised explosive devices. We need to make sure that they see the other images of Afghanistan.

In 2001, there were 900,000 kids in school. Now it is over 5 million. In 2001, it was illegal for girls to go to school. And now it's over 1.5 million. There is greater access to healthcare. There is road building. There is an economy. There is a democratically elected government.

So I think if the European public gets the whole picture of what we are doing in Afghanistan, we can broaden support for that. And that is critical for then empowering the governments to be more forthcoming with the contributions and the way that their forces are used.

Senator BARRASSO. Because it did seem that there were different rules of engagement from one nation to another instead of a unified rules of engagement for all of our NATO allies, when troops are deployed in various provinces. Do you want to comment?

Mr. VOLKER. Sure. In terms of there is a joint operational plan, there is a common operational plan that NATO has agreed. There are also rules of engagement that apply with that plan.

But on top of that, some nations have applied political limitations on their forces. You know, a caveat that says we don't have night vision goggles so we won't go do things at night. Well, that is understandable. But a caveat that says we won't allow our forces to move from this part of the country to that part of the country because there is fighting there or they can't engage in certain combat roles, well, that is damaging to the political solidarity of NATO. It makes the commander's job on the ground harder. So we have to keep working away at it to try to strengthen the operational flexibility and the political solidarity of NATO.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

Ms. Barrett, if I could, I noted that you had been a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, and I am wondering if you could tell me a little bit about your work there and if there is anything you have learned that we can apply, both in Iraq and in Afghanistan?

Ms. BARRETT. Thank you, Senator. One of the things that we learned was that women, as well as men, can contribute significantly to our defense and that women as well as men are sacrificed for their country and women as well as men can perform great duty for their country. And I note that among the Senators on our panel, there are fathers of daughters, and it is often fathers of daughters who are most aggressive in realizing the capability that women bring to military as well as other roles.

So through the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, we learned a great deal about unfairness and opportunity at that point, inchoate opportunity that we could open new job roles and new privileges to women, and it was an extraordinary eye-opener to me.

Senator BARRASSO. If I could now ask specifically about your comments about Finland. You mentioned that Finland is a global leader in biofuels and renewable energy. I think 25 percent of the energy there is renewable. And you talked a little bit about some of Finland's cooperation with other countries in this area.

How do you see that unfolding from an energy state, given that we have lots of renewables as well as unrenewable resources? How is it that you see us working in a more cooperative way?

Ms. BARRETT. I think that their research, their development, their efforts so far have produced results. Just about 100 percent of their forest products, industry is fueled by the byproducts of the industry. So woodchips, for instance, are fueled by their own product. And we can learn a lot from that.

They are looking at biofuels, as I indicated, but also at alternate resources. They also have a close link to the pipeline ideas that would bring fuel from Russia into Europe. So they are looking at technologies and also transport issues in fuels. We can learn from

them, and they can learn from us. I think it is an opportunity for nuclear alternate fuels as well as transportation in fuels.

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

Senator OBAMA. Thank you.

Senator Barrasso, we had said that we were going to do a second round. Do you have any further questions?

Senator BARRASSO. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator OBAMA. Okay. If not, I just have one last question that I have for you, Mr. Volker, and I wanted to get a sense of whether you could characterize the transit agreements that we concluded with Russia at the Bucharest summit and whether there is some overlap there in terms of what that will facilitate or allow NATO to do? In what way does it enhance NATO's forces' abilities to send supplies and so forth?

Mr. VOLKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The idea of working together with Russia on logistical support for Afghanistan is one that we supported for over a year. Just before the Bucharest summit, the Russians came forward and said, okay, we can do something on this. What was agreed at the Bucharest summit was for ground transport of nonlethal supplies. So we are talking about logistical support for the forces in Afghanistan. It is not air transit. It is not lethal materials.

Is it a help? Yes, it is a help. It is good for our forces and others there to have multiple routes of access, multiple ways to go. Crossroad transport through Russia is helpful. There is more that could be done, and as I mentioned, we could open up to other areas if we had agreement with Russia to do that, and it is something we could continue to talk about.

It is an example of something that is being done positively in the NATO-Russia Council, the ability to look at what we can do together on something such as supporting the effort in Afghanistan.

Senator OBAMA. Good. Okay, well, I thank all of you for your responses, for your service, and for your testimony here today in these important positions.

The record will remain open for 2 days so that the committee members may submit additional questions for the record. I ask that each nominee respond expeditiously to any of these queries.

And I again want to thank the members of the families of all of you because I know that it is an extraordinary burden that is placed on them, and they are providing a service to this country, as well.

If no one has any additional comments, then this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:20 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN MCCAIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM ARIZONA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today's hearing. I would like to express my strong support for the swift confirmation of Barbara McConnell Barrett as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Finland. I commend the President for nominating such an outstanding candidate for this important post.

Barbara has a long history of service to Arizona and our Nation. During her professional career, she has amassed an impressive and diverse resume, ranging from serving as the first female deputy administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and acting as chairwoman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, to being an executive at two Fortune 500 companies. Throughout this time, Barbara has distinguished herself as a respected leader in both the civic and business communities.

Her professionalism, thoughtfulness, and diverse experience will make her an effective diplomat and representative of the United States abroad. I have every confidence that, if confirmed, Barbara will contribute greatly to the continuation of our warm relations with the Republic of Finland.

I urge the committee's expeditious action in moving this nomination to the full Senate and ask my colleagues to support her prompt confirmation.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JIM DEMINT, U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today so we could move forward with these ambassadorial nominations. To our nominees and your families, thank you for taking the time to serve. Public service is never easy and I wanted to let you know how appreciative we are that you would be willing to take on the tasks for which you have been nominated.

As we all know, Europe is filled with our closest allies and friends in the world. While friends sometimes disagree, we find ways to overcome these challenges through our long history together.

However, all of your countries of assignment share a role in the strategic security of Europe. Obviously, Bulgaria and Slovenia are members of NATO, Cyprus is the reason Turkey pulled out of NATO's military council, and Finland borders on the Russian Federation, which is trying to dictate terms to NATO.

I was discouraged by Russia's influence to prevent even larger efforts to expand NATO. I do not believe their posturing should stand in the way of NATO's efforts to expand freedom to countries that want an opportunity to side with the West, that is the countries sovereign choice. Mr. Volker, I hope you will work diligently to correct this situation.

Despite this disappointment, I was encouraged by NATO's endorsement of missile defense and its willingness to move forward with providing a blanket of protection for all of Europe—not just NATO members. It is a strong signal that the United States is still intimately concerned with European security.

I was also pleased by NATO's renewed pledge to the long-term fight in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is the first military engagement outside Europe's boundaries. Europe has experienced more terrorist attacks than the United States, and the threat of Islamic extremism throughout Europe is just as large as the risk to America.

However, while European leaders may understand the importance of Afghanistan and the threats posed by terrorism, the citizens of these nations do not. It will be important for all of you to talk with the people of your countries and help them understand the crucial link and why it is important that all of Europe support and remain engage in NATO's activities in Afghanistan.

Many European nations want to play a larger role in the affairs of Africa, but success in Afghanistan is critical to the future of NATO and if the alliance cannot succeed there, then the hopes of more engagement in Africa will never become a reality.

While these many not seem like issues for your individual concerns, they are at the heart of Europe's position in the world and each of your countries will play a part. All of you will have to tackle these daunting tasks, and you will be in very crucial positions to help foster the trans-Atlantic relationship. Your willingness to listen and be passionate advocates is vital.

Often European leaders express how the United States and Europe share a common set of values. It will be important to remind them that we have a long history of common values that include the ideals of freedom and economic opportunity, and that these values serve as the foundation to our prosperity. American culture is loved in Europe, but the same is not always true of American policy. However, the two cannot be conveniently separated.

As a final note, I encourage you to spend more time outside of the embassy and government offices in your respective capitals than inside. Successful diplomacy is no longer an activity just between heads of state, but between the people of each nation. If you are committed to fostering even stronger relations and want to be successful American advocates, you will need to deliver your messages directly to the people of your countries.

I look forward to working with each of you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARL LEVIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MICHIGAN

I want to begin by thanking the Chairman and ranking member of this committee for holding this hearing today.

I regret that I am not able to deliver these remarks in person. I am chairing a hearing before the Armed Services Committee with Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. I thank the Foreign Relations Committee for taking up this nomination so quickly, and I am pleased to support the nomination of Yousif Ghafari to serve as Ambassador to Slovenia.

Born in Lebanon in 1952, the eldest of seven children, Mr. Ghafari immigrated to the United States in the early 1970s to pursue his education at Wayne State University in Detroit. He successively earned three degrees from Wayne State—a bachelor of arts degree in mathematics in 1974, a master of arts in applied mathematics and computer applications in 1975, and a master of science in chemical engineering in 1977. In 1992, he returned to school to receive his master of business administration from the Michigan State University Advanced Management Program.

Soon after leaving Wayne State, Mr. Ghafari founded GHAFARI, Inc., a highly successful global architectural, engineering, and consulting firm. Established in 1982, he built GHAFARI, Inc., on a foundation of responsive client services and the utilization of the latest technology in order to improve quality. The success of his business has been acknowledged by national trade publications such as INC. magazine and Engineering News Records.

Mr. Ghafari has done a tremendous amount of work to give back to the communities he has come from. As a founding partner of the United States-Lebanon Partnership Fund, he has helped to raise money and awareness of the effort to provide resources and infrastructure repair to parts of Lebanon damaged by war. In 1995, he was named one of the top 100 "executive heroes" in southeastern Michigan, and is a member of the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit's "Hall of Fame." In 2005, Wayne State University acknowledged his longtime generosity and support by renaming a residence building Yousif B. Ghafari Hall. Mr. Ghafari also currently serves on the board of trustees of the College for Creative Studies and Oakwood Healthcare, Inc. He additionally is on the board of directors for the Automobile Club of Michigan, Dura Automotive Systems, Inc., the Economic Club of Detroit, and the Wayne State University Foundation.

If confirmed, this would not be the first time that Mr. Ghafari has served the United States in the international arena. In 2004–2005, he served as a public delegate designate at the U.S. mission to the United Nations for the 59th United Nations General Assembly. He has served on the J. William Fulbright Foreign Service Scholarship board since 2005, being elected vice chair this year.

Mr. Ghafari is a prominent member of the Detroit community and a successful businessman who will serve as an excellent representative of our Government in Slovenia. I thank the committee for allowing me to enter this introduction into the record.

RESPONSES OF NANCY E. MCELDOWNEY TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read this cable concerning Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and, if confirmed, will abide by the guidelines as conveyed in 04 STATE 258893.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I agree that the Peace Corps, in order to effectively carry out its mandate, needs to be distinct from the United States mission in Bulgaria, as in other countries.

Questions. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. In line with Secretary Rice's guidance on this issue, if confirmed, I intend to allow the Peace Corps to operate with as much autonomy as possible, bearing in mind my responsibility to provide for the safety and security of the volunteers and to coordinate United States objectives and policy in Bulgaria.

RESPONSES OF KURT VOLKER TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JIM DEMINT

Question. Have you been briefed on all of the negotiations from the Bucharest Summit last week?

Answer. Yes, I have been fully briefed on all of the negotiations from the Bucharest Summit.

Question. Did the United States offer France anything in return for their pledge of increased forces for the Afghanistan mission?

Answer. In our diplomatic exchanges with France, the United States urged France to increase its contributions in Afghanistan, but we did not offer anything in return.

Question. Has the State Department entered into formal discussions with Paris regarding the possible entry of France into NATO's integrated command structure?

Answer. The State Department has not entered into formal discussions with Paris regarding the possible entry of France into NATO's integrated command structure. French President Sarkozy has made general statements about France's intention to reintegrate fully into the NATO integrated military structure by the time of the April 2009 NATO Summit meeting. The French have not, however, followed up with detailed proposals at NATO or bilaterally with the United States. The French have indicated that they prefer to use the term "normalization" rather than "reintegration" when discussing France's rejoining NATO's integrated military structure.

Question. If so, what is France requesting from the United States in return?

Answer. We have not entered into formal discussions with Paris regarding possible French reintegration into NATO's military structure.

Question. What is your opinion about how the United States should respond if France formally requests United States support for an independent European Union defense structure within NATO?

Answer. We do not support an independent European Union defense structure within NATO. We support stronger European defense capabilities, which can support NATO or European Union operations. In supporting stronger European defense capabilities, we must avoid the creation of duplicative or competing structures that could waste resources, divide the United States and Europe politically, undercut NATO, or impede the development of effective military forces.

In his speech in advance of the Bucharest Summit, President Bush said, "Building a strong NATO Alliance also requires a strong European defense capacity. So at this summit, I will encourage our European partners to increase their defense investments to support both NATO and European Union operations. America believes that if Europeans invest in their own defense, they will also be stronger and more capable when we deploy together."

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM TODD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. What are the primary United States foreign policy objectives related to Brunei?

Answer. Our foreign policy objectives in Brunei mirror those for the Asia-Pacific region in general:

- Regional Security: Strengthening regional security by garnering Brunei's support for enhanced United States relations with ASEAN and encouraging expansion of its contributions to peacekeeping operations in the region and to other multilateral undertakings;
- Stability: Safeguarding Brunei's long-term stability by helping to improve its counterterrorism and defense capabilities through law enforcement and mili-

tary-to-military cooperation and by encouraging broader popular participation in the political process through development of the country's legislative council;
- Outreach: Improving perceptions of the United States among Brunei's largely Muslim population and its decisionmakers through outreach, exchange programs, and promotion of United States education;
- Sustainable Development: Increasing opportunities for United States firms to compete in Brunei through an expanding trade dialog focused on improving protection of intellectual property rights and opening markets for United States goods and services, while contributing to sustainable development through conservation of Brunei's tropical forests.

Question. How many students from Brunei have studied in the United States during the past 7 years? Does the United States Government, or American colleges and universities, actively recruit Brunei students?

Answer. There have been approximately 136 students who have studied in the United States during the past 7 years. The year-by-year breakdown is given below.

Year	No. of students
2006/07	24
2005/06	12
2004/05	18
2003/04	13
2002/03	17
2001/02	27
2000/01	25

Source: International Institute of Education (IIE) Open Doors statistics.

The embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan actively promotes United States higher education as part of our foreign policy objective of creating a greater understanding of United States society and policies by Brunei's majority-Muslim population. Embassy officials often speak to target audiences of prospective students to encourage study in the United States. They and other State Department officials also helped arrange a visit in 2007 by Brunei's Deputy Minister of Education to several leading United States universities to establish contact with Islamic studies programs. The Minister of Education plans to visit the United States in 2008 to build partnership relations between United States universities and the University of Brunei Darussalam, which the embassy expects will result in increased student exchanges—both short and long term—between the United States and Brunei.

The embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan worked to place United States institutions of higher learning on a list of Ministry of Defense-recommended schools, as part of the embassy's campaign to promote United States schools to Bruneians, who historically have looked to the United Kingdom and Australia for foreign study. As a result, five students entered U.S. universities through this new track for the current academic year and our embassy anticipates four more will enter in the 2008/09 academic year. The embassy is also working with the Ministry of Education to allow students to use other Brunei Government scholarship programs to attend United States educational institutions.

In the past year, the embassy also assisted the following American colleges or universities visiting Brunei to recruit students:

- Tufts University (Fletcher School)
- Upper Iowa University
- Portland State University
- State University of New York—Binghamton
- Creighton University
- University of Denver
- Eckerd College
- Herkimer Community College

Question. What is the present level of Brunei investment in the United States? Do you anticipate an increase in such investment in the future?

Answer. Exact figures for the present level of Brunei's investment in the United States are difficult to obtain, because the United States does not require the registration of investments and the level of Bruneian direct investment flows are small.

According to industry estimates, Brunei holds substantial foreign assets globally, estimated at $30 billion dollars, through its Brunei Investment Agency (BIA), a sovereign wealth fund. Brunei's investments in the United States include luxury hotels

in New York and California. Other financial assets are believed to be managed by U.S. financial institutions.

The current value of the United States dollar would appear conducive to growing Bruneian investment in United States equities and bonds, but we are not aware of any plans for Brunei to acquire controlling interests or direct equity stakes in additional United States companies. Traditionally, the BIA has preferred passive, indirect investments to direct equity investments.

Question. During the past 5 years, what cabinet or subcabinet level United States officials have visited Brunei? What United States military leaders have visited Brunei during the same time period?

Answer. Assistant United States Trade Representative Barbara Weisel visited Brunei in May 2007. In December 2002, the Sultan of Brunei met with President Bush at the White House, and with Secretary Powell. In addition, the President has met the Sultan of Brunei every year at the annual APEC leaders meeting. Brunei hosted APEC in 2000, which President Clinton attended, and the ASEAN Regional Forum in July 2002, which Secretary Powell attended.

The following United States military leaders have visited Brunei in the last five years:

- April 2008: Pacific Commander Admiral Keating
- May 2006: Deputy Under Secretary for Defense Lawless
- March 2006: Pacific Commander Admiral Fallon
- March 2005: U.S. Army Pacific Commander LTG Brown

RESPONSE OF HON. BARBARA M. BARRETT TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

Question. The issue that I am concerned about is the issue of this Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. And I don't know whether you are even familiar with it. But I will tell you this, that there are many people here in this Congress that worked very hard to get the Office of Nondiscrimination and Tolerance on the core budget of the OSCE.

And right now, we are in the midst of hiring someone to take the place of a man by the name of Christian Strohal, and I would really appreciate your looking into it. And I would like to spend some time with you on the phone talking about perhaps a role that you might play because Finland is in charge of that ministerial effort right now. And I think if we don't do that, we may lose a wonderful opportunity to continue to make a difference in the area of dealing with discrimination.

Answer. Finland's OSCE Chairman-in-Office has actively promoted the work of the ODIHR's tolerance and nondiscrimination unit, which is funded by the OSCE core budget. If confirmed as the United States Ambassador to Finland, I look forward to working closely with the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to support Mr. Strohal and his successor. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you and to hear your views on how we can improve our antidiscrimination efforts in the OSCE.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2008

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

Haslach, Patricia M., to be United States Senior Coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum
Marciel, Scot A., to be United States Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs
Stephens, D. Kathleen, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Korea
Todd, William E., to be Ambassador to the State of Brunei Darussalam

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The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:15 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Barbara Boxer presiding.

Present: Senators Boxer, Webb, and Murkowski.

Also Present: Senator Kennedy.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA BOXER, U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA

Senator BOXER. Good afternoon, everybody. Today, the full Senate Foreign Relations Committee meets to consider four distinguished nominees for ambassadorial posts.

As chair of the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, I am extremely pleased to welcome our nominees, and I am also pleased to welcome our colleague and my dear friend, Senator Kennedy, who has come today to say a few words about Ms. Kathleen Stephens. And how lucky you are to have his support.

Ms. Stephens, the President's nominee to be the ambassador to the Republic of Korea, has served her country as a career member of the Foreign Service for 30 years, most recently serving as the political advisor in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Ms. Stephens has had an expansive career throughout Europe and Asia, but I understand this post will bring her back to where she served as a Peace Corps volunteer before joining the Foreign Service. That is a really wonderful circle.

Mr. Scot Marciel, sir, the President's nominee for the rank of ambassador for the Association of South Asian Nations Affairs, has served his country as a member of the Foreign Service for more than 22 years. If confirmed, Mr. Marciel will serve as the ambassador while also serving his current post as the Deputy Assistant

Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Mr. Marciel has extensive experience in Asia, having served in Hong Kong, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines.

Ambassador Patricia Haslach—hello—is the President's nominee to be the U.S. senior coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, with the rank of ambassador. Ambassador Haslach has served as the U.S. senior coordinator to APEC since last year.

During today's hearing, we will consider the Honorable Patricia Haslach for promotion and nomination to the rank of ambassador. Prior to her current post, she served as the director for the Office on Afghanistan in the Bureau of South Asian Affairs and the U.S. Ambassador to Laos.

And finally, Mr. William Todd is the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei. Mr. Todd is a member of the Senior Executive Service. He currently serves as the Deputy Inspector General for the Department of State. Prior to this assignment, he served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civilian Police, Rule of Law, Asia, Africa, and Europe in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Mr. Todd has served the U.S. Government in a variety of other posts since beginning his career in 1983.

I want to thank all of you for your amazing dedication to our country. It goes without saying that we are considering a number of very important posts today, as we look to define the future role of the United States in Asia and the Pacific region. While that role has yet to be fully shaped, for many of us, one thing is clear. The 21st century will be defined as much by the Pacific and Asia—by the Pacific and by Asia as it will be by our traditional relationships in the Atlantic region and Europe.

And of course, coming from California, I particularly know that I am right on that point. Not only—and I am sure that I speak for Senator Murkowski, too, given her representation of Alaska.

Not only do we have an extensive and growing economic relationship in Asia and the Pacific, but all of the major transnational challenges faced by the United States today have a place there, including terrorism, nuclear proliferation and arms trafficking, climate change, epidemic diseases such as avian flu and HIV–AIDS, the flow of refugees, and human trafficking.

One place where a number of these challenges continue to play out is on the Korean peninsula, and one of the places where climate change could have a particularly harsh impact is Brunei, a country where 70 percent of the territory is primal tropical rain forest and whose economy is looking toward ecotourism to help sustain it into the future.

Our success or failure at addressing these challenges will be defined by the extent of the cooperation we can get from this region of the world. And so it is important that we seek comprehensive and sustained engagement with all of the countries in East Asia and the Pacific.

As we seek to advance human rights in Burma and bring meaningful pressure to bear on the Burmese regime, we must ask more of our friends and allies in Asia, and this must be done. The Burmese regime must be held accountable for its continued failure to

afford its people the fundamental rights and freedoms they deserve and they have demanded.

The United States also faces challenges with China. We all know this. As China asserts itself in the region, we need to press the Chinese to play a constructive role and to abide by international standards and norms, particularly on the issue of human rights that we know was in the news today regarding Tibet.

So, to do that, we need people like those in front of us here—dedicated, experienced people. And so, you certainly have your work cut out for you.

Now the way we are going to proceed is I am going to turn to Senator Murkowski for her opening statement, if she has one. Then we are going to turn to Senator Kennedy. And at that time, we will then turn to Senator Webb for his opening statement, and we will go from there.

Senator Murkowski.

STATEMENT OF HON. LISA MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Madam Chairman, and thank you for holding the hearing here this afternoon.

You have touched on the relationship, but when we think about the United States relationship with our Asia-Pacific neighbors, truly the four individuals that we have before us today, who have been nominated to these posts, these are truly very key posts within that region.

APEC, with its significant economic and a growing noneconomic role, the importance of the ASEAN nations as they move forward politically and economically. I am pleased that the administration agreed with the Congress on the need to appoint an ambassador to the ASEAN nations. Brunei, certainly despite its very small geographic size, can play a very significant role as a moderate Islamic nation in helping the United States standing with other Islamic nations. Of course, South Korea, our seventh-largest trading partner. We have got quite a significant military presence in country, and of course, Seoul plays a very instrumental role in the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program.

I would like to put on the record that I am very hopeful that South Korea will soon be able to participate in our Visa Waiver Program. I believe that we are close in meeting the requirements to be eligible for this program or that Korea is close to being eligible, and I certainly support their inclusion in that.

Each post is very key, very important, and will have a vital role in shaping U.S. policy in the region. I look forward to the hearing from the nominees on what action they individually will take to promote the United States interests in the region and am delighted to have the four of you before us this afternoon and your willingness to serve.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator BOXER. Senator Kennedy, why don't you introduce your friend.

Senator KENNEDY. Yes.

Senator BOXER. And then after that, we will call on her.

STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD M. KENNEDY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Senators Boxer, Murkowski, and Senator Webb. I am very grateful for the opportunity to make some brief comments this morning, Madam Chairman and members of the committee, to introduce Kathleen Stephens, who has been nominated to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Korea.

I first met Kathy in Northern Ireland in 1998, when she was counsel general to the United States consulate in Belfast. Previously, she had served in the National Security Council under President Clinton. At that time, the situation in Northern Ireland was very different from what it is today. But by 1998, significant progress was taking place. In fact, tomorrow, April 10, we celebrate a dramatic milestone of the 10th anniversary of the Good Friday agreement, peace agreement.

As Kathy and all of us remember so well, ending the decades of hatred, violence, and bloodshed in Northern Ireland and achieving a peaceful resolution of the conflict was an enormously difficult challenge. But today, we see the people of Northern Ireland living in peace and prosperity and fulfilling their dreams and pursuing a promising future.

Through her work on the National Security Council and at the consulate in Belfast, Kathy was significantly involved in the peace process. I was impressed with her diplomatic skills and her positive ties with the principal political leaders on both sides. She knew the many complex details involved in the peace negotiation. She offered perceptive insights about the complicated political process taking place.

Her son, James, who was with her in Belfast, is now here today at Olin College of Engineering in Needham, MA.

Kathy's work on the Balkans has been impressive. As Deputy Assistant Secretary for Burma—for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs from 2003 to 2005, she worked on Kosovo's future status and the integration of the Western Balkan nations in Europe. She ably managed our policy with countries in the region to see that America's interests were protected and promoted, and her work has left a lasting imprint. And I am sure she is very pleased, as I am, by the recent independence of Kosovo and by last week's announcement that Albania and Croatia have been invited to join NATO.

More recently, as political advisor and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific, Kathy has been closely involved in strengthening our relations with the nations in that region as well, particularly Japan and Korea. And it is fitting that she is now being nominated to be Ambassador to Korea, a country that she has lived in and has known well for many years, beginning in 1975, when she was a Peace Corps volunteer there, teaching English to young Korean students.

She returned to Korea in 1983 as a political advisor and human rights officer at the American Embassy, and she is a strong advocate for human rights and equality for all. I am delighted that the administration has selected such a talented and dedicated diplomat to represent us. She will be the first woman to serve as an Amer-

ican Ambassador in Korea, the first American Ambassador there to be fluent in Korean, and the first American Ambassador who was once a Peace Corps volunteer in Korea.

She is a consummate diplomat with ability, experience, and vision to represent the United States extremely well in a nation vital to our foreign policy in today's world. I strongly support Kathleen Stephens's nomination as our next Ambassador to Korea.

Senator BOXER. Senator, thank you so much. I know you have a busy schedule. We so appreciate your coming.

And before we call on Ms. Stephens to introduce her family and make her statement, I know Senator Webb had some comments, in general, that he would like to share.

STATEMENT OF HON. JIM WEBB, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I wanted to come here today just to express my support for all the nominees. They are obviously extremely qualified and to especially express my gratefulness that we are nominating people like Kathleen Stephens and Scot Marciel, both of whom I have known at some level. And everything that Senator Kennedy just pointed out, I think is illustrative of the incredible qualifications that we have in the person that we are sending to South Korea at a time when relations with that country and on the Korean peninsula are in such a period of change. It is kind of a remarkable set of credentials to be bringing to the table at this key time.

And also, as someone who has spent a great deal of my life in and out of Southeast Asia, I would like to reiterate what other people are saying about how important it is that we have created this position that Scot Marciel is going to be occupying. We tend to look at so many of our relationships in Southeast Asia as bilateral relationships at a time when the region itself is coming together in a more collective way to try to deal with problems, and I think it is very important for our country that we have this sort of representation at ASEAN.

And quite frankly, we need new solutions in Southeast Asia, and the Burmese situation is a good example of that. The ways that we have been trying haven't really worked in terms of solving the problem. And there are other ideas that we can work on with other nations maybe to come to a better solution there and in other places. And we have the right person to be doing that. I have got a great deal of confidence in him and look forward to seeing our relationships in Southeast Asia mature and move forward with this new position.

Thank you very much.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Senator Webb.

So now, Ms. Stephens, would you like to introduce some folks you may have brought with you? And I will offer that to all of the nominees.

STATEMENT OF D. KATHLEEN STEPHENS, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Ms. STEPHENS. Yes, thank you very much. It is a great privilege to be here today, and I do want to thank Senator Kennedy so much

for his very, very generous introduction. If I look a little flushed, it is not just the excitement of the moment. I am blushing a bit because it was very, very generous.

And thank you for recalling our work together, and I do thank you for our work together and the work that I have enjoyed doing throughout my 30-year career with all of the members of Congress in promoting U.S. ideals and interests abroad. I look forward to doing the same if I am confirmed.

My son, as mentioned, is here. He is 21 years old. James, studying engineering at Olin College.

Senator BOXER. James, why don't you stand up so we can say hi to you? Thank you for being here for your mom.

Ms. STEPHENS. James is studying engineering, but he had to be a bridge builder before that because he is a Foreign Service kid, and I am very proud of him.

If I may, Madam Chairman, I wanted to also introduce two great mentors of mine.

Senator BOXER. Sure.

Ms. STEPHENS. Ambassador James Lilley, who was my boss in the Republic of Korea during some very exciting times in the 1980s and, of course, was also United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. I learned so much from him.

Senator BOXER. Ambassador, will you stand, please, so we can recognize you? Thanks. It is very nice to see you again.

Ms. STEPHENS. And Mr. Jon Keeton, who was Peace Corps Korea director in the 1970s. Both of these men have done so much for our country, and I thank them for their example.

Senator BOXER. Thank you both.

Okay, we will start the clock going now at 7 minutes, and we will move forward. Yes. Go ahead.

Ms. STEPHENS. Oh, I am sorry.

Senator BOXER. This is your turn. [Laughter.]

Ms. STEPHENS. Okay. This is my first time doing this.

Senator BOXER. Well, so far, you are doing well.

Ms. STEPHENS. Thank you.

Madam Chairman, I wanted to start by saying it has been mentioned that I lived in Korea many years ago, and in the years ago, I used to hear a phrase from Koreans quite often, even when I didn't speak much Korean. When they talked about the United States-Korean relationship, they would talk about "Hyal Maeng Gwan-gei." And literally, that is an alliance forged in blood.

I am not sure that is said so much these days, but over a 60-year history of our relationship, the United States and the Republic of Korea have faced many challenges. There have, of course, been immense changes in both countries and in the world around us. But the partnership between our two countries has remained vital.

I think this is the time to reinvigorate our partnership and to take it to a new level. Many of the goals the United States and Korea have been pursuing together for many years are within our grasp—a more mature and balanced military partnership, tariff-free trade, and the prospect of positive change in the North. So I believe that the most important work and the best days of the United States-Korean partnership are still ahead of us.

Madam Chairman and Senator Murkowski, I have submitted a written statement, which is rather lengthy. It goes into more detail than time allows me here, and it is lengthy because we have a very big agenda with Korea. But you know, in Korea, there is always breaking news. And even though I submitted my statement yesterday, it doesn't include comment on some important events that actually have occurred in the last 24 hours.

And to name just a few as a sample, the National Assembly elections concluded in Korea today, given the time difference. Ambassador Chris Hill's meeting earlier today in Beijing with his Republic of Korea counterpart in the Six-Party Talks. And my favorite, the first Korean astronaut in space, a woman, Yi So-yeon, by the way.

Each of these events reflects the breadth and vitality of Korea itself and the potential for our future cooperation together. So, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and with other members of Congress on a number of goals, which I will very briefly enumerate.

First, working with my military colleagues and the Republic of Korea in adjusting our military forces on the peninsula. This includes moving our main United States military base out of downtown Seoul and preparing for the transfer of wartime operational control of Korean forces to the Republic of Korea in 2012.

And expanding our global partnership with the Republic of Korea and deepening our cooperation in the kinds of areas that Senator Murkowski mentioned, from climate change to energy security and many, many more.

And third, promoting open markets, fair trade, and U.S. economic leadership in the region. This includes ensuring that the Republic of Korea follows international guidelines and fully reopens its market to United States beef. It also includes the consideration by legislatures in both countries of the free trade agreement we have signed. This is a comprehensive, high-quality agreement between two democracies with advanced economies. It will open South Korea's growing market of 49 million consumers to the full range of United States goods and services from agriculture to autos to telecommunications services.

It will also strengthen our relationship with Korea and send a strong message of continued United States leadership in Asia. If confirmed as ambassador, upon FTA ratification, I am committed to working closely with the U.S. trade representative to ensure that all the provisions of the agreement are enforced across the board.

Another key item on our agenda already mentioned is our effort to implement fully the September 2005 Statement of Principles agreed to the in Six-Party Talks. The full implementation of these principles envisions not only the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, but transformed relations on the peninsula and beyond and more secure and better lives for all Koreans.

We have made progress, but much remains to be done, and it hasn't been easy, as I know this committee well knows. Working closely with our allies in Seoul is vital. Ambassador Hill has just completed a round of meetings in Singapore and Beijing and will be reporting to Secretary Rice when he arrives back this evening.

Issues related to North Korea will be on the agenda when President Lee and President Bush meet next week at Camp David. If confirmed, I will also work closely and energetically with the South Korean Government to promote an improved human rights situation in North Korea and to seek sustainable solutions to the plight of North Korean asylum seekers.

I also hope we can deepen the people-to-people ties between our two countries. Congress has provided legislation allowing us to work with the Republic of Korea on the steps needed to facilitate entry into our Visa Waiver Program, and I thank Senator Murkowski for her mention of this.

If confirmed, I will work with the Koreans and our own authorities toward this end. In my own activities and those of the embassy, I will put a strong emphasis on outreach, on building our ability to communicate in Korean as well as in English, in cyberspace as well as face-to-face with Koreans from all walks of life, from all generations, and every part of the country.

Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, thank you very much for the honor of appearing before you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Stephens follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF D. KATHLEEN STEPHENS, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Madame Chairman and members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea. I am honored by the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me. I want to thank the committee and the other Members of Congress with whom I have had the pleasure of working during my career for your support for the Foreign Service and your dedication to advancing U.S. ideals and interests abroad. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with this committee and with other members of Congress to strengthen our partnership with the Republic of Korea and to work together for the kind of peace and stability in which democracy and economic opportunity can flourish, not only on the Korean peninsula, but also throughout the world.

I am joined today by my son, James, who is a student at Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering in Needham, MA. James was born in Korea. Like all Foreign Service family members, he learned to be a bridge-builder, even before he decided to study engineering.

I am also grateful to my friends and colleagues from the Peace Corps and the Foreign Service who have joined me today, including the dedicated men and women of the Department of State who have been so helpful as I have prepared for this new assignment. I also want to recognize Ambassador James Lilley, former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China, and Mr. Jon Keeton, former Peace Corps/Korea director. Both have represented the United States brilliantly in Korea and elsewhere, and both have contributed hugely to United States-Korean relations. I have benefited from their mentorship, encouragement, and example.

I have been a U.S. Foreign Service officer for 30 years. Early in my career, I spent 8 memorable years at United States diplomatic posts in China and Korea. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, I turned to post-cold war Europe with assignments abroad and in Washington focused on the Balkans, the search for peace in Northern Ireland, and the changing transatlantic relationship. In 2005, I returned to the United States diplomatic agenda in East Asia. As this committee knows well, it is a huge agenda on which success is vital to the peace and prosperity of this country and indeed of the world. I believe we are making good progress.

Madame Chairman, if we consider the history of American engagement in East Asia since the Second World War, if we examine the flowering of economic opportunity and democratic expression in much of East Asia in recent decades, if we identify the key security, human rights, and other issues yet to be resolved, it is clear—the 60-year-old partnership between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea has been and remains a remarkably successful and vital one. South Korea

emerged from a catastrophic half-century of occupation, division, and war to join within the space of only decades the top ranks of the world's free and prosperous nations. This stunning achievement is testimony to the talent, determination, and sacrifices of several generations of Koreans, and to the power of free markets and democracy to unleash extraordinary human potential. It is also rightly viewed in the context of the sacrifice of the more than 35,000 Americans who lost their lives in the Korean War, and to the many thousands who have served side by side with our Korean allies to secure an uneasy peace since then. With the Republic of Korea serving today as a model and a catalyst for economic growth and democratic development elsewhere, in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in its own neighborhood, I believe the best days of the United States-Korean partnership are still ahead of us.

One reason I am an optimist about Korea's future, and about the still-untapped potential of the United States-Republic of Korea partnership, is because I was fortunate enough to live and work in Korea during periods of amazing economic and political transformation. In the Korean countryside that was my home as a Peace Corps volunteer from 1975 to 1977, the memory and threat of war was the backdrop to a life that was harsh for many, not easy for any. The political atmosphere was stifling. But an economic and social transformation was happening before my eyes. I could see the way people's standards of living were improving in small but crucial ways day by day, and the way new opportunities—for education, for a brighter future—were being created and energetically grasped.

When I returned to Korea in 1983 as a political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, burgeoning economic growth had been joined with increasing urgency by a growing insistence by Koreans that economic development should be matched with political reform, with human rights standards and democratic institutions that reflected the aspirations and maturity of the Korean people. It was a difficult period, at times for United States-Korean relations, but especially for the patriotic Koreans who took risks in the cause of Korea's democratization. By 1987, the tide had turned. Just as an earlier generation of Koreans had against all odds turned their country from an economic disaster zone into a powerhouse, so did Koreans in the 1980s take Korea across the democratic threshold.

Koreans have never looked back. The twin engines of a dynamic economy and a vibrant democracy have lifted Korean accomplishments to new heights and new fields. We see it in Korea's status as Asia's "most wired country," in its innovative mobile phone industry that made South Korea the first to launch digital TV to cell phones in 2005, in its cutting-edge, globally-recognized film and art scene, and in its full participation in the international community, epitomized by the election of its distinguished former Foreign Minister, His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, as the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Madame Chairman, Senate Resolution 444, which passed unanimously on February 14, marked another milestone in Korea's recent history, that of the election of the Republic of Korea's new President, Mr. Lee Myung-bak. The resolution describes the ever-growing areas in which the Republic of Korea and the United States work together closely in our alliance partnership, and highlights the opportunities before us to expand further our areas of cooperation. In that spirit, it is fitting that President Lee's first overseas trip in his new role is to the United States. President and Mrs. Bush will host President Lee and his wife, Mrs. Kim Yoon-ok, at Camp David next week for discussions that will focus on ways in which the United States and the Republic of Korea can continue to work together to advance our shared values of freedom, security, and prosperity in East Asia and beyond.

This year, 2008, marks the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Korea as well as the sixtieth anniversary of the United States-Republic of Korea relationship. As we reflect on our shared history of sacrifice and success, and as we examine the regional and global opportunities and challenges we face, the time is right to reinvigorate and maximize the mutual benefits of our partnership. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to realize this goal. There are several major areas in which I intend to concentrate my efforts.

ADAPTING OUR LONGSTANDING SECURITY ALLIANCE WITH SOUTH KOREA TO ADDRESS CONTEMPORARY REALITIES

The United States and the Republic of Korea have agreed to adjust the size and strategic stance of our respective military forces on the peninsula to reflect better the challenges we face today and the changes in the Republic of Korea itself. We are working with our Korean counterparts to move the main United States military base out of downtown Seoul, and to consolidate United States troops in the Republic of Korea overall to fewer hubs further south. We have agreed to transition our command relationships such that beginning in 2012, the Republic of Korea will exercise

wartime operational control over Korean troops. These steps are sensible and timely. The changes overall will reflect Korea's economic and military strength, and its place in the world and the region. The changes will also strengthen the U.S. military's operational efficiency and deterrent capability. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Korean Government, my military colleagues, and with the Congress to accomplish this transformation.

The core mission of deterring aggression from the North will remain the principal priority. But we should continue to deepen our cooperation with the Republic of Korea as we address other regional and global challenges. We should build on the work we have done together in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lebanon. In Iraq's Irbil province, the Koreans have been successful not only in developing local infrastructure and maintaining security, but also in providing a vision for a more democratic and peaceful future. The Republic of Korea has made substantial contributions to international peacekeeping efforts, from Somalia to Georgia to Timor-Leste. The Republic of Korea currently has some 350 troops in southern Lebanon supporting the U.N. peacekeeping mission. The South Korean National Assembly is considering legislation to allow even greater participation in peacekeeping missions. We should also continue to expand our cooperation on a range of global and transnational issues, such as nonproliferation, pandemics, counterterrorism, climate change, and democracy promotion.

PROMOTING OPEN MARKETS, FAIR TRADE, AND U.S. ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN THE REGION

The Republic of Korea has gone from a per capita income of $67 in 1953 to roughly $20,000 today. In the past several years, South Korea has demonstrated a growing willingness to move to greater market openness. It has demonstrated its resolve to participate in free and fair trade by making the strategic decision to negotiate and sign a comprehensive, high-quality free trade agreement with the United States. Upon approval by the legislatures of both countries, the KORUS FTA will open South Korea's growing market of 49 million consumers to the full range of United States goods and services, from agriculture to autos to telecommunications services.

The KORUS FTA is the most commercially significant free trade agreement the United States has concluded in over 15 years. Just taking into account the benefits of eliminating tariff barriers alone, this trade agreement has the potential to boost U.S. exports by more than $10 billion annually, according to the recent International Trade Commission report on the expected impact of the FTA. The benefits are even more significant when the elimination of nontariff barriers is factored in. It will accelerate and lock in Korea's economic reforms. The FTA will provide new opportunities for American companies to export to and invest in the Korean market. It will strengthen our relationship with a key democratic ally in a critical part of the world, and send a strong message of continued United States leadership in Asia. If confirmed as ambassador, and upon FTA ratification, I will make it a top priority to work with the United States Trade Representative to ensure that the provisions of the agreement are enforced across the board. This includes enhancing our current cooperation with the South Koreans on environment and labor standards.

Moreover, we must ensure that the Republic of Korea follows international guidelines and fully reopens its market to United States beef. If confirmed, and as the progeny of Texas ranchers, you can be assured I will do all I can to ensure that our safe and delicious beef has unrestricted access to the South Korean market.

WORKING CLOSELY WITH OUR SOUTH KOREAN ALLIES TO ACHIEVE THE COMPLETE, VERIFIABLE DENUCLEARIZATION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA, BETTER LIVES FOR THE LONG-SUFFERING PEOPLE OF NORTH KOREA, AND A PEACE SETTLEMENT ON THE PENINSULA THAT REFLECTS THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE

Strategically situated between China and Japan, the Korean peninsula remains of critical geopolitical importance to the region and to the United States. Despite the prosperity and freedom that has come to define the Republic of Korea, the situation on the peninsula as a whole remains unpredictable. On a human level, the disparity between the lives of the ordinary citizens of North and South Korea is greater than ever. The United States seeks through the Six Party Talks to complete the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and to implement fully the vision set out in the Joint Statement of Principles agreed to by all six parties in September 2005. Our close coordination with the Republic of Korea in that process has been instrumental to the progress made to date, and if confirmed, I will seek to ensure that we continue that vital cooperation. With successful denuclearization, the joint statement commits the United States and the other parties to the normalization of rela-

tions, to economic and energy assistance to North Korea, and to achieving a permanent peace arrangement in Korea, along with a peace and security mechanism for the region. It is an ambitious agenda. The United States and the Republic of Korea will need to work closely together to succeed.

As democratic societies, the United States and South Korea also share a deep interest in promoting an improved human rights situation in North Korea. This interest is particularly keen among the many Koreans whose families were tragically separated by the Korean War. President Lee and his government have made clear the importance the Republic of Korea attaches to this issue. The United States has equally deep resolve. If confirmed, I will work closely with the South Korean Government on the issue of human rights in North Korea, including in seeking sustainable solutions to the plight of North Korean asylum seekers.

ENHANCING THE PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND DEEPENING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The people-to-people ties between the United States and Korea continue to grow exponentially. The 2 million Korean-Americans in the United States and Korea play a positive and ever-growing role in strengthening the ties between our two countries. Tourism from the Republic of Korea is on the rise, topping 800,000 visitors last year. Over 100,000 Korean students are studying in the United States. South Korean investment and business interests are also growing. In 2006, South Korea was our 7th largest trading partner and the 18th largest source of foreign direct investment in the United States.

These facts, combined with Korea's stable democracy and our strong alliance partnership, make South Korea a natural candidate for the Visa Waiver Program. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of the Republic of Korea to address the legislative requirements for entry into our Visa Waiver Program, including increased information sharing, greater law enforcement cooperation, and the timely production of a South Korean electronic passport. I will work with the Department of Homeland Security and with Korean authorities to ensure that, consistent with congressional and administration requirements, the security, immigration, and law enforcement interests of our Nation are strengthened by the inclusion of the Republic of Korea in the Visa Waiver Program.

I also look forward to leading our embassy's efforts to communicate our ideas and priorities as a Nation to the South Korean people. Much has changed since I last lived in Korea. I will need to do a lot of listening and learning. I will ask the forbearance of my audiences as I attempt to improve my Korean language ability and to use it to understand better a culture and people I respect so deeply.

I will build on the embassy's reputation of being on the leading edge of United States diplomatic missions in the use of innovative technologies to reach out to South Korea's plugged-in public. I look forward to supporting programs such as the Korean-American Educational (Fulbright) Commission. This year alone, there are 114 United States grantees in Fulbright programs in Korea, and 82 Korean grantees in programs in the United States. Just last week, the Asia Society, devoted to improving ties between Americans and the diverse people of Asia, opened a new regional center in Korea. The American Chamber of Commerce in Korea, or Amcham Korea, has an impressive record of bringing American and Korean business people together. These organizations and the multitude of other United States-Korea educational, cultural, spiritual, and artistic exchanges epitomize the breadth and depth of the United States-Korean relationship in the 21st century.

LEADERSHIP OF THE EMBASSY COMMUNITY; PARTNERING WITH OUR COLLEAGUES IN UNIFORM

If confirmed, I will lead a complex diplomatic mission in the Republic of Korea consisting of 575 employees, including staff in the United States Embassy in Seoul and the American Presence Post in Busan. Of that number, 184 are U.S. citizens representing 15 U.S. Government agencies and offices, and 391 are locally hired United States and Korean citizen staff. All the staff serve our country in a mission that is categorized by the State Department as "historically difficult to staff" due to unique linguistic and other challenges. Among the U.S. citizen employees currently at post, 44 possess a working to fluent level of Korean language skills. I look forward to rounding out that number to 45, if confirmed. I will do my best to ensure that all members of the diverse community at Embassy Seoul and their families have the leadership, security, and support they need to get their jobs done, serving and representing the American people, and strengthening our partnership with South Korea. One high priority will be to hasten the day when we are able to move into a new embassy building that better represents the modern United States-Re-

public of Korea partnership. It will also be my privilege to serve with the committed, hard-working men and women of United States Forces Korea. I have had the pleasure of getting to know here in Washington, Lieutenant General Walter Sharp, who has been nominated to be Commander of United States Forces Korea. If we both are confirmed, I look forward to a close and productive service together in Korea.

Thank you very much. I look forward to your questions.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Ms. Stephens.

And now it is my pleasure to introduce Mr. William Todd to be Ambassador to the State of Brunei. And sir, if you have anyone you would like to introduce, please do so. And then we will start the clock, give you 7 minutes.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM E. TODD, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Mr. TODD. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

My wife, Ann.

Senator BOXER. Ann, you want to stand, please.

Mr. TODD. She has put up with a heck of a lot while I have been getting ready for this hearing. So I owe her public thanks and thank her for her love and support.

Senator BOXER. Very good.

Mr. TODD. Thank you. Madam Chairman and Senator Murkowski, members of the committee, I deeply am honored to come before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the next American Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam, which is known as the abode of peace.

I want to thank Secretary Rice and the President for their confidence in nominating me for this position. If confirmed by the Senate, I will work closely with the committee, interested Members of Congress, and other Americans to further advance United States interests in Brunei.

Madam Chairman, a little over a year after 9/11, the Sultan of Brunei came to Washington and met with the President. At that meeting, the President and the Sultan agreed to four goals and objectives. The first were closer counterterrorism cooperation. The second were more military-to-military visits and collaboration. The third, expanded trade and investment. And lastly, the fourth, expanded educational opportunities for Bruneians to study in America.

I am happy to report that both of our governments have made progress in all four of these areas, and if confirmed, I will continue to vigorously pursue these goals.

Madam Chairman, I also wanted to add two or three very important goals for my team and I to focus on, if confirmed. First, the last few years have been a challenging time for America's image in some parts of the world. I think we have an opportunity to regain some of the ground we lost through more public diplomacy, outreach, engagement with this moderate Muslim nation.

Second, I hope to be able to expand on the environmental programs in Brunei, like the Heart of Borneo Initiative, which was created to safeguard the future of Brunei's tropical rainforests. This program has only been around for approximately a year, but it is showing great promise.

Last, I will aggressively manage the construction of the new Embassy in Brunei, ensuring that it becomes a model for safe, secure, environmentally friendly new small embassies.

Madam Chairman, I believe the broad range of experience I have gained during my 25-year career in the Federal Government will assist me in accomplishing these goals. I have served in the Senior Executive Service for more than 10 years. I am currently the Acting Inspector General for the State Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors. In this capacity, I oversee all OIG activities, both domestically and abroad.

Previously, I directed the day-to-day global operations in the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, spearheading programs to combat illicit narcotics, international crime and terrorism, and to strengthen rule of law institutions and law enforcement capabilities all over the world, including in Southeast Asia.

During the mid 1990s, I worked in a senior position in the United States and Foreign Commercial Service, helping to promote U.S. trade and investment abroad. In this capacity, I helped create and implement the big and emerging market strategy that was designed to maximize exports to countries like China and create jobs in the United States. As part of this program, I also built, staffed, and opened a number of United States commercial centers abroad, including three in Asia—one in China, one in Vietnam, and one in Indonesia.

In closing, Madam Chairman and members of the committee, if confirmed, I will dedicate all of my energy and experience to advancing United States foreign policy objectives in Brunei. I will be glad to respond to your questions and thank you for today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Todd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM E. TODD, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, and members of the committee, I am extremely honored to be here before you today as President Bush's nominee to become our next ambassador to the nation of Brunei Darussalam. I am also honored by the confidence the President and Secretary Rice have shown in me in making this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I will work closely with the committee, interested Members of Congress, and other Americans to advance United States interests in Brunei Darussalam.

Although a small country, Brunei exerts a greater influence in the region than its size would suggest. Brunei's location, its status as a significant provider of hydrocarbons, its stance against terrorism, and its membership in a number of important regional and multilateral organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), makes it an important partner and a valued friend of the United States.

Since the Sultan of Brunei met with President Bush in the White House in December 2002, our ties with Brunei Darussalam, which means the "abode of peace" in Malay, have expanded and deepened. If confirmed, I therefore will be building on a strong foundation of growing cooperation in a number of areas, including security and military-to-military relations, economic-commercial ties, environmental protection, and people-to-people contacts.

In considering our economic relations, we have common interests with Brunei. Brunei shares with us a desire and strong support for free markets, secure global shipping lanes to ensure smooth passage of exports and imports, and a stable financial system. Brunei is an important provider of liquefied natural gas to the region and also provides oil to the world market. The United States had a little over half a billion dollars of two-way trade with Brunei in 2007. U.S. exports surged last year due to sales of aircraft and other manufactured items. If confirmed, I will do all I

can to support U.S. businesses in order to continue this trend. We have a bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with Brunei, which enables us to raise with Brunei officials our concerns and suggestions to expand our trade and investment relationship. Brunei is a member of what is called the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership, also known as the P–4 Free Trade Agreement, along with Singapore, New Zealand, and Chile. The U.S. Government has joined negotiations with those countries on the investment and financial services chapters of that Free Trade Agreement. We are also exploring whether it will be in the United States interest to participate in the full FTA. I look forward to increasing our economic relationship with Brunei through the P–4 and other means.

I also hope to do all I can to support Brunei's partnership with Malaysia and Indonesia in the "Heart of Borneo Initiative" to preserve and sustainably manage the treasure of biodiversity that is found in the tropical rain forests of the island of Borneo. Although Brunei possesses just a fraction of the total area included in the initiative, approximately 240,000 square kilometers, Brunei has put at least 58 percent of its territory under the conservation protection called for in the Heart of Borneo Initiative, which has the strong support of the Government and the people of Brunei.

Brunei Darussalam strives to maintain its well-deserved reputation as an "abode of peace." The United States has found Brunei to be a valuable partner in promoting regional stability and security. Brunei and the United States coordinated relief to Aceh following the 2004 tsunami, and for several years Brunei has contributed forces to the international monitoring team on the Philippine island of Mindanao. Brunei welcomes the United States military presence in Southeast Asia, viewing it as essential to regional stability and prosperity. Our militaries cooperate closely in exercises and exchanges, and an increasing number of United States ships have visited Brunei's port. Brunei's first cadet at West Point is due to graduate in 2009, and two other officers are currently on shorter-term study in the United States. Our Department of Defense is working with the Government of Brunei to improve the latter's abilities in military procurement, and we hope to sign a Mutual Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement to improve the ability of our military to work with its Bruneian counterparts in many areas, such as exercises and disaster assistance. If confirmed, I will seek to further enhance these ties. I will also work to improve our information sharing on terrorist threats.

Madam Chairman, Brunei is an absolute monarchy. If confirmed, I will share with Bruneians the benefits of our democratic system and political openness, and look for ways we can further promote Brunei's move toward a more participatory government.

I also believe it is very important to promote greater people-to-people ties, and I especially want to increase the number of Bruneian students studying in or visiting the United States. While we have a friendly and constructive relationship with Brunei, I am confident that increased direct exposure to America would deepen understanding of our country by Bruneians and overcome stereotypes common in the global media. I am a firm believer in the value of public diplomacy and will work hard to ensure that Bruneians, the majority of whom are Muslim, are aware of the many qualities that make America such a great nation, and a nation of religious tolerance for all faiths.

Madam Chairman, if confirmed to lead our embassy in Brunei, I will be responsible for the protection of United States citizens and our employees and facilities. Fortunately, the United States and Brunei recently agreed on the acquisition of land in order to build a new embassy compound that, when completed, will provide a secure working environment for our dedicated diplomats and local employees. This will be a great improvement over the current embassy location.

Madam Chairman, the experience I have gained in government service for nearly 25 years has prepared me well to serve as our next Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. I have had a life-long interest in Asia, and I am looking forward with great enthusiasm to putting all of my experience and skill to use in order to advance United States interests in Brunei.

I am currently the Acting Inspector General of the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors. I direct all Office of Inspector General activities, domestically and abroad.

Previously, in the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), over a 4-year period I served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS), as Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Civilian Police and Rule of Law Programs and Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as Executive Director/Controller. As PDAS, I was the Chief Operating Officer for global programs, including all post-conflict activities, and at the forefront of our international programs for police training, rule of law, and counternarcotics ef-

forts in some of the most hostile places on earth, including Iraq, Afghanistan, and Colombia. I managed approximately 4,000 employees and contractors in more than 75 theatres of operation. As INL's Executive Director/Controller, I was in charge of about one-sixth of the State Department's budget (over $3.5 billion), and about one-fourth of its assets.

Finally, as Director of Planning and Resource Management for the Department of Commerce's U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, I built, staffed, and opened U.S. Commercial Centers around the world, including three in Asia.

Madam Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for your consideration of my nomination. I would be happy to respond to your questions.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, sir.

And next we go to Mr. Scot Marciel for the rank of Ambassador for Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Sir, go right ahead. If you have anyone to introduce, feel free.

STATEMENT OF SCOT A. MARCIEL, NOMINEE FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR FOR ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) AFFAIRS

Mr. MARCIEL. Thank you. Unfortunately, the combination of work, school, and studying for exams made it impossible for my wife and my daughters to join me today. But I would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation for all the support they have shown me over the years.

Senator BOXER. Good.

Mr. MARCIEL. Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today to seek confirmation of President Bush's nomination of me as United States Ambassador for ASEAN affairs. I would like to begin by acknowledging the key role that the U.S. Senate played in creation of this position.

Madam Chairman, just over a year ago, you and Senator Murkowski and other members of this committee cosponsored Senate Resolution 110, which urged, among other things, the United States to appoint an ambassador for ASEAN affairs. That resolution and the administration's decision to put forth my nomination highlight our shared belief that ASEAN is playing a growing role in the region and that the United States should increase its engagement with ASEAN. In that spirit, and if confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with you and other members to advance our interests in Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asia is a dynamic region of great importance to us. ASEAN's 10 member nations have a combined population of almost 600 million people and together constitute our fourth-largest export market. ASEAN members include two treaty allies, the world's third-largest democracy, and many partners and friends.

Our fundamental interest in Southeast Asia is that the region's nations remain strong and independent, that they enjoy increased prosperity and freedom, and that they work with us in addressing regional and global issues. It is also in our interest to see a successful ASEAN, which can be a positive force for peace, stability, and progress. ASEAN members have worked to bolster their organization recently, including by signing a charter last year that provides a legal basis for the organization and offers the possibility for it to play a more significant and positive role in the future.

We have responded by ramping up our own cooperation with ASEAN. An appointment of an ambassador for ASEAN affairs will add to the momentum in the relationship.

Madam Chairman, nearly half of my 23 years in the Foreign Service has been devoted to working in or on the ASEAN region. I have served in the Philippines and Vietnam as director of the two offices responsible for Southeast Asia and in my current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary responsible for Southeast Asia in which I am also responsible for relations with ASEAN.

I have developed a broad network of contacts in the region and a healthy appreciation for its diversity, its challenges, and its many opportunities. If confirmed, I pledge to use that experience to expand United States engagement with ASEAN in support of our national interests. I will work to ensure the United States maintains a significant presence in the region and to erase any doubt about the United States commitment to Southeast Asia.

I intend to urge ASEAN to set and to meet high standards, whether on economic issues or on democracy and human rights. I also look forward to expanding our cooperation with ASEAN in key areas such as health, education, and the environment.

Finally, one of my highest priorities, if confirmed, will be to work with ASEAN and with other countries in the region to convince Burma's rulers to end their brutal repression and to begin a genuine dialog leading to a democratic transition. Burma represents one of ASEAN's biggest challenges, but it is also an opportunity. If we and ASEAN, along with other members of the international community, can help bring about a reversal of Burma's dangerous downward spiral, it will be of great benefit not only to the Burmese people, but to ASEAN and to our interests in Asia.

Madam Chairman, we are doing a lot of good work in Southeast Asia, and there is more that we can do. I would consider it a privilege and an honor to be part of that effort by serving my country as the first United States Ambassador for ASEAN affairs.

Thank you for considering my nomination, and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Marciel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOT A. MARCIEL, NOMINEE FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR FOR ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) AFFAIRS

Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today to seek confirmation of President Bush's nomination of me as U.S. Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs. I appreciate the confidence that the President and Secretary Rice have shown in me by this nomination.

The creation of the position of U.S. Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs reflects our recognition of the growing importance of ASEAN as an institution. I would like to acknowledge the important role the United States Senate played in the creation of this post. Madam Chairman, just over a year ago, you joined nine other Senators in cosponsoring Senate Resolution 110, sponsored by Senator Lugar, expressing the sense of the Senate that, among other important actions, the United States should appoint an ambassador for ASEAN affairs. That resolution and the administration's subsequent move to nominate such an ambassador highlight our shared belief that the United States should increase its engagement and cooperation with ASEAN. In that spirit, and if confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with you and other members to advance United States interests in Southeast Asia and within ASEAN in particular.

Southeast Asia is a dynamic region of great importance to our country. ASEAN's 10 member nations have a combined population of nearly 600 million, and together

constitute our fourth largest export market. ASEAN members include two treaty allies, the world's third-largest democracy, and many long-time partners and friends.

Our fundamental interest in Southeast Asia is that the region's nations remain strong and independent, that they enjoy increasing prosperity and freedom, and that they work with us as partners in addressing a wide range of regional and global challenges.

We are pursuing these interests, both by bolstering our already strong bilateral relations with most ASEAN members and, increasingly, by building a fuller relationship with ASEAN itself. Because I have been nominated to be Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs, I would like to focus my comments on our relationship with ASEAN as a whole, rather than on our bilateral relations with individual members.

ASEAN was established in 1967. The United States became a dialog partner, ASEAN's term for those nations with which it has established regular formal discussions, in 1977. Throughout those 31 years, we have developed closer relations between our governments, our businesses, nongovernmental organizations, education institutions, and individuals.

In recent years, ASEAN members have worked to bolster the organization and to promote economic integration and a greater sense of community. ASEAN governments understand these changes are essential if they are to compete internationally and ASEAN is to maintain its relevance. ASEAN leaders took a very important step along these lines last November when they signed the ASEAN Charter, which provides a legal basis for the organization and offers the possibility for it to play a much more significant and positive role in the future.

It is in our interests to see a strong and successful ASEAN, which can be a positive force for peace, stability, and prosperity, and which also can set high standards for its members in areas such as rule of law and human rights. That is why we have responded to ASEAN's recent efforts by ramping up our engagement. The ASEAN-United States Enhanced Partnership, announced by the President and ASEAN leaders in 2005, set a clear framework for boosting cooperation. The action plan signed by Secretary Rice and her ASEAN counterparts in 2006 laid out a series of concrete areas of cooperation. More recently, the Department of State and USAID have developed a program, called ADVANCE, to support these efforts, and to help ASEAN achieve its ambitious goals.

Much of our initial work has focused on supporting ASEAN's economic integration efforts, in large part because ASEAN itself is moving fastest in building its economic pillar. However, we also are advancing our political, security, social, and cultural interests with ASEAN. We have been very active on the environment, supporting projects such as the successful ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network, the Coral Triangle Initiative, and the Heart of Borneo program. We are rapidly increasing our cooperation on climate change, clean energy, pandemic preparedness, and avian influenza. I am very pleased that we recently launched the first ASEAN Fulbright program.

We want to work with ASEAN to promote democracy and freedom. We are pleased that the fundamental principles embodied in the ASEAN Charter include commitments to "strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms." We welcome the decision to create a human rights body—and as the structure and functions of that body take shape, we will urge ASEAN to give it the means to promote and protect fundamental human rights throughout the region.

Madame Chairman, nearly half of my 23 years in the Foreign Service has been devoted to working in or on the ASEAN region, including assignments in the Philippines and Vietnam, as director of the two offices responsible for Southeast Asia, and as desk officer for Laos. I have developed a strong network of contacts in the region, as well as a healthy appreciation for its diversity, challenges, and opportunities.

If confirmed, I pledge to use that experience and my firm belief in the value of a strong United States role in Southeast Asia to expand United States engagement with ASEAN in support of our national interests. I will do all I can to ensure the United States maintains a strong presence in the region, and to eliminate any doubt about the United States commitment to Southeast Asia. I intend to urge ASEAN to set and to meet high standards, whether on economic issues such as intellectual property rights protection or on democracy and human rights, including by making the human rights body a credible and meaningful entity. I also look forward to enhancing United States-ASEAN cooperation in other areas, such as health, energy, and the environment.

One of my highest priorities, if confirmed, will be to work with ASEAN and its member nations—as well as with other countries in the region and around the globe—to convince Burma's rulers to end their brutal repression and begin a gen-

uine dialog leading to a democratic transition. The problem of Burma represents one of ASEAN's biggest challenges, but also an opportunity. If we and ASEAN, together with others in the international community, can help bring about a reversal of Burma's dangerous downward spiral, it will be of enormous benefit not only to the Burmese people, but to the region, to ASEAN, and to our interests in East Asia.

I would like to conclude with a few comments on how I hope to carry out this new role as Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs, while continuing my work as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Southeast Asia. First, I intend to travel extensively throughout the region, and to use every stop to talk about both bilateral and ASEAN issues. I believe the title of Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs will give me good access, and many opportunities to talk about our concerns—and the positive role the United States is playing in the region—both privately and publicly. Second, I intend to engage extensively with the ASEAN Secretary General and his staff in Jakarta to support ambitious ASEAN goals and to find concrete ways in which we can work together. Finally, I need to do a lot of work here to ensure that we have a clear, coherent, and coordinated approach to Southeast Asia that combines the traditional focus on bilateral relations with recognition that our challenges and opportunities in that part of the world increasingly need to be pursued regionally, particularly through close cooperation with ASEAN.

Madam Chairman, I would consider it a great privilege to serve my country as the first U.S. Ambassador for ASEAN Affairs.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I welcome your questions.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, sir.

And now we turn to the Honorable Patricia Haslach for the rank of ambassador during her tenure of service as United States senior coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICIA M. HASLACH, NOMINEE FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS UNITED STATES SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC) FORUM

Ambassador HASLACH. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank my mother, also named Patricia Haslach, who is here with me today.

Senator BOXER. Why don't you stand up, Mrs. Haslach.

Ambassador HASLACH. And to my father, who has recently passed away and who was always an inspiration to me. I would also like to thank my husband, David, who is serving as a Foreign Service officer in Austria, and to our two daughters, Shereen and Kiran, who are unable to join us today.

Madam Chairman, I note that Shereen is a student at Santa Clara University, which gives me the chance to visit your State quite frequently.

Senator BOXER. Wonderful. Well, we welcome you.

Ambassador HASLACH. Thank you.

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you to seek confirmation as United States Ambassador to APEC. I appreciate the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in me by this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to advance United States interests through APEC.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, APEC, is the premier venue for United States engagement with the Asia-Pacific region on economic and other issues. The 21 members of APEC together account for 60 percent of U.S. exports, 60 percent of global GDP, 50 percent of world trade, and nearly 3 billion consumers.

APEC is the only trans-Pacific forum that includes the United States and meets annually at the head of State level.

While these facts alone demonstrate the significance of the forum, APEC is more than the sum of its statistics. APEC is a vibrant organization that works to enhance the well-being of the United States and the Asia-Pacific in practical and tangible ways.

With little fanfare, APEC is playing a vital role in promoting prosperity, opening markets, and ensuring our security. For example, APEC is at the forefront of regional economic integration. A key component of this effort is APEC's exploration of a free trade area of the Asia-Pacific as a long-term vision, which would allow Americans to compete on a level playing field in the region.

APEC also helps to facilitate increased regional commerce. This includes promoting the development of high-quality free trade agreements, protecting intellectual property rights, expediting business travel, and reducing the costs of conducting trade.

America must participate constructively in the process of economic integration that is already transforming the Asia-Pacific or risk becoming disadvantaged and isolated. If confirmed as ambassador, I will work to utilize the tools and opportunities provided by APEC to ensure that America will be part of the region's extraordinary dynamism and in a way that benefits all Americans.

At the same time, addressing economic issues alone does not guarantee growth. We must also foster an overall environment where prosperity can occur. This is why APEC is helping to build institutions, combat corruption, and promote education. Madam Chairman, you might be interested to know that APEC is committed to women's economic empowerment and has made it an important criterion in the approval of APEC projects.

In addition, APEC is helping to address energy security and climate change. It is also helping to improve port security, counterterrorism, and confront avian influenza. I note that APEC is accomplishing these things in partnership with the region's private sector.

This year, Peru's hosting of the forum enables us to tackle emerging challenges while highlighting ties between Latin America and Asia. APEC will work to enhance protections against unsafe food and other products. APEC is uniquely suited for addressing this issue since our key regional trade partners, including China, are active members.

APEC will also work to address concerns about globalization, including access to the skills needed to succeed in the global economy. Furthermore, I want to highlight that in 2011, the United States will be hosting APEC for the first time in 18 years. This is a tremendous opportunity for our country, and I look forward to working with Congress to make this event successful.

During my 22 years in the Foreign Service, I have developed an intimate knowledge of Asia. If confirmed as ambassador to APEC, I promise to work to strengthen the organization as an engine of growth and opportunity in the Asia-Pacific.

Thank you for considering my nomination, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Haslach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICIA M. HASLACH, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS UNITED STATES SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC) FORUM

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Murkowski, and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today to seek confirmation as U.S. Senior Official for APEC with the rank of Ambassador. I appreciate the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in me by this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with you to advance U.S. interests through APEC.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) is strategically important to the United States. It is the premier venue for engaging the Asia-Pacific region on economic and other issues. The 21 members of APEC together account for 60 percent of U.S. exports, 60 percent of global GDP, 50 percent of world trade, and nearly 3 billion consumers. APEC is the only trans-Pacific forum that includes the United States and meets annually at the head of state level, with President Bush having attended every APEC leaders meeting since taking office. It also brings together other top officials throughout the year to address an array of important issues.

While these facts alone demonstrate the significance of the forum, APEC is more than the sum of its statistics. APEC is a vibrant organization that works to enhance the well-being of the United States and the Asia-Pacific in practical and tangible ways. With little fanfare, APEC is playing an important role in promoting economic growth, opening markets for U.S. business, and ensuring our security. If confirmed as U.S. Senior Official for APEC with the rank of Ambassador, I will work vigorously to strengthen the organization, particularly as the United States prepares to host APEC in 2011.

PROMOTING U.S. TRADE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Madam Chairman, APEC has made real progress in breaking down barriers to American goods and services, as well as addressing an array of issues that are important to U.S. manufacturers, service providers, workers, farmers, and ranchers.

- Over the years, APEC has offered strong support to concluding the Doha Round of multilateral trade talks, especially at critical junctures. In March, at their first meeting of 2008, APEC senior officials issued a strong statement noting the recent positive developments in the Doha Round and committing to work toward an ambitious and balanced outcome that delivers real commercial gains.
- APEC is also at the front-and-center in the trend toward economic integration in the Asia Pacific, a critical ingredient for building prosperity and stability in the region. A key component of this effort is APEC's work to actively explore the long-term vision of a free trade area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), which would allow Americans to compete on a more level playing field in the world's most dynamic economic region.
- In addition, APEC has made important progress in addressing an array of issues to further facilitate trade and economic growth in the Asia Pacific. This includes establishing guidelines to promote the development of high-quality FTAs in the region, increase protection of intellectual property rights, and reduce the costs of conducting trade that hinder American businesses—especially small businesses—from fully participating in the regional marketplace.
- APEC also expedites the travel of senior business people and government officials throughout the region using the APEC Business Travel Card program. This program provides eligible individuals with speedier processing at airport immigration lines in participating APEC economies.

There is still unfulfilled potential in our trade relationship with Asia. America must participate constructively in the process of economic integration that is already transforming the region, or risk becoming disadvantaged and isolated. If I am confirmed with the rank of ambassador, I will work to utilize the tools and opportunities provided by APEC to ensure that our country will be a part of the extraordinary dynamism of the Asia-Pacific, and in a way that benefits all Americans.

BUILDING AND SECURING PROSPEROUS SOCIETIES

At the same time, addressing economic issues alone does not guarantee growth. We must also foster an overall environment where prosperity can occur.

- This is why APEC is helping economies to construct transparent regulatory institutions, combat corruption, and promote education. It is also why APEC is working to ensure that all members of society can prosper from regional trade and investment. Madam Chairman, you might be interested to know that APEC members, including the United States, are particularly committed to women's

economic empowerment and have made it an important criterion in the approval of APEC-sponsored projects.

- APEC is also contributing to the global response to energy security and climate change. Utilizing its strengths as the region's preeminent economic forum, APEC is working to achieve regional goals in such areas as improving energy efficiency, promoting alternative energy sources, and fostering the development and trade of clean technologies. These activities include an effort in APEC to promote trade of environmental goods and services.
- Furthermore, APEC has made important contributions to protect the region from security threats that could harm economic growth. With the United States in the lead, APEC has helped to improve the security of airports and seaports, counterterrorism, and confront avian influenza.

I want to emphasize that APEC is not just a forum for talking about policy solutions to economic challenges; it also works in practical terms to translate ideas into action. In particular, APEC undertakes technical cooperation programs that help our trade partners to implement their commitments and improve the economic life of people throughout the region. This is one of the main reasons why President Bush committed in 2006 to augment U.S. funding for APEC. With financial contributions from the United States and other members, APEC is implementing projects in a wide range of areas, including education, energy, emergency preparedness, anticounterfeiting, and economic reform. APEC's partnership with the region's private sector, including many of its leading companies, also ensures that its initiatives are focused, constructive, and of tangible benefit to U.S. businesses.

PERU 2008 AND THE FUTURE

Peru's hosting of the forum in 2008 underscores the trans-Pacific nature of APEC and enables us to tackle emerging challenges while highlighting the growing economic ties between Latin America and Asia.

- APEC will be working to increase economies' capacity to protect against unsafe food and other products, an issue of immense concern to U.S. consumers. The United States believes that APEC is uniquely suited for addressing this issue, since our key regional trade partners—including China—are active members. APEC will implement a major program this year to identify strategies for improving food safety and is looking to pursue more initiatives that will strengthen regional capabilities to protect consumers.
- APEC will focus on ways to address concerns in both developed and developing economies about globalization, including access to education and workplace skills needed to succeed in the global economy.
- APEC will also work to promote corporate social responsibility in the Asia-Pacific, since we know that good corporate citizenship has a positive impact for both the people of the region as well as for the business community.

Madam Chairman, I also want to highlight that in 2011 the United States will be hosting APEC for the first time in 18 years. This is a tremendous opportunity for our country. As the host economy, it will be an excellent chance to promote U.S. business and investment opportunities and define an agenda for regional prosperity that reflects our values. This will be a major undertaking, and I look forward to working with Congress to make this important event successful.

CONCLUSION

If I am confirmed with the rank of Ambassador, I promise to put my experience and enthusiasm to work in advancing United States interests in the Asia-Pacific. During my 22 years in the United States Foreign Service, I have developed an intimate knowledge of Asia, having served as Ambassador to Laos between 2004 and 2007, and in the economic section of the United States Embassy in Indonesia during the 1990s. Together with my other experience working on economic issues in South Asia, Africa, and Europe, I am prepared to tackle the broad range of economic issues with our fellow APEC members.

Madam Chairman, it would be a great privilege to serve my country as U.S. Senior Official for APEC with the rank of Ambassador. APEC is a truly unique and irreplaceable asset to the American people, and I am ready to help the United States strengthen the organization as an engine of growth and opportunity in the Asia-Pacific.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

Senator BOXER. Thank you all. Excellent panel, and I will just ask a few questions and then turn it over to my colleague. And I

don't have any need to go any extra rounds, I don't think. So, hopefully, this will be short and sweet for you.

Ms. Stephens, while South Korea remains an important ally of the United States, it is safe to say that the United States-South Korean relationship has faced a number of challenges over the past few years. At times, anti-Americanism has reached alarming levels, particularly after the tragic death of two South Korean girls, who were hit by a United States tank on its way to a training exercise in 2002.

The election of President Lee in South Korea is being touted as an opportunity to strengthen our relations. President Lee has himself set rebuilding ties with the United States as one of the objectives of his presidency. How will you work to strengthen the relationship between the United States and South Korea, and how will you specifically address the issue of anti-Americanism?

Ms. STEPHENS. Madam Chairman, thank you very much for that question.

As I said in my opening statement, I look at the United States-Korea relationship in a historical context. This is the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Korea. It is the 60th anniversary of the United States-Republic of Korea diplomatic relations. And as you point out, we have had a lot of challenges.

When Ambassador Lilley and I were serving in Korea in the 1980s, there was not democracy there. And so, I would have to say that I see some of the events of the past few years as a sign of a democratic society as it develops and matures. And as that society has developed and matured, so has the United States-Republic of Korea relationship.

Polling suggests today that there is strong support across the board for a United States-Korea security relationship. The fact that we have a Korean-American community that now numbers some 2 million—about 1.5 million in the United States, a half a million in the United States—gives the relationship, I think, the kind of foundation perhaps and resilience that perhaps it did not have some years ago. And I think there are a number of areas in which we can work to build on this relationship.

When President Lee comes to the United States next week, I know that he and President Bush will be looking at a number of these. And without repeating what I said in my opening statement, I would again highlight in terms of the embassy our outreach in Korea itself. Korean is a very hard language. We are very proud of the fact that about a third or almost a third——

Senator BOXER. Oh, wait. I don't want to get off the question.

Ms. STEPHENS. Yes.

Senator BOXER. So you don't think there is anti-Americanism in South Korea?

Ms. STEPHENS. No, I do think that there has been, and there remains critical voices about the alliance, about what has happened in the past. But I think there is generally a sense that as Korea looks to its own interest, to its own future, that it needs to have a mature relationship with the United States.

Senator BOXER. Good. Well, I think we need to build on that.

I understand that the United States Government has repeatedly asked South Korea to contribute forces to assist with the inter-

national effort to help stabilize Afghanistan, but that South Korea has been nonresponsive to date. Is there an overarching reason as to why South Korea does not want to assist the United States and its allies in Afghanistan? And do expect that there might be a change of heart because of President Lee's new tenure?

Ms. STEPHENS. Well, Madam Chairman, I do think that we—this is an issue we can discuss and should discuss with the Koreans. I would note that the Republic of Korea has contributed not only to our efforts in Iraq, where for a while they were the third-largest coalition contributor, but also in Afghanistan, where they did have a presence of, I think, some engineers and some other experts.

Senator BOXER. But mine was—I was talking about forces.

Ms. STEPHENS. Yes. I think this is a discussion that we should have with the new government, and I think we need to make—to discuss what the needs are in Afghanistan and to see how they can contribute. They have certainly made clear they would like to contribute to more peacekeeping operations worldwide.

Senator BOXER. Well, I think it is very important because, of course, I have been to the zone there. I have looked across, and you know, South Korea understands the need to have stability at its border. Afghanistan deserves to have a country free of the Taliban, and I would hope that in this new opportunity that we have with you and the new President that we will make that case for Afghanistan. It is a very different case than Iraq. And so, I am looking forward to hearing from you on that.

Mr. Marciel, what steps will you take to urge the ASEAN members to do more to let Burma know that its behavior is reprehensible and will not be tolerated in the future? How will you work with ASEAN to pressure the Burmese Government to reconsider the referendum it is planning to hold on a new constitution in May of this year?

As you know, the referendum is facing widespread opposition in Burma, particularly because it will bar Aung San Suu Kyi from running for office. Now the Philippines has asked that she be released before it will ratify the new charter. Will you encourage other nations to follow suit?

Mr. MARCIEL. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

We have been working extensively and intensively with all of the ASEAN countries to try to get them to push the Burmese regime to take a number of steps, including releasing political prisoners, beginning a genuine dialog, and most recently, making the upcoming referendum an inclusive process that is credible.

We have had, I would say, mixed success. On the one hand, you can look at ASEAN's response compared to our response and say it has been somewhat meek. On the other hand, given ASEAN's history and precedent, it has been remarkably strong. A very strong statement, as you know, last September expressing the sense of ASEAN of being appalled and expressing repulsion at the crackdown.

ASEAN is a little bit split on this. I think all of the ASEAN countries would like to see change in Burma. They see that it is going downhill, and it is hurting ASEAN. Some, like the Philippines, have been most outspoken. We are continuing to weigh in

diplomatically with all of them, and we just need to keep doing that.

Part of what is happening in places like Indonesia is that civil society in Indonesia is actually increasing pressure on the government to step in. The ASEANs are interested in working with us. They are opposed to sanctions, as you know. I don't anticipate that will change. Frankly, we just need to continue working with them diplomatically and pointing out that the Burma problem is not going to go away on its own.

Senator BOXER. As you know, because you have testified here before, this is an issue of great concern to members of the committee. So we will be working with you on this.

I have one more question for you, Mr. Marciel. Then I will yield, and then I will come back with just two quick questions for our other panelists.

In January of this year, Singapore's defense minister said the United States should place some hot energy and effort in Southeast Asia, and I think he was relating to the fact that we have been so focused on Iraq. What initiatives are necessary to reassure our friends and allies in Asia that we are committed to an active and engaged presence in the region?

Mr. MARCIEL. Senator, I think one of the challenges that we face is actually making sure that people in the region understand all the many things that we are doing in the region. The fact is that we have an incredible level of engagement. I would say overall, with the exception of a place like Burma, bilateral relations with the ASEAN members are at an all-time high, and we are doing more with ASEAN by far than ever before, with the enhanced partnership, assistance, et cetera.

But as you said, the perception is still out there that somehow we are not engaged, we are not committed. Part of, I think, the beauty of creating an ambassador for ASEAN affairs, and I don't want to sound arrogant here at all about my future role, if confirmed. But I think having an ambassador for ASEAN affairs allows us to raise the profile, and when we talk publicly in the region to emphasize the things we are doing and to look for more opportunities, including continuing high-level visits.

So it is both a substantive challenge, but more importantly, I would say a public diplomacy challenge. Southeast Asians want more of us.

Senator BOXER. Well, I think you make a good point, and that was one of the reasons we did support the creation of this position. So we are glad that you are willing to take it on.

Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Mr. Marciel, we will just keep you on the seat for a moment longer. With regard to Burma again, following up on Senator Boxer's question, we recognize that the economic ties that Burma has with India and China and the significance of those. How much influence do the members of ASEAN have then with the military regime, given how China and India factor in? And where I am going is what is their leverage?

Mr. MARCIEL. Thank you, Senator Murkowski. It is actually a question that we ask ourselves all of the time.

I think it is—we believe and most people believe that China probably has the most influence over Burma of any other nation, although I wouldn't exaggerate even that influence. The Burmese generals don't seem to take advice particularly well, either from outsiders or even from their own people. So I would say China has the most influence.

ASEAN as a whole seems to have relatively limited influence, surprisingly. I think the greatest ASEAN influence is that when ASEAN speaks out strongly on Burma, it makes it harder for other nations in the region not to speak out, as well. I mean, I think in some ways it is a bit of an indirect influence. And so, we urge the ASEANs, as a result, to continue to speak out.

But I think the experience over the last several months shows that the Burmese generals have not been particularly responsive. That said, ASEAN needs to keep raising this and pushing any way they can.

Senator MURKOWSKI. What is the status of the trade agreements that are being negotiated currently? This is the ASEAN Plus Three and the ASEAN Plus Six and the East Asia Economic Group. And in terms of the U.S. involvement on these trade agreements, do you know where we are?

Mr. MARCIEL. We are not part of those. Senator, we are not part of those agreements. ASEAN is negotiating a series of agreements, I think, with Korea, China, and Japan. Yes, and they are all different—I think as well as with India, although that one is not moving ahead as fast.

I don't—I am afraid I don't have a very good update for you, but I would be pleased to come back and give you more details.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Okay. If there is an update, that is what I was looking for.

Mr. MARCIEL. Okay.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Let me ask you, Ms. Haslach, the—you mentioned the administration's proposal for a free trade area within the Asia-Pacific. What has been the reaction of the APEC members to the proposal? I am assuming this is something that is meeting with a level of support or endorsement?

Ambassador HASLACH. Thank you, Senator Murkowski.

This is actually an aspirational goal. In everything in APEC, we have to reach consensus, and all the 21 members have agreed to a path looking at what is called a free trade area—not an agreement, a free trade area of the Asia-Pacific. And the focus is on building economic integration, and we can do this in many different ways, and we haven't actually defined what the path will be.

But currently, what we are trying to do is come up with model measures for free trade agreements, and we are looking at high-quality free trade agreements similar to the one that we have recently negotiated with Korea.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. What about the sentiment that is out there that this administration just has not paid close enough attention to what is going on in the Asia-Pacific region? There were some issues recently where we didn't stay at the meeting as long as we would have liked.

And I guess the question is whether that sentiment is still out there, that the Bush administration is just not giving enough, at-

taching enough significance to the region and to the APEC members? And if that sentiment is still out there, how do you counteract that as ambassador to APEC?

Ambassador HASLACH. Well, I think we have been able to actually counteract it by announcing that the United States will be hosting APEC in 2011, and I think that really speaks out for our commitment to APEC. Also, we fully are engaged in all of the different APEC meetings, hundreds of them that take place over the year. And President Bush has attended every single one of the leaders meetings, and Secretary Rice has attended all the ministerials. Yes.

Senator MURKOWSKI. So that sentiment is changing then with the passage of time?

Ambassador HASLACH. Absolutely. And we cooperate in many, many tangible ways.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. Let me ask you, Ms. Stephens, and again, kind of sticking with some of the trade issues. Given Alaska's relationship with South Korea and the fact that South Korea is our third-largest trading partner ahead of our neighbor, Canada, I am supportive of the United States-South Korea free trade agreement. But we recognize that there is some opposition to that agreement here in the United States.

But can you speak to the agreement's chances of success or how that is being received within South Korea's National Assembly and what concerns they might have specifically?

Ms. STEPHENS. Well, thank you, Senator. As you know, the agreement was signed in June of 2007 between our trade representative and her counterpart. The Republic of Korea is on a little bit of a different track in its timing, and it was introduced into the Korean National Assembly, I believe, last September.

Now since then, Korea has had a presidential election and transition and then today the National Assembly election. But there has been a great deal of discussion—debate. In the early days of the negotiations, quite a bit of very vocal opposition to the idea of a free trade agreement. So they have been through quite a process there.

And I think where they have come out, according again to polling, is with very strong support for it as a strategic decision by the Republic of Korea. As it looks at its very large neighbors in the region it works in and its need to be competitive in this global economy, I think for Korea they look at it as a key strategic move to not only deepen its ties with the United States, but as I said, to really kind of reform its economy.

The benefits are different for our two countries. For us, we get a lot more access, as you know, because the tariffs go down. We don't have so many tariffs on our products. So, for the Koreans, it is a little bit different. But it is about deregulating the Korean economy, making it more investor friendly, including to foreign investors, and making it more competitive.

And it seems to me—I haven't been to Korea recently. But from what I see in the polling and the discussion, President Lee's party supports the agreement. The outgoing government, of course, is the one that negotiated it. I don't know what the timing will be, but

we hope that it will go before the National Assembly and that they will consider it and ratify it.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Let me ask you a little bit more parochial question. But you mentioned one of your goals was just the outreach. The Korean Government has applied to open a consulate office in Anchorage, and I understand that the progress has been some slow—just hasn't been at the speed that we would like. Do you have any update on what is happening with approval of that application?

Ms. STEPHENS. Yes, Senator, happily, I do.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good.

Ms. STEPHENS. And we do regret that it has been a bit slow, but I understand that the approval was sent through diplomatic channels to the Korean Embassy here and that they can move forward with opening that consulate in Anchorage.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. Good, good. Well, that—you talk about the level of outreach, and that is highly significant. So I am pleased to hear that.

And then just very quickly, we have been working—the State of Alaska has been working with the embassy there in Seoul to establish this Alaska Explorer Visa Program, and this provides the visa interviews for the Korean travelers. It has been very successful in encouraging tourism into Alaska from our Korean visitors, and I would just ask for your support to continue this program. I think it has been very helpful for both sides.

Ms. STEPHENS. Thank you very much for highlighting that for me. I will certainly pay great attention to that, and we hope to get more and more Koreans visiting Alaska.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. Madam Chairman, my time has expired. I have one quick question for Mr. Todd.

Senator BOXER. Go ahead. Please, go ahead.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And it is really very general. Mr. Todd, you had ticked off four specific items in terms of the foreign policy objectives that the United States has with regard to Brunei, and the first on your list related to the counterterrorism initiative. And you bring to this post a degree of background, you indicated, with international narcotics and law enforcement department.

Can you speak to the issue of counterterrorism and what specifically you would look to do in Brunei to work with the United States foreign policy objectives on that issue?

Mr. TODD. Thank you, Senator. That is an important question.

The current state of play in Brunei is that there are not any active terrorist organizations in Brunei itself. However, there are three active terrorist organizations in the surrounding countries. Many of the top leaders have basically been dealt with, and they are not part of those organizations at this point in time. But the organizations still exist.

In terms of Brunei itself, we share data with them. We share information. We know who is coming and going. It has been a very informative relationship. One of the things that we do do and what I did when I was in INL, which is the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, is we would do training and equipping and assistance in the form of teaching and training people what to do and what not to do.

And we have—the department has an ILEA, an International Law Enforcement Academy, in Bangkok, which I funded and ran that last—I think in 2006 trained, I think, 21 Bruneians in various forms of enforcement, some of which included antiterrorism activities.

So if I am confirmed, I would continue to get people trained. I also would continue and encourage more information sharing. And as long as these three terrorist groups are still active in the region, my goal is to make sure that all Americans and American assets are protected. Thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you. Appreciate your response.

In looking at Brunei—I have never had the opportunity to go there, but in looking at your economy reminds me a lot of what we have up north in Alaska and the dependence on oil, your desire to seek some diversification with your economy, some of your environmental issues. We differ a little bit in terms of size, but maybe one of these days I will have an opportunity to come visit for myself.

Mr. TODD. I would love for you to come visit, ma'am.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you.

Madam Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to ask the questions of these individuals. They certainly appear to be well prepared for their appointed tasks and I look forward to seeing them move through the process.

Senator BOXER. I absolutely agree. And I was going to say while, future Ambassador Stephens, you are looking after Alaska, we have six——

[Laughter.]

Senator BOXER [continuing]. We have 600,000 Korean Americans in California. And——

Senator MURKOWSKI. She trumps me every time.

Senator BOXER. We trump each other, but anyway. So, anyway, just don't forget. That is all.

I have just a couple of questions. Ambassador Haslach, in recent weeks, China's treatment of the Tibetan people has focused the world's attention on China's commitment to the rule of law and human rights. Obviously, this scrutiny is growing as we get closer to the Olympics. I understand in San Francisco today I forget how many people came out, but thousands and thousands of peaceful demonstrations. It has touched people's hearts.

And in the months leading up to the Olympics, how, if at all, can APEC be used as a forum to urge China to responsibly handle the crisis in Tibet?

Ambassador HASLACH. Well, thank you, Madam Chairman.

APEC is largely an economic organization, but certainly there are many opportunities we have during the year at the Secretary of State level, at the leaders level. For example, last year in Sydney, President Bush did meet with many of our APEC partners to discuss issues that were not economic, human rights issues with regard to Burma.

I much expect that Tibet will be on the agenda this year, as well as the bilateral meetings that we conduct with the economies whenever we meet, and we always bring up other subjects. And so, we use APEC for that. It presents yet another opportunity for us to dialog with China.

Senator BOXER. Good. I am glad you see it that way because, you know, we have a lot of States in our Union that will act unilaterally sometimes and say we are going to boycott this, that, or another from our State government purchases. And you look at my State, we have got 37 million people. We would be the fifth-largest economy in the world. So, in many ways, I think you are right to use it as an opportunity because you never know what State could all of a sudden decide to say we are done.

So I hope you use every opportunity that you can to raise this issue. It is such a sad one, and it seems to me we can resolve it. It could be resolved without independence, just with some autonomy, and I just would press you on that. And I am glad that you intend to raise it.

So, in conclusion, I have just a couple of quick questions for Mr. Todd. Why should he get away from my questions?

[Laughter.]

Senator BOXER. And so, Mr. Todd, Brunei—and this really follows Senator Murkowski's question about the economy in Brunei.

Brunei is one of the most prominent economic success stories in Southeast Asia, thanks in large part to its natural resources. However, it is reported that Brunei's oil and gas reserves, which account for 90 percent of its exports and one half of its GDP, are declining to the point where they will be exhausted in the relative near future. Oil is expected to dry up in 15 years and natural gas in 30.

The Government of Brunei has reportedly tried to pursue alternative development strategies, but with limited success. As the Ambassador to Brunei, what will you do to help ensure that Brunei remains an economic success story in Asia? And I think you do have some unique qualifications to do this. So why don't you discuss that as well?

Mr. TODD. Thank you, ma'am. In terms of Brunei, as you said, it is a very wealthy country. It is about the size of Delaware. It has 383,000 people. And at one point, the Sultan was the richest man in the world before the tech boom.

Senator BOXER. Oh, I feel so sorry for him. [Laughter.]

Mr. TODD. He still owns quite a bit, though. But in terms of it all, there seems to be a recent surge on the part of the several of the ministers in the Bruneian Government, where this is bothering them. One minister recently wrote an article that was in the Associated Press that talked about the complacency on the part of Bruneians and the fact that the per capita income in Brunei is one of the highest in the world. It is approximately $32,000 per person. And depending on whose numbers you believe, the oil and gas are going to run out somewhere between 15 and 40 years.

In this article, this minister talked about alternatives to the current economy and diversifying. And I found it quite interesting because one of the things that it talked about was the wasteful use of energy in Brunei and how the country needed to learn how to be more economic and efficient in terms of how they use gas and oil, how they basically look at other alternative energy sources.

And so, in terms of your question, if I am confirmed, I would like to look at U.S. firms promoting trade for alternative energy sources, looking at things that are more efficient in terms of cars

and buses and their manufacturing base. The other thing that I have thought about that actually is very popular in the rest of ASEAN is aqua farming. There have been talks about the Bruneians looking at cultivating shrimp and other things.

Lastly, the—if I am confirmed, one other thing that has been recently brought to the attention of this specific minister is Brunei does have the Heart of Borneo Initiative, which basically is a huge ecological reserve that basically walls off approximately 50 percent of the country. One of the things that has been talked about is increasing ecotourism and making it kind of a new base of the economy.

Currently, Brunei is a dry country. The expenses—or the hotels are extremely expensive. So there aren't many tourists, but I see it as a place that American businesses could flourish in.

Senator BOXER. Interesting. Well, let me say that as you talked about moving toward energy efficiency, that is exactly what we are doing here. We have a lot of steps we have to take right here in America. So that is good timing because we are all going to be looking toward this as we face global warming challenges.

So my last question is really a human rights question to you, Mr. Todd. While the citizens of Brunei appear to enjoy a relatively high quality of life, Brunei is an absolute monarchy that restricts freedoms of speech, assembly, and the press. According to the 2007 Reporters Without Borders annual report, journalists working for privately owned publications in the sultanate—and this is a direct quote—can be punished by prison sentences of up to 3 years for publishing "false news." And self-censorship is commonplace, and freedom of expression is limited.

In June of 2006, three men were sentenced to 1 year in prison for having sent seditious and insulting mobile phone messages to the family of the leader. I was just thinking about how many people send insulting messages to me and the consequences that could——

[Laughter.]

Senator BOXER [continuing]. But I think they are wrong. People should have the right to insult their leaders. I would die for that right. So, if confirmed, what will you do to encourage Brunei to increase freedom of the press?

Mr. TODD. Thank you, Senator. That is an excellent question.

Right now, political freedoms are very limited—freedom of the press, religion, the right to congregate. There has been an emergency act that has been in place that gives the Sultan almost ultimate power since 1962. There is something called an Internal Security Act, which basically gives the Sultan and his ministries the ability to pick up people and to hold them without due process for up to 2 years. That is on one hand. That is the bad news story.

The good news story is that the Government of Brunei and the Sultan have made some very positive changes over the last few years. The first is that they have enacted, the Sultan enacted in 2004 the legislative council. A number of the people on the legislative council are actually elected, which is a new, novel thing in Brunei.

The second is that government and the Sultan ratified 2 of the 12 human rights conventions, basically protecting the rights of

women and children. And in terms of human rights, and if I am confirmed, my goal is through engagement and through staying true to our principles, focusing on these issues with the government and the Sultan and when—monitor, engage, and report. When I am done, report it up the food chain to DRL at the State Department and to the Hill and continue to press things that we believe in.

Thank you.

Senator BOXER. Well, thank you. And I think that is true that we have seen some movement in the right direction, and I am sure that you will encourage that.

Well, I would like to again thank our nominees for their willingness to serve our country. I also, and I know Senator Murkowski joins me fully in this, not only thanking our nominees, but their families. We certainly know the sacrifices that families do make.

Of course, there are opportunities and pluses that go with our lifestyle in government, but there is a lot of sacrifice involved. So we want to thank you all. We want to thank some of you who were here who have been mentors to our outstanding panel.

And I just wanted you to know that it is my understanding that Senator Biden will schedule a business meeting in the upcoming weeks so that these nominees can be considered and reported to the full Senate, and I want you all to know that you have my full support. I think I speak for Senator Murkowski and certainly Senator Webb, who said that.

So we are really just glad you have stepped forward and accepted these new responsibilities, and much luck. And we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:20 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF D. KATHLEEN STEPHENS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Depending upon the report, there are varying degrees of anti-American sentiment in the Republic of Korea. What contributes to reportedly significant levels of anti-American perspective among the people of South Korea? As ambassador, how will you work to improve perceptions and attitudes of South Koreans toward the United States?

Answer. Most Koreans support the alliance with the United States, and older Koreans especially view that alliance as having been forged in blood during the Korean War. The most current opinion poll conducted by the State Department (in September 2007) revealed that 60 percent of South Koreans have an overall favorable opinion of the United States. Sixty-five percent also said the United States-South Korean security alliance was in good shape. Three-fourths of South Koreans consider the presence of United States forces in Korea important for their country's security, and 68 percent feel that South Korea should maintain the security alliance with the United States even after North-South reunification. Other indicators, including the number of South Korean students who come to study in the United States and Korea's strong interest in the Visa Waiver Program, also highlight the strength of the relationship.

That said, given the many challenges the United States and the Republic of Korea have faced together in our 60 years of bilateral relations, it is no surprise that there has long been some anti-American sentiment in South Korea, or at least ambivalence and misunderstanding about the United States role in Korea at various historical junctures. I saw this personally, both as a Peace Corps volunteer in Korea in the 1970s and while there on diplomatic assignment in the 1980s. In my discussions during those decades, Koreans from all walks of life almost unanimously affirmed

their desire to see a healthy United States-Korea relationship, but were also critical of aspects of our shared history and of United States policies past or present. Part of that criticism stems from the division of the Korean Peninsula after World War II. Part is also rooted in the varying perceptions Koreans have of their process of democratization and of the role of the United States in those years. Incidents relating to the U.S. military presence have also inflamed anti-American feeling, such as after the tragic deaths in 2002 of two schoolgirls during a training exercise.

I believe the best way to improve perceptions and attitudes of South Koreans toward the United States is to engage in a genuine dialog across the board, on all the issues. If confirmed as ambassador, I would seek first of all to listen to Korean voices and to understand better the many ways in which Korea has changed since I last lived there. I will put a strong emphasis in my own activities on outreach, on building our ability to communicate in Korean as well as in English, and on communicating in cyberspace as well as face-to-face. I will seek ways to engage more actively the large and influential Korean-American community, which now numbers some 2 million people, of whom about one-fourth reside in South Korea.

Progress on our shared policy objectives is also key. I will work for early implementation of the consolidation of United States forces south of the Han River, which will reduce the United States footprint in central Seoul. I will seek to support, as well as explain publicly, why the implementation of our shared vision for the Korean peninsula's future outlined in the September 2005 Joint Statement of Principles is so important to Americans as well as Koreans. I will work to streamline business, tourism, and educational travel to the United States, important to improving public perceptions of the United States.

Question. If confirmed as ambassador, you will be challenged with important issues to the Alliance, that have necessarily occupied Ambassador Vershbow's time. These include the Free Trade Agreement, the Visa Waiver program, the North Korean nuclear issue, and the United States military presence in the Republic of Korea, among others. Please describe some new and innovative ways of growing the United States-Republic of Korea relationship, that you consider notable and that you envision pursuing, if confirmed and in Seoul.

Answer. As the question suggests, the groundwork has been laid to achieve an upgrade in the United States-Republic of Korea relationship in the coming years. Much work still remains to be done in adjusting our security presence on the peninsula in achieving denuclearlization of the peninsula and full implementation of our shared vision for its future as outlined in the September 2005 Joint Statement of Principles, and in implementing the Free Trade Agreement upon ratification. If confirmed, I will be focused on advancing this work, and to working with Korean authorities as they aim to enter the Visa Waiver Program.

I would continue the effort to adjust our longstanding security alliance with South Korea to address contemporary realities. The United States and the Republic of Korea have agreed to adjust the size and strategic stance of our respective military forces on the peninsula to reflect better the challenges we face today and the changes in the Republic of Korea itself. We are working with our Korean counterparts to move the main United States military base out of downtown Seoul and to consolidate United States troops in the Republic of Korea, overall, to fewer hubs further south. We have agreed to transition our command relationships such that beginning in 2012 the Republic of Korea will exercise wartime operational control over Korean troops. These steps are sensible and timely. The changes overall will reflect Korea's economic and military strength and its place in the world and the region. The changes will also strengthen the U.S. military's operational efficiency and deterrent capability. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Korean Government, my military colleagues, and with the Congress to accomplish this transformation.

I would also seek to ensure that we continue our vital cooperation with the Republic of Korea in the Six-Party talks to complete the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and to implement fully the vision set out in the Joint Statement of Principles agreed to by all six parties in September 2005. With successful denuclearization, the Joint Statement commits the United States and the other parties to the normalization of relations, to economic and energy assistance to North Korea, and to achieving a permanent peace arrangement in Korea, along with a peace and security mechanism for the region. It is an ambitious agenda. The United States and the Republic of Korea will need to work closely together to succeed.

As democratic societies, the United States and South Korea also share a deep interest in promoting an improved human rights situation in North Korea. This interest is particularly keen among the many Koreans whose families were tragically separated by the Korean War. President Lee and his government have made clear the importance the Republic of Korea attaches to this issue. The United States has

equally deep resolve. If confirmed, I will work closely with the South Korean Government on the issue of human rights in North Korea, including in seeking sustainable solutions to the plight of North Korean asylum seekers.

The United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement would, upon approval by the legislatures of both countries, open South Korea's growing market of 49 million consumers to the full range of United States goods and services, from agriculture to autos to telecommunications services. The KORUS FTA is the most commercially significant free trade agreement the United States has concluded in over 15 years. If confirmed as ambassador, and upon FTA ratification, I will make it a top priority to work with the United States Trade Representative to ensure that the provisions of the agreement are enforced across the board. This includes enhancing our current cooperation with the South Koreans on environment and labor standards.

Moreover, we must ensure that the Republic of Korea follows international guidelines and fully reopens its market to United States beef. If confirmed, and as the progeny of Texas ranchers, you can be assured I will do all I can to ensure that our safe and delicious beef has unrestricted access to the South Korean market.

South Korea is a natural candidate for the Visa Waiver Program, and, if confirmed, I will work with the Government of the Republic of Korea to address the legislative requirements for entry, including increased information sharing, greater law enforcement cooperation, and the timely production of a South Korean electronic passport. I will work with the Department of Homeland Security and with Korean authorities to ensure that, consistent with congressional and administration requirements, the security, immigration, and law enforcement interests of our Nation are strengthened by the inclusion of the Republic of Korea in the Visa Waiver Program.

Continued progress on all these fronts will indeed grow the United States-Republic of Korea relationship in important ways. I believe we have the opportunity to take the alliance to a new level. While I hope my long experience in Korea in the 1970s and the 1980s, as well as more recently working on Korean issues from Washington, will be useful, I am mindful that, particularly in the beginning, I must be careful to observe, listen, and learn. I am concentrating my efforts, at present, on improving my Korean language skills. If confirmed, I will be the first United States Ambassador to Korea able to speak directly to the Korean people in their own language. I believe that using Korean myself in speeches, with the press, and in engaging in a dialog with Koreans from all walks of life, and supporting and encouraging other embassy officers to do the same, will enhance our own understanding of Korea as well as get our message out better. I also want to look at our exchange programs, such as the range of educational, technical, and business efforts ongoing, and think about how we might expand or use them better. We should ensure our educational and cultural exchange programs provide expanded opportunities for participation to groups that have been traditionally underrepresented but who are now becoming important voices in Korean society. I understand how Koreans, at every level of society, look to the Internet for information and news and how important it is to shape opinion. And I understand the critical role our Korean employees have in the success of our mission operation in Korea, and I would make sure embassy management continued to nurture this important resource.

Question. As you are aware, the Republic of Korea is often the destination of North Korean refugees, some of whom spend years making their way through China and elsewhere in the region, hoping to eventually arrive in Seoul. Challenges of assimilation to a new life in South Korea are genuine.

In recent weeks, the Government of Thailand has reportedly signaled its interest in sending a few hundred North Koreans presently detained in Bangkok, on to Seoul. How does the United States Government presently assist South Korea on matters related to North Korean refugees, and is the United States encouraging the South Korean Government to make necessary arrangements so that the North Koreans presently in Thailand may be moved on to Seoul?

Answer. The United States Government, since the passage of the North Korean Human Rights Act has expanded its efforts to protect and assist North Korean refugees, including working, quietly if necessary, with other governments and international organizations, to help North Korean asylum seekers obtain protection and permanent resettlement.

We are in close and frequent communication with the South Korean Government on issues related to North Korean asylum seekers, and if confirmed I will seek to expand our work together to find sustainable solutions for this vulnerable population. Numerous United States Government and embassy officials, including Ambassador Vershbow earlier this month, have visited the Hanawon resettlement center and discussed these issues with Republic of Korea Government authorities. Also, earlier this month, four North Koreans who have resettled in the Republic of Korea

and are active in NGOs in Seoul, visited the United States as part of the State Department International Visitor Program to study programs in the United States to assist and resettle refugees here. When resettlement in the United States is desired by North Koreans and we are able to obtain needed host government cooperation, we actively seek to ensure this option is available. Forty-six North Koreans have been resettled in the United States as refugees in recent years. We would be happy to provide a classified briefing on our efforts in specific countries, including those referenced in your question.

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM TODD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. What are the primary United States foreign policy objectives related to Brunei?

Answer. Our foreign policy objectives in Brunei mirror those for the Asia-Pacific region in general:

- Regional Security: Strengthening regional security by garnering Brunei's support for enhanced United States relations with ASEAN and encouraging expansion of its contributions to peacekeeping operations in the region and to other multilateral undertakings;
- Stability: Safeguarding Brunei's long-term stability by helping to improve its counterterrorism and defense capabilities through law enforcement and military-to-military cooperation and by encouraging broader popular participation in the political process through development of the country's legislative council;
- Outreach: Improving perceptions of the United States among Brunei's largely Muslim population and its decisionmakers through outreach, exchange programs, and promotion of United States education;
- Sustainable Development: Increasing opportunities for United States firms to compete in Brunei through an expanding trade dialog focused on improving protection of intellectual property rights and opening markets for United States goods and services, while contributing to sustainable development through conservation of Brunei's tropical forests.

Question. How many students from Brunei have studied in the United States during the past 7 years? Does the United States Government, or American colleges and universities, actively recruit Brunei students?

Answer. There have been approximately 136 students who have studied in the United States during the past 7 years. The year-by-year breakdown is given below.

Year	No. of students
2006/07	24
2005/06	12
2004/05	18
2003/04	13
2002/03	17
2001/02	27
2000/01	25

Source: International Institute of Education (IIE) Open Doors statistics.

The embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan actively promotes United States higher education as part of our foreign policy objective of creating a greater understanding of United States society and policies by Brunei's majority-Muslim population. Embassy officials often speak to target audiences of prospective students to encourage study in the United States. They and other State Department officials also helped arrange a visit in 2007 by Brunei's Deputy Minister of Education to several leading United States universities to establish contact with Islamic studies programs. The Minister of Education plans to visit the United States in 2008 to build partnership relations between United States universities and the University of Brunei Darussalam, which the embassy expects will result in increased student exchanges—both short and long term—between the United States and Brunei.

The embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan worked to place United States institutions of higher learning on a list of Ministry of Defense-recommended schools, as part of the embassy's campaign to promote United States schools to Bruneians, who historically have looked to the United Kingdom and Australia for foreign study. As a result, five students entered U.S. universities through this new track for the current academic year and our embassy anticipates four more will enter in the 2008/09 aca-

demic year. The embassy is also working with the Ministry of Education to allow students to use other Brunei Government scholarship programs to attend United States educational institutions.

In the past year, the embassy also assisted the following American colleges or universities visiting Brunei to recruit students:

- Tufts University (Fletcher School)
- Upper Iowa University
- Portland State University
- State University of New York—Binghamton
- Creighton University
- University of Denver
- Eckerd College
- Herkimer Community College

Question. What is the present level of Brunei investment in the United States? Do you anticipate an increase in such investment in the future?

Answer. Exact figures for the present level of Brunei's investment in the United States are difficult to obtain, because the United States does not require the registration of investments and the level of Bruneian direct investment flows are small.

According to industry estimates, Brunei holds substantial foreign assets globally, estimated at $30 billion dollars, through its Brunei Investment Agency (BIA), a sovereign wealth fund. Brunei's investments in the United States include luxury hotels in New York and California. Other financial assets are believed to be managed by U.S. financial institutions.

The current value of the United States dollar would appear conducive to growing Bruneian investment in United States equities and bonds, but we are not aware of any plans for Brunei to acquire controlling interests or direct equity stakes in additional United States companies. Traditionally, the BIA has preferred passive, indirect investments to direct equity investments.

Question. During the past 5 years, what cabinet or subcabinet level United States officials have visited Brunei? What United States military leaders have visited Brunei during the same time period?

Answer. Assistant United States Trade Representative Barbara Weisel visited Brunei in May 2007. In December 2002, the Sultan of Brunei met with President Bush at the White House, and with Secretary Powell. In addition, the President has met the Sultan of Brunei every year at the annual APEC leaders meeting. Brunei hosted APEC in 2000, which President Clinton attended, and the ASEAN Regional Forum in July 2002, which Secretary Powell attended.

The following United States military leaders have visited Brunei in the last five years:

- April 2008: Pacific Commander Admiral Keating
- May 2006: Deputy Under Secretary for Defense Lawless
- March 2006: Pacific Commander Admiral Fallon
- March 2005: U.S. Army Pacific Commander LTG Brown

RESPONSES OF SCOT A. MARCIEL TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. It has been expressed to the committee that congressional passage of additional sanctions against Burma could contribute to Thailand turning more toward China in the future. What is the Department's perspective on this issue? Why might Thai officials be concerned by additional Burma sanctions?

Answer. We would not expect legislation authorizing additional sanctions on Burma to significantly affect Sino-Thai relations.

Economic sanctions are an important tool for pressuring the Burmese regime to respect the desire of the Burmese people for a peaceful transition to a democratic government that respects their human rights. It is crucial, however, that sanctions laws preserve sufficient flexibility for the United States Government to use sanctions as an effective tool to influence the regime's behavior without unduly jeopardizing other U.S. foreign policy interests. By authorizing, rather than mandating, a prohibition on the importation of Burmese-origin gemstones from third countries, such as Thailand, for example, sanctions legislation would allow the President the necessary degree of flexibility.

During remarks at the Center for Strategic and International Studies on March 20, Thai Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama reiterated his government's opinion that sanctions will be counterproductive in Burma, and that Thailand is better

placed to argue for democratization there in the context of neighborly engagement than it would be were it to adopt or support sanctions. He also noted that as Burma's neighbor, Thailand needs Burmese cooperation on critical cross-border issues like trafficking in narcotics and persons and migration, and therefore must maintain a working relationship with the Burmese regime.

Thailand may also be concerned about the impact on the Thai economy of additional sanctions on Burma. Bangkok is a major center for cutting and polishing colored gemstones and Burma exports almost all of its high quality rubies there. Restrictions on importing finished items to the United States that incorporate Burmese stones could negatively affect Thailand's jewelry industry, which reportedly earned $938.8 million from exporting precious stones and jewelry to the United States in 2006.

Question. What is the present status of the military-to-military relationship with Thailand? What changes, if any do you project with the military-to-military relationship over the next 5 years?

Answer. United States-Thailand military relations have returned to full strength following the removal of legal restrictions on assistance and policy restrictions on other military cooperation imposed after the September 2006 coup. Upon the installment of a democratically elected Thai Government on February 6, Thailand is again eligible to receive Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, 1206, and Peacekeeping Operations (as a Global Peace Operations Initiative partner) assistance. The Departments of State and Defense are working to resume those programs expeditiously using available funds. The administration's fiscal year 2008 budget and fiscal year 2009 request both feature military assistance for Thailand.

Our military-to-military relationship with our long-time treaty ally goes far beyond assistance. Thailand hosts more exercises annually with the United States than any other country in Southeast Asia, including our signature Cobra Gold multinational exercise. Thailand has contributed forces to our highest priority military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan and has pledged a battalion of peacekeepers for the U.N. mission in Darfur. Access to Thai military facilities was critical to United States regional humanitarian relief efforts following the tsunami in 2004. Continued access is key to our long-term regional security interests. We also recognize the region's security challenges—natural disasters, maritime security, counterterrorism, and piracy—and work closely with Thailand to ensure Thailand obtains and maintains the necessary capabilities to contribute to the region's security and stability.

We expect the current high level of cooperation to exist well into the future, and communicate regularly with our Thai allies on how to deepen and strengthen our military ties to meet future challenges. We expect Thailand's enthusiastic participation in peacekeeping operations to continue, and its contribution to regional maritime security efforts to increase. The Thai military is also pursuing an ambitious defense reform project, having already completed the assessment phase of a United States-sponsored Defense Resource Management Study, focusing and tailoring existing Theater Security Cooperation tools to improve training and educational institutions.

We anticipate hosting a round of strategic dialog talks later this year that will include discussion of the military relationship. These talks will build upon the recent visits of Pacific Command's Admiral Keating to Thailand and the Thai Deputy Supreme Commander's visit to Washington, both of which followed Thailand's return to elected government and the accompanying reengagement of our militaries at senior levels.

Question. What is the status of Thailand' military relationship with China? What agreements of any kind, have been finalized between Thailand and China during the last 6 years?

Answer. China and Thailand's military relationship has continued to improve over the last several years. Following the September 2006 Thai military coup, many countries, including the United States, imposed restrictions on various military-to-military programs. At the same time, China intensified its engagement with the Thai military.

China continues to offer seats in its military schools to Thai personnel and is supporting Chinese language classes in Thai military academies in order to increase the number of Thais able to train in China. In addition, in 2006–2007, China sent a Major to the Royal Thai Army Command and General Staff College, a first in China-Thailand military relations.

China has also used senior visits and offers of assistance to cultivate stronger ties with the Thai military. The extent to which the Thai have accepted assistance is

unclear, but it is widely believed that the two countries made commitments to future military cooperation during senior-level official exchanges over the past 2 years. According to Chinese state media, Thailand and China staged a joint search and rescue exercise in December 2005. Following an early 2007 visit by then-Thai Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont to China, the first ever Thai-Chinese Special Forces bilateral training exercise took place in Guangzhou, China, in July 2007; a follow-on exercise is scheduled to take place in Thailand this summer. Thailand has also invited the PRC to send official observers to the annual COBRA GOLD multinational military exercise held in Thailand in 2008.

Question. Given the diplomatic and economic reemergence of China throughout Southeast Asia, what are your recommendations for the United States toward providing a balance in the region consistent with our foreign policy objectives?

Answer. China's growing presence in Southeast Asia does not mean that the United States will play a smaller role. We do not see this as a zero-sum game. More trade between Southeast Asia and China does not necessarily mean less trade between Asia and the United States. And a more capable China acting as a responsible stakeholder in the region may benefit the United States as well as other countries.

The United States strongly supports ASEAN's integration efforts as its member states work to realize the vision of a dynamic, outward looking ASEAN, living in peace, stability, and prosperity. We seek to be a part of and contribute to the successful political, economic, and social integration of the ASEAN community. The United States will remain a partner valued by our friends in Southeast Asia by continuing our deep bilateral and multilateral involvement with the region.

In fact, the United States is increasing its engagement with the Asia-Pacific region in line with our growing interests there. Our engagement is developing through our work with individual countries, the enhanced partnership with ASEAN, new cooperation in the ASEAN Regional Forum, and our leadership role in APEC.

As we develop our increasing engagement with Southeast Asia, in particular, we are drawing on America's unique strengths. No other country enjoys the depth and breadth of engagement we have with that region through the work of numerous U.S. Government agencies, programs undertaken by our individual states, the deep commercial ties developed by our businesses, the cooperation built up by numerous educational institutions and organizations outside of government, and the ties of millions of families and individuals that span the Pacific. We are involving them all in our programs with ASEAN.

Question. Recent news reports state that North Korea has been selling multiple rocket launchers to Burma. What is the projected dollar amount and description of annual military—related transfers from North Korea to Burma since and including 2000?

Answer. We have seen these press reports. We closely monitor reports of North Korean weapons sales to Burma, keeping in mind that U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1718, adopted unanimously on October 14, 2006 after the DPRK announced it had conducted a nuclear test, remains in effect and is legally binding on all member states of the U.N.

As we proceed with denuclearization efforts in the Six-Party Talks process, all U.N. member states should continue in parallel to cooperate to ensure the full and effective implementation and enforcement of UNSCR 1718, which includes a prohibition on the procurement of large caliber artillery systems from the DPRK.

While we cannot provide specific information in an unclassified response, we would be pleased in a classified setting to brief the committee on the question of military related transfers from North Korea to Burma since 2000.

Question. What is the perspective of the U.S. Department of State regarding the reported presence of North Korean military personnel in Burma?

Answer. Given that U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1718 bans certain kinds of military trade and cooperation involving North Korea for all U.N. member states, and that the Burmese military continues to repress citizens of Burma, we are following closely and with serious concerns the reports of military cooperation between Burma and North Korea.

Question. When did U.S. officials last meet with Aung San Suu Kyi? When was she last allowed to meet with her physician?

Answer. U.S. officials have been unable to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi since she was placed under house arrest following the assault on her and her National League for Democracy colleagues at Depayin in May 2003. The last senior U.S. official to

travel to Burma to meet Aung San Suu Kyi was then Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Daley in April 2003.

The Burmese regime allows Aung San Suu Kyi's physician to visit her periodically. We understand that he has visited her earlier this year.

Question. How do United States officials incorporate issues related to Burma in our bilateral discussions with India, China, Japan, Singapore, and other countries that actively engage with the Burmese military junta?

Answer. U.S. officials regularly raise Burma with our interlocutors in these countries. We consistently encourage these and other foreign governments to use the influence that they have with the Burmese military regime to press the regime to begin a genuine dialog with democratic and ethnic minority representatives on a transition to a civilian, democratic government.

Question. On an individual country basis, please provide the committee with a list of economic, military, and all other agreements finalized between the People's Republic of China and ASEAN countries, since and including 2000.

Answer. China has likely concluded hundreds of agreements with individual ASEAN countries since 2000. There is no comprehensive register of such agreements. Attached is a list of those currently known to the Department.

China has also concluded at least 17 agreements with ASEAN, which are also noted in the attachment.

ATTACHMENT—AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES

Agreements between China and Brunei

1. Seventeen bilateral agreements are mentioned, but no list or dates are available.
2. Agreement on Investment Mutual Encouragement and Mutual Protection, November 2000.
3. China International Petroleum and Chemical Industries Joint Company and Brunei's Shell Petroleum Company signed Long-Term Contract on Champion Crude Oil, November 2000.
4. Agreement on Cooperation between the Supreme People's Procuratorate of China and Procuratorate-General of Brunei, 2002.

Agreements between China and Cambodia

1. Agreement on Cooperation between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia in Combating Transnational Crime, April 8, 2006.
2. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Health of the Kingdom of Cambodia on Cooperation in the Field of Health, April 8, 2006.
3. Memorandum of Understanding on the Construction of Greater Mekong Subregion Information Superhighway Network Cambodian Section between the Ministry of Information Industry of People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of the Kingdom of Cambodia, April 8, 2006.
4. Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Royal Government of Cambodia (80 Million Yuan Grant), April 8, 2006.
5. Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Royal Government of Cambodia (80 Million Yuan Noninterest Loan. April 8, 2006.
6. Exchange of Notes on the Provisions of 30 Fire Trucks to the Royal Government of Cambodia by the Government of the People's Republic of China, April 8, 2006.
7. Exchange of Notes on the Provision of One Unit of THSCAN Mobile Container Scanning System to the Royal Government of Cambodia by the Government of the People's Republic of China, April 8, 2006.
8. Exchange of Notes on the Survey Study of the Project of Establishment of National Botanical Garden in Cambodia, April 8, 2006.
9. The General Loan Agreement Regarding the Utilization of 200 Million U.S. Dollar Preferential Buyer's Credit from the Government of the People's Republic of China to the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia between the Export and Import Bank of China and the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Kingdom of Cambodia, April 8, 2006.
10. Government Concessional Loan Agreement between the Export and Import Bank of China as Lender and the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Kingdom

of Cambodia as Borrower on the Project of Upgrading Cambodian National Telecom Network, April 8, 2006.

11. Agreement between the State Administration of Cultural Heritage of the People's Republic of China and the Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap of the Kingdom of Cambodia on the Second-Phase Project of the Joint Protection of Angkor Temples, April 8, 2006.

Agreements between China and Indonesia

1. Exchange of notes in regard with the setup of Indonesian consulates general in Guangzhou and Shanghai, March 2002.
2. Air Transport Agreement, Investment Protection Agreement, Sea Transportation Agreement, Agreement on Avoiding Dual Taxation, memorandum for understanding of cooperation in the fields of mining, forestry, tourism, fishery, transportation, agriculture and finance, etc., dates not available.
3. Agreement on mutually granting judicial assistance, July 2000.
4. Agreement on Conducting Chinese Examination in Indonesia, May 2000.
5. Agreement for Cultural Cooperation, November 2001.
6. Joint statement on the direction of the development of bilateral relations in the future, May 2000.
7. Memorandum of understanding about putting in place a joint committee on bilateral cooperation, May 2000.

Agreements between China and Laos

1. Joint Statement on the Bilateral Cooperation, November 2000.
2. Seven cooperation agreements in the sectors of economy, technology, energy and e-governance, March 8, 2008.
3. Comprehensive agreement to boost all-round cooperative relations to strengthen bilateral ties, March 30, 2008.

Agreements between China and Malaysia

1. More than 10 agreements on economic and trade cooperation such as Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation, Trade Agreement, Agreement on Investment Protection, Shipping Agreement, and Air Transport Agreement. (Dates not available.)
2. Agreement between the Chinese People's Bank and the National Bank of Malaya on Bilateral Exchange of Currencies. October 20002.
3. Memorandum of Understanding on Aviation Cooperation between China and Malaysia, 2002.

Agreements between China and Burma

1. Seven documents on bilateral cooperation, including Sino-Burmese Agreement on Fishery Cooperation, and Sino-Burmese Agreement on Investment Protection, and agricultural, natural cum human resources development as well as infrastructural construction, December 12–15, 2001.
2. Intergovernmental Agreement on China's remittal of Part of Myanmar's overdue debt, January 2003.
3. Agreement on investment promotion and protection, (date not available).
4. Joint Statement Concerning Framework Document on Future Cooperation in Bilateral Relations between the People's Republic of China and Federation of Myanmar, June 6, 2000.

Agreements between China and the Philippines

1. Joint Statement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Framework of Bilateral Cooperation in the 21st Century. Signed in Beijing on 16 May 2000.
2. Memorandum of Understanding between the Philippine Council of Young Political Leaders (PCYPL) Foundation, Inc. and Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU). Signed in Beijing on 5 July 2005.
3. Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation between the Department of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Beijing on 8 November 2004.
4. Agreement between the Department of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China on China's Provision of Military Aid Gratis to the Philippines. Signed in Beijing on 8 November 2004.
5. Agreement between the Department of National Defence of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of National Defence of the People's Republic of China

on China's Provision of Military Aid Gratis to the Philippines. Signed in Beijing on 10 October 2006.

6. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation against Illicit Traffic and Abuse of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances, and Precursor Chemicals. Signed in Beijing in October 2001.

7. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Combating Transnational Crime. Signed in Beijing in October 2001.

(8. Agreement on Cooperation between the National Prosecution Service of the Department of Justice of the Republic of the Philippines and the Supreme People's Procuratorate of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Beijing in October 2000.

9. Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China. Signed on 30 October 2001.

10. Letter of Intent between the Philippine National Oil CO. Exploration Corp. and the China National Offshore Oil Corp. (CNOOC). 10 November 2003.

11. An Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking on Certain Areas in the South China Sea By and Between Philippine National Oil Company and China National Offshore Oil Corporation. Signed in Beijing on 1 September 2004.

12. An Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Survey in Certain Areas in the South China Sea by the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), the China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC), and the Vietnam Oil and Gas Corporation (PETROVIETNAM). Signed on 14 March 2005.

13. Memorandum of Understanding between Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the People's Bank of China on the Establishment of Banking Institutions in Each Other's Territories. Signed on 17 May 2000.

14. Cooperation Agreement between the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). Signed in October 2001.

15. Bilateral Swap Agreement between the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the People's Bank of China. Signed in Manila on 30 August 2003.

16. Memorandum of Understanding on Mining Cooperation between the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM). Signed in 18 January 2005.

17. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Trade and Investment Cooperation. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

18. Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

19. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Early Harvest Program under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

20. Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Provision of Concessional Loan by China to the Philippines. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

21. Framework Agreement on Expanding and Deepening Bilateral Economic and Trade Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

22. Memorandum of Understanding between the National Economic and Development Authority and the Department of Trade and Industry of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China on Establishing the Economic Working Group. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

23. Memorandum of Understanding between China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation and Philippine Government Agencies. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

24. Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

25. Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Provision of Concessional Loan by China to the Philippines. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

26. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Trade and Industry of the Republic of the Philippines and the General Administration of Quality Su-

pervision, Inspection, and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation on Industrial Products Safety and TBT Measures. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

27. Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Utilization of US$500 million Preferential Buyer's Credit Between the Department of Finance of the Republic of the Philippines and the Export and Import Bank of China. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

28. Understanding on the Cooperation in the Fields of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Other Related Areas between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. Signed on 16 May 2000.

29. Agreement between the Department of Finance and the China National Construction and Agricultural Machinery Import and Export Corporation on a US$100 million credit facility to finance agricultural development projects in the Philippines. Signed on 20 December 2000.

30. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Agriculture of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China on Fisheries Cooperation. Signed in Beijing on 1 September 2004.

31. Memorandum of Understanding on the Special Treatment for Rice between the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of the Philippines. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

32. Memorandum of Understanding on Expanding and Deepening Agriculture and Fisheries Cooperation. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

33. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Agriculture of the Republic of the Philippines and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China in the field of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

34. Agreement on the Development of 1 million Hectares of Land for Hybrid Corn, Hybrid Rice, and Hybrid Sorghum Farming. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

35. Agreement on the Leasing of 40,000 Hectares of Agri-Business Lands for Sugarcane and Cassava Plantation. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

36. Agreement on the Provision of a 5,000-Square Meter Space for Philippine Tropical Fruits in the Jiangnan Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

37. Agreement for the Establishment of a 150,000 Liter per Day-Capacity Bio-Ethanol Plant in Palawan. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

38. Joint Venture Agreement for the Manufacture of Bio-Ethanol (B.M.S.B). Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

39. Joint Venture Agreement for the Manufacture of Bio-Ethanol (Negros Southern). Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

40. Joint Venture Agreement for the Establishment of a 150,000 Liter per Day-Capacity Bio-Ethanol Plant. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

41. Memorandum of Agreement on the Provision of Small Mobile Ice Plant and Transport Facilities to Municipal Fishery Cooperatives and Associations. Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

42. Memorandum of Agreement on the Establishment of a 35-Hectare Demonstration Farm for Sweet Corn. Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

43. Memorandum of Agreement on the Construction of Ship Yard, Establishment of a Cold Storage Facility, and Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Certain Facilities at the Navotas Fish Port Complex (NFPC). Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

44. Agreement on the Development of Candaba Swamp Resource Project as a Source of Water for Irrigation. Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

45. Memorandum of Agreement on Cooperation By and Between the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and Guandong Ocean Fisheries Administration (GDOFA). Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

46. Memorandum of Agreement on the Breeding and Culture of Grouper and Other High Value Species. Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

47. Joint Venture Agreement on Fisheries. Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

48. Agreement on Breeding and Culture of Abalone, Sea Cucumbers, Sea Urchins, and Scallops. Signed in Manila on 16 January 2007.

49. Visa Agreement allowing Filipino diplomatic and consular personnel to receive multiple-entry entry visas from the Chinese Government for a maximum validity period of 5 years. Signed on 3 July 2002 and entered into force on 19 December 2002.

50. Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Mutual Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic and Official (Service) Passports. Signed in Beijing on 1 September 2004.

51. Memorandum of Understanding on air services. Signed in Beijing on 2 March 2004.

52. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Philippine National Railways and China National Technical Import Export Corporation and China National Machinery and Import & Export Corp. Signed in Manila on 15 November 2002.

53. Memorandum of Understanding Regarding the Utilization of the US$400 million Preferential Buyers' Credit from China to the Philippines between the Export-Import Bank of China and the Department of Finance of the Philippines. Signed in Manila on 30 August 2003.

54. Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding between North Luzon Railways Corporation and China National Machinery and Equipment Corporation (Group). Signed in Beijing on 1 September 2004.

55. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Trade and Industry of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China on Infrastructure Cooperation. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

56. Memorandum of Understanding Regarding the Utilization of US$500 million Preferential Buyer's Credit from the Government of the People's Republic of China to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines between the Export-Import Bank of China and the Department of Finance of the Republic of the Philippines. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

57. Loan Agreement on the Provision of US$500 million Preferential Buyer's Credit Loan for the Northrail Project Phase 1, Section 2. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

58. Concessional Loan Agreement on Nonintrusive Container Inspection System Project Phase 2. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

59. Contract Agreement between North Luzon Railways Corporation and China National Machinery Industry Corporation for the Northrail Project Phase 1, Section 2. Signed in Manila on 15 April 2007 (originally signed in Beijing on 15 November 2006).

60. Engineering, Procurement, and Construction Contract for the Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Philippine Mainline South Railway Project Phase 1, Section 1. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007 (originally signed in Manila on 5 December 2006).

61. Memorandum of Understanding concerning Tourism Cooperation. Signed in Beijing on 11 September 2002.

62. Implementation Program of the Memorandum on Tourism Cooperation between the Department of Tourism and the China National Tourism Administration. Signed in Beijing on 1 September 2004.

63. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Transportation and Communications of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of Communications of the People's Republic of China on Maritime Cooperation. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

64. Agreement on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

65. Agreement on the Prevention of Theft, Clandestine Excavation, Illicit Import and Export of Cultural Property between the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Manila on 15 January 2007.

66. Memorandum of Understanding on Sports Cooperation. Signed in October 2001.

67. Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding between the Philippine Sports Commission and the General Administration of Sports of the People's Republic of China. Signed on 8 April 2005.

68. Agreement between the National Youth Commission of the Republic of the Philippines and the All-China Youth Federation of the People's Republic of China on Youth Affairs Cooperation. Signed in Manila on 27 April 2005.

69. Memorandum of Understanding on Further Development of Sino-Filipino Youth Exchange between the All-China Youth Federation and the National Youth Commission of the Philippines. Signed in Beijing on 13 July 2005.

70. Letter of Intent on Friendly Exchanges and Cooperation between the Office of the Press Secretary of the Republic of the Philippines and the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. Signed in Beijing on 3 September 2004.

Agreements between China and Singapore

1. Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services between Singapore and China, November 28 to December 2, 2005.

2. Several MOUs to promote closer bilateral cooperation in areas such as human resource development, high-tech cooperation, and agricultural products, September 19–21, 2005.

3. MOU on the establishment of the Singapore-China Joint Investment Promotion Committee, May 17–19, 2005.4. Defense Agreement formalizing existing exchanges between Republic's Ministry of Defense (MinDef) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and pledged to work together on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, January 8, 2008.

Agreements between China and Thailand

1. Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Drug Prohibition (2000).
2. Thai-China Agreement on Bilateral Currency Exchange (2001).
3. Thai-China Agreement on Cultural Cooperation (2001).
4. Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening Cooperation in Drug-Prohibition, 2000.
5. Agreement on Cultural Cooperation, 2001.
6. Treaty on Assistance in Criminal Judicature, 2003.

Agreements between China and Vietnam

1. Memorandum of Understanding on the Hanoi-Naning corridor and the Huu Nghi Quan border gate, March 30, 2008.
2. Nearly 40 documents on cooperation in the diplomatic, public security, trade, economic, scientific, technological, cultural, and legislative areas have been signed between the departments concerned of the two countries, dates not available.
3. Treaty on the land Boundary between China and Vietnam on December 30, 1999 in Hanoi and exchange of instruments of ratification, July 6, 2000.
4. Agreement on the Demarcation of the Beibu Gulf Territorial Waters, Exclusive Economic Zones and Continental Shelf, and Agreement on Fishing Cooperation in the Beibu Gulf, December 25, 2000.

Agreements between China and ASEAN

1. Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia by China, October 8, 2003.
2. Joint Statement of ASEAN-China Commemorative Summit, "Towards an Enhanced ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership," October 30, 2006.
3. Joint Declaration of the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity, October 8, 2003.
4. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Strengthening Phytosanitary Cooperation, November 20, 2007.
5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China on Agricultural Cooperation, January 14, 2007.
6. Plan of Action to Implement the Beijing Declaration on ASEAN-China ICT Cooperative Partnership for Common Development, January 14, 2007.
7. Agreement on Trade in Goods of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China, November 29, 2004, plus Annexes.
8. Agreement on Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China, November 29, 2004.
9. Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China, October 6, 2003.
10. Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and the People's Republic of China, November 5, 2002.
11. Joint Declaration of ASEAN and China on Cooperation in the Field of Nontraditional Security Issues, November 4, 2002.
12. Joint Statement on ASEAN-China Port Development, China, October 29, 2007.
13. Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Transport Cooperation, November 27, 2004.
14. Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Government of the People's Republic of China in the Field of Nontraditional Security Issues, January 10, 2004.
15. Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity, October 8, 2003.

16. Memorandum of Understanding between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China on Agriculture Cooperation, November 2, 2002.

17. Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, November 4, 2002.

Question. Japan has actively promoted nonproliferation efforts in Asia, such as hosting the Asian Senior-Level Talks on Nonproliferation (ASTOP). Do you view ASTOP as a viable means of regional discussion on matters related to the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes?

Answer. The United States appreciates the leadership that Japan shows in the Asian Senior-Level Talks on Nonproliferation (ASTOP). Since the first meeting in November 2003, Japan has used this forum as a way to engage the 10 ASEAN countries, as well as others in the Asia Pacific region on nonproliferation. At the talks, Tokyo encourages political support for nonproliferation objectives, including the Additional Protocol, the Hague Code of Conduct on Ballistic Missiles, strengthening of strategic trade controls, and implementation of nonproliferation-related resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

This forum helps to further develop international norms on nonproliferation in East Asia, which will help engender a climate of compliance with the international nuclear nonproliferation regime.

This norm-strengthening work will pay dividends in the future as countries in the region turn increasingly to peaceful nuclear power to meet rising energy needs.

Question. Philippines' officials, namely Foreign Secretary Albert Romulo, have taken the lead on encouraging implementation of an ASEAN energy security plan. How do you envision the United States working with ASEAN on matters related to energy security?

Answer. The Joint Vision Statement on the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership provides for cooperation on energy issues, including energy security. Under the Enhanced Partnership, the United States already has sponsored workshops on policies and financing needed for energy security, as well as on the use of coal, best practices in energy efficiency, and energy efficiency labeling that will contribute to energy security. We will continue to work with ASEAN to promote the adoption of policies and best practices in this area.

In addition, the larger ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is venturing into the field of energy security. Its work includes maritime security exercises, assessing the physical security of energy stockpiles and certain infrastructure, and examining how militaries in the region approach this new issue. The United States has also engaged the ASEAN members in APEC on a variety of energy security issues, including preparation for energy supply disruptions through such measures as sea lane security, real-time emergency information sharing, oil supply emergency response, promotion of energy investment, and cooperation in various energy sectors.

Question. The ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership, as you have noted, sets "a clear framework for boosting cooperation." Please outline specific steps of cooperation and benchmarks achieved since the partnership's announcement in 2005?

Answer. The United States and ASEAN have made good progress in implementing the Enhanced Partnership, which supports plans to create an ASEAN Community by 2015 with political/security, economic and social/cultural pillars. Training, technical assistance, and other cooperative programs are being implemented with ASEAN in all three areas.

When President Bush met ASEAN leaders at APEC in November 2006, the U.S. and ASEAN cited eight areas as priorities in the Enhanced Partnership: economics (including good governance and combating corruption), health, scholarships, information and communications technology, transport, energy, disaster management, and the environment.

An important benchmark under the Enhanced Partnership was the signing of the Plan of Action by Secretary Rice and ASEAN Foreign Ministers in July, 2006. The Plan of Action calls for the development and implementation of 164 actions and programs between ASEAN and the United States. Work has been completed or is ongoing on 127 of these items that are of importance to both ASEAN and the United States, such as:

- The establishment of the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network, which has provided training to rangers, the judiciary, and policy officials. Last month alone, five major seizures in ASEAN countries of illegal wildlife and forestry products have resulted from this training.

- The first four participants in the ASEAN Fulbright Visiting Scholars Program will begin their work in the United States in September.
- By the end of December 2007, 3,500 parliamentarians, prosecutors, lawyers, judges, policy makers, regulators, enforcement officers, and business persons from ASEAN have participated in 25 capacity-building and other training activities to improve intellectual property rights administration and enforcement.
- Workshops on industrial standards to increase understanding and cooperation on this issue, which is of growing interest to both governments and our private sector.
- Training on disaster management which will help ASEAN officials respond to natural and man-made disasters throughout the region.

Another benchmark in the Enhanced Partnership and the Plan of Action was the conclusion of a Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA) between the United States and ASEAN. USTR Ambassador Susan Schwab and ASEAN Economic Ministers signed the TIFA in August 2006. The TIFA includes a work program to assist in developing the economic pillar of ASEAN's Community that is supported by USAID and the Department of State.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2008

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

Callahan, Robert, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua
Cianchette, Peter, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Costa Rica
Hodges, Heather, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador
Llorens, Hugo, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras
McFarland, Stephen, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala
Speck, Samuel, to be the Commissioner for the United States on the United States-Canadian—United States-Canada International Joint Commission
Stephenson, Barbara, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Panama

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:45 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher Dodd presiding.

Present: Senators Dodd, Feingold, Menendez, Corker, Voinovich, and Isakson.

Also Present: Senators Snowe, Collins, and Martinez.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Senator DODD. My apologies to our witnesses and others in the room. The voting gods always arrange for a vote to occur just about the time a hearing is supposed to start.

So, I see my colleagues are here, as well, to introduce some of our witnesses. And I'll share a few opening comments quickly, and turn to my colleague from Tennessee, and then welcome our guests here, as well.

So this morning, or this afternoon rather, this hearing on the Committee on Foreign Relations will come to order, and the committee meets to consider the nomination of seven individuals to assume key leadership positions of the administration in this hemisphere. There will be two panels at today's hearing.

On the first panel we have four nominees. The President has nominated Robert Callahan to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua, Heather Hodges to be the Ambassador to the Repub-

lic of Ecuador, Hugo Llorens to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras, and Stephen McFarland to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala.

On the second panel we have three nominees. The President has nominated Peter Cianchette—is that the correct pronunciation? Thank you very much—to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Costa Rica, Samuel Speck to be the Commissioner for the United States on the United States-Canadian—United States-Canada International Joint Commission, and Barbara Stephenson to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Panama.

So, I want to congratulate all of our nominees on your willingness to serve and congratulate you on being nominated by the President to be an ambassador.

I also welcome my colleagues, Senator Collins, Senator Snowe, Senator Martinez—my good friend, as well, from Florida—who've joined us to introduce Mr. Cianchette and Mr. Llorens. In addition, I understand Mr. Voinovich will be here to introduce Mr. Speck.

You are here, thank you, George. I'm sorry, I didn't see you there.

Since the end of the cold war, United States foreign policy toward Central and South America has tended to focus narrowly on three issues: elections, trade, and drug programs. And while I understand and accept that these three focuses will need to remain very much components of any policy in the region, I believe that alone they have never been sufficient for bringing about the real holistic change that the hemisphere requires, that its people demand, and that serves the interest of the United States, as well.

In the broadest sense, we need to see political development to include civil society, institution-building, social contracts, and of course, the rule of law. We must see beyond free trade as a panacea to Latin America's social and economic woes, and instead work as well to embrace holistic development, which should include not only trade, but also investment in infrastructure, education, public health, foreign aid, and direct investment. And we must no longer stay the course in our failed policies of drug eradication and demand reduction, rather we must create smarter, targeted anti-drug programs, work to replace black-market economies with legitimate investment, and strengthen civilian law enforcement and justice institutions.

I credit the administration with proposing the Merida Initiative to respond to concerns voiced by our neighbors and their request for aid in combating increasing drug trafficking and violence in Mexico and Central America. I support the spirit of Merida and I hope to work closely with our allies to make sure that we tackle these collective concerns.

But in my view, the Merida Initiative will never fully succeed if we don't also work to put in place adequate institutions that can systematically address civil society institution-building, as well as corruption and the rule of law. Our Central America neighbors will need well-trained and equipped military forces to confront the most violent criminals. But I would strongly argue that the region also needs equally well-trained and equipped police and civilian authorities operating in a fair and impartial judicial system, to enforce and uphold the rule of law.

And joining with our neighbors to combat these increasing problems, we must recognize that our neighbors are taking important steps to respond to the needs of their citizens, and they are doing so because they are closer than ever to completing the transition to stable, democratic, civil societies, one with social contracts who are tackling some of their society's most difficult problems.

With the exception of Cuba, every nation in the Western Hemisphere has a democratically elected government. But many problems still persist as we all know, and inequality plagues our hemisphere, income and wealth disparities in Latin America are the worst in the world. Nicaragua, for example, is the second poorest country in our hemisphere. In the region, social and economic exclusion are rampant, fostering conditions in which political radicalism thrives and crime rates soar to six times greater than the rest of the world. As a result of these debilitating conditions, millions of Latin Americans have emigrated from the region to seek better opportunities for themselves and their families. Nearly 100 million people have left Latin America since World War II.

Many countries, such as Guatemala and El Salvador, are struggling with impunity. Now given this duality, on the one hand, continuing challenges we face with poverty, impunity, crime, and violence, and on the other hand, democratic governments responding to their people's needs, the question seems to be how we in the United States will work to promote our mutual interest in partnership with our neighbors to the South, because a renewed relationship with a stronger, more prosperous, and democratic Latin America, that can handle its own political, social, and economic affairs is in everyone's interest, especially those of the United States.

Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama are diverse countries with proud histories. Some face serious challenges with poverty and inequality, others with crime and violence, but all of these countries have democratic governments, and the United States must take the lead in engaging these neighbors, working in a respectful manner toward advancing our mutual interest in the broader sense.

So I welcome all of you to the committee this afternoon, congratulate you again on being selected by our President to serve in these important posts. And I look forward to engaging and a good discussion with you this afternoon, along with my colleagues on these critical manners.

Now, let me turn to my ranking subcommittee chair members, Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee for his opening statement, and then we'll turn to our fellow Senators who are here to present their witnesses.

STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

And I too want to welcome, not only these public servants, but their families, who I can see have gathered in large numbers, and certainly our colleagues from the Senate who know them well and want to speak on their behalf. And as I look at where they're going, except for Mr. Speck, who I know is going to a different part of the world, I wonder how we functioned in Central and South America,

but we're glad that, hopefully, your leadership is going to be in place. I certainly thank you for your dedication.

There are a lot of challenges, as Chairman Dodd just alluded to, that are occurring right now in Central and South America. Both poverty, as was alluded to—we have a huge food crisis that's brewing because of, in some cases our own policies here—HIV/AIDS, certainly while there's been greater cooperation on the narcotics, certainly more progress needs to be made. Our Federal—our trade agreements, our free trade agreements, certainly we have some that need to be approved, and hopefully will take us even further down the road towards prosperity in South America.

But there's no question, while there are challenges, it's a time of great opportunity, and I'm excited for each of you. I can see it in your eyes, you're excited about the task in front of you.

I have just recently come from two trips to the part of the world you're going to be representing, and look forward to coming down many more times while you're in service. And again, I think we have a tremendous opportunity into the future in Central and South America. I'm thrilled to have people of your quality serving us there, and look forward to your testimony and confirmation.

Senator DODD. Thank you very, very much, Senator.

We now have the opportunity to hear from our colleagues who are here this afternoon. I thank them for coming over. And what I want to do is ask all of our colleagues who are here to introduce their nominees, including the second panel as well. So, I know you have very busy afternoons in front of you here, I won't make you wait for the second panel as well to do that.

So we'll begin with you, Senator Snowe, welcome, we're delighted to have you here with the committee, and the introduction of Peter Cianchette.

STATEMENT OF HON. OLYMPIA J. SNOWE, U.S. SENATOR FROM MAINE

Senator SNOWE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. That's good, the microphone works.

Senator SNOWE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Corker. And I want to express my appreciation, and I know along with my colleague Senator Collins, first of all for scheduling this timely hearing on the consideration of the President's nominee Peter Cianchette to be Ambassador to Costa Rica.

It's certainly my distinct pleasure to be here, along with Senator Collins, to introduce Peter Cianchette as the next Ambassador to Costa Rica. He has been a good friend of mine for many years and is someone who I've had the utmost regard and highest esteem. I also want to welcome his family who's here today, his wonderful family, his exceptional wife, Carolyn, their two children, Evan and Maria, his parents, Bud and Priscilla, and his brother, Earl. I know that this is a proud moment for them as they look forward to a new chapter in Peter's dedication to his country.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, indisputably, Costa Rica is a pivotal ally of the United States in a vital and critical region. And we've had a history of close, friendly, and supportive relations based on respect for a democratic government, shared values, and human rights. The nomination of Peter

Cianchette to serve as a preeminent diplomat in a Central American nation is an appropriate reflection of his intellect, his ability, and his commitment to public and private service.

Peter brings a wealth of experience in solving problems and securing results, from both his tenure in the service in the Maine State Legislature from 1996 to 2000, and his extensive business background, both as—including his tenure as a senior executive of one of Maine's top manufacturing companies, as well as his leadership at the helm of his own company, Cianchette Enterprises.

Peter comes from a tradition of public service. He's part of a family that has contributed tremendously to the State of Maine over the years. And Peter's own stellar record of combined public and private sector service speaks to his ability to ably and well represent the interest of the United States in Costa Rica.

The United States and Costa Rica share growing concerns for the environment and seek to preserve Costa Rica's important tropical resources. Indeed, Costa Rica's primary foreign policy objective is the promotion of environmental sustainability, which is a lynchpin of United States-Costa Rican relations that resulted in 2007, the largest debt for nature swap to date, in which the United States forgave its debt in exchange for Costa Rica's pledge to preserve large swaths of wilderness.

Peter brings an appreciation for these issues as our natural assets are a vital component of Maine's quality of life, with 90 percent of our land deforested, probably the only difference is that their forests weren't covered with more than 180 inches of snow this winter, but I'm sure Peter could adapt to that. Moreover, Peter's understanding and appreciation of travel and tourism issues, as they are the life-blood of Maine's economy, are especially applicable in a country that is host up to 50,000 expatriate American citizens, including many retirees, as well as 700,000 American visitors annually.

As someone who's devoted himself to the empowerment and well-being of young people in Maine, whether it's Director of the Greater Portland Big Brother/Big Sister of America, member of the Southern Maine Community College Foundation, or Director on the Board of the Make-A-Wish Foundation, or Yes to Youth, which is a charitable organization to prevent at-risk behavior in our young people, Peter will be right at home in a country whose emphasis on education has produced a remarkable 96 percent literacy rate in universal public education.

So, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Corker, and members of this committee, I know Peter is an individual of tremendous energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to our country and its finest principles, he's a person of the highest caliber, and I believe there is no question he will skillfully represent our nation's interest in this neighboring and critical region. So I want to commend the committee for his consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator Snowe. That was a very generous introduction, and thank you for being with us.

Senator Collins.

STATEMENT OF HON. SUSAN M. COLLINS, U.S. SENATOR FROM MAINE

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Corker. It's my privilege today to join Senator Snowe in presenting Peter Cianchette to this committee. We're very proud that he has been nominated to be our next Ambassador to Costa Rica.

As Senator Snowe indicated, the United States and Costa Rica have a long history of friendship and cooperation. Mr. Cianchette is an outstanding choice to strengthen this relationship. With more than 20 years of business experience and public service, he has a proven ability to work cooperatively with others to achieve progress. As a dedicated community leader and civic activist, he has a long and distinguished record of using his talents to benefit others.

As Senator Snowe mentioned, Peter served two terms in the Maine Legislature, he ably represented the people of South Portland and Cape Elizabeth. He has a long business record as well. He's been a partner in the Maine private investment firm known as CHK Capital Partners, and he's president of one of its portfolio companies. He's also the owner and president of the Cianchette Group, a public affairs management and business consulting firm. Prior to this, Peter served as the COO and executive vice president of Pierce Atwood Consulting. He previously had founded Cianchette Enterprises, which owned and operated a successful employee staffing, recruiting, and placement company. He also served, previously, as senior executive in one of Maine's manufacturing firms, the Dragon Products Company, a leading manufacturer of cement and concrete, and a subsidiary of the largest cement producer in Spain.

I mention this, in particular, because I know the chairman is always concerned about language capabilities and skills. In that position, Mr. Cianchette participated in meetings conducted in Spanish, and he is continuing to perfect his command of that language. I know that skill's going to be an invaluable asset in the position to which he's been nominated.

Mr. Cianchette's impressive business resume is exceeded only by his commitment to community service. I won't repeat the long list of community organizations, which Senator Snowe has already alluded to. But suffice it to say, that whenever a community group needs a strong leader, they turn to Peter Cianchette, and he always answers the call.

He is also a graduate of the University of Maine, and with his wife Carolyn, the proud parents of two children. There's one particular aspect of Peter's public service that I believe deserves special mention. His service in the Maine Legislature and his political campaigns have always been marked by civility, decency, and integrity. He is one of those rare elected officials who has opponents, but does not have enemies. He is able to work with people across party lines. These character traits have been evident in his business endeavors and in his community service, and they will serve our nation well if he is confirmed for this diplomatic position.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Corker, members of the committee, I strongly endorse Peter Cianchette's nomination to be our next Ambassador to Costa Rica, and I join Senator Snowe in enthusiastically recommending him for your favorable consideration.

Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator Snowe.

You've got a very high bar to climb over now, Peter. I tell you, you better be very good in your remarks, given that wonderful introduction. And truth in advertising, of course I think both Senator Snowe and Senator Collins are where my brother Tom was the Ambassador of Costa Rica a number of years ago and had the privilege of visiting him on numerous occasions, and so it's more than just a passing familiarity with the country. And so, we look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Senator Martinez, welcome.

STATEMENT OF HON. MEL MARTINEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you, Senator Corker, and members of the committee. I'm really delighted today to have the opportunity to be here to introduce Hugo Llorens, the former Deputy Chief of Mission to the United States Embassy in Madrid, and a Floridian.

Hugo, like myself, shares an immigrant background to this country, and in one of those poignant coincidences that I like to think as, only in America, he came to the United States 46 years ago precisely today, on April 16th of 1962.

The President nominated him to serve as Ambassador to Honduras, and I know he's got a long list of accomplishments, but I want to speak about Mr. Llorens in terms of my own experience with him. I've been in Madrid when he was DCM there and I've also been to Buenos Aires when he was DCM there. And I have had the opportunity to work with him and see his work firsthand and up and close and personal.

I know he could play a key role in our strong relations with Honduras during his critical time there. Through a $215 million compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the United States is supporting Honduras' efforts to reduce poverty and improve its citizens' quality of life. Successful implementation of this compact will help to consolidate the gains already made with the help of the Central America Free Trade Agreement.

And I totally agree with the chairman's comments about having to have a much broader approach to Latin America than free trade and democratic institutions. Those are great and we have to continue that commitment, but it is broader than that and I think the MCC is one great way to broaden that. I think that Mr. Llorens has that kind of understanding of the balance that we have to bring in our foreign policy to all of those issues.

He has a long—life-long commitment to serving our Nation and serving our Nation's interest abroad. He's been in four different continents and I just want to note that he has, in fact, received some wonderful accolades for his work. He has earned three superior and six meritorious awards. He is a past recipient of the prestigious Cobb Award for excellence in promoting of U.S. business and trade policy, and was runner-up for the Saltsman Award for distinguished performance in advancing U.S. international economic interest, and was also the runner-up for the James Baker Award for the best DCM.

Hugo, I know, as all of the folks here today, not only does this job, but they do it as a team with family members. Lisetee, his wife, is here. She has been with him through all the steps of his distinguished career in the Foreign Service of our Nation.

And so, I am delighted to be here today. And with a total passion and endorsement of Hugo Llorens to be Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras, and commend him to the committee, and thank you for allowing me this opportunity.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator, and appreciate your being at the table to introduce Mr. Llorens.

George Voinovich, our colleague from Ohio, has got a statement to make.

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman——

Senator DODD. Thank you all very much, and Senators are excused. We won't have any questions for you here today. [Laughter.]

Tempting, tempting, but——

[Laughter.]

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Senator Dodd, Senator Corker. I'm pleased to be here today, especially because Dr. Sam Speck has been nominated to the International Joint Commission.

Sam has an outstanding academic record, graduated from Harvard, got his Ph.D. from Harvard, and the was the President of Muskingum College for many years, served as a State Representative, State Senator, and his last position was the position as Director of the Department of Natural Resources in Ohio.

Sam and I met when we were State reps together and worked on the creation of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, and passed the Mine Reclamation Act that served as a model to many States throughout the country. And during the years since then, we've stayed in touch with each other, and more recently we've spent a lot more time together when he was Director of the Department of Natural Resources.

In that position, as Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, he served as chairman of the Council of Great Lakes Governors Water Management Working Group, which helped lead the development of the Great Lakes Annex Agreement and the Great Lakes Water Management Compact. This effort brought together the eight Great Lake States and Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec to devise a strategy to cooperatively manage the waters of the Great Lakes. Sam's work on the Great Lakes Water Management Initiative exemplifies his ability to work impartially for the best outcome to manage and protect our waters.

He's committed to preserving the Great Lakes and has served on a variety of Great Lakes commissions and councils. He works well with and is respected by a variety of interests to use our waters, with his more than 30 years of public service as well as his commitment to making our State of Ohio a better place to work and live. I believe that Sam would bring a great deal of knowledge, background, and expertise to the commission.

I'd like to also, Mr. Chairman, ask that two statements, one from Governor Strickland from Ohio and one from Senator Sherrod

Brown, be submitted for the record.[The statements referred to above appear in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section at the end of this hearing.]

Senator DODD. They'll be included.

Senator VOINOVICH. They both strongly support Sam's nomination to the Great Lakes Commission.

[The prepared statement of Senator Voinovich follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Good morning. I am pleased that this committee is holding today's hearing on all of these nominees, and I am particularly pleased to see Dr. Sam Speck's here today. I have worked with Sam for many years on projects in Ohio, and I strongly support his nomination to the International Joint Commission.

Many rivers and lakes lie along or across the border between the United States and Canada. The 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty had the foresight to establish the International Joint Commission to help solve problems and resolve disputes in these shared waters. Canada and the United States recognized that each country is affected by the other's actions on boundary waters. Our two countries cooperate to manage these waters wisely and to protect them for the benefit of both of our citizens and future generations. Commissioners are governed by the requirements of the Boundary Waters Treaty. They are impartial and work toward the interests of the shared boundary waters.

Sam has had a long history of working on a portion of the United States and Canadian boundary waters—the Great Lakes. In his most recent position as the Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Sam served as the Chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors' Water Management Working Group which helped to lead the development of the Great Lakes Annex Agreement and the Great Lakes Water Management Compact. This effort brought together the eight Great Lakes States and Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec to devise a strategy to cooperatively manage the waters of the Great Lakes. Sam's work on the Great Lakes Water Management initiative exemplifies his ability to work impartially for the best outcome to manage and protect our waters.

He is committed to preserving the Great Lakes and has served on a variety of Great Lakes commissions and councils. He works well with and is respected by the variety of interests who use our waters. With his more than 30 years of public service, as well as his commitment to making our State of Ohio a better place to work and live, I believe that Sam would bring a great deal of knowledge, background, and expertise to the commission.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you very, very much.

You are welcome, if you want to spread out a little bit. I know you're all going to be close to each other in the years ahead, but if you want breathing room there.

And then what I'll do is, Mr. Llorens, I want to begin with you and then go to Ms. Hodges and Mr. Callahan and Mr. McFarland. If you could, I'd like you to try and keep you remarks to about 5 minutes or so. I'm not going to bang down the gavel, obviously, but you understand that. I know the members would like to maybe raise some questions with you. And any other supporting documents or information you think would be helpful for the committee to consider during the nomination process—we're happy to include those in the record as well.

And I know they've done this already to some degree, but I thought, Mr. Llorens, I think these are special moments, and I'm sure you'll make reference, all of you will, to your family and friends who've gathered here as well, but I always like to welcome them to the committee. This is a very important moment, to be nominated to be an ambassador to represent our country, is a very special moment.

I've been involved in this committee for 27 years and I still find that one of the best jobs of all is to have a confirmation hearing for people to serve. And I always love the fact that people bring their families with them, as well. I don't know if you have any here, and if you do, we're happy to have them recognized.

STATEMENT OF HUGO LLORENS, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS

Mr. LLORENS. Yeah, I'd like to—thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Corker, Senators. I'm truly honored to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to Honduras. I'm deeply grateful for the trust and confidence President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working with members of this committee and Congress, as appropriate, to advance United States interests in Honduras.

I would like to take a moment, Mr. Chairman, to acknowledge my wife, Lisetee. She has been my life partner for 25 years——

Senator DODD. Would you stand up and be recognized. Welcome.

Mr. LLORENS [continuing]. And she has been a dedicated representative of our country in seven overseas postings. My son, Andrew, a student at Loyola University in New Orleans, and Dirk, who is living with us in Madrid, could not be here today. But I consider myself fortunate to have my family's constant love and support.

I came to this great Nation with my family 46 years ago as a 7-year-old Cuban refugee. We arrived with a suitcase in hand and a buffalo nickel in our pocket, but we knew we were richly blessed by America's freedoms. We worked hard and an unquenchable faith in America, as the land where dreams come true. It is difficult to convey in words how proud I am to have been given an opportunity to serve my adopted land these many years, and what a profoundly humbling experience it is to be in the presence of this committee today.

I've been a career Foreign Service officer——

Senator DODD. The record wants to know, as I heard, it was 46 years ago today.

Mr. LLORENS. Today, today.

Senator DODD. What better way to celebrate that anniversary.

Mr. LLORENS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I've been a career Foreign Service officer for 27 years. I'm a Latin American hand by trade, having served in challenging assignments in Bolivia, Paraguay, El Salvador, Honduras, and most recently as DCM in Argentina. In the 4 years I served in Honduras, I traveled the length and breadth of the country and I know the land and its people. I've had the privilege of working Latin American issues in Washington at the State Department and at the NSC. In my current posting as DCM in Spain, our embassy coordinates actively on Latin America with our Spanish counterparts.

If confirmed, I will bring both the regional and executive experience to lead our diplomatic team in Honduras.

Honduras has been a faithful and long-standing friend of the United States. This year, Honduras will celebrate its 28th year of unbroken civilian and constitutional rule, and will hold elections

for a new president in November 2009. The U.S. mission I hope to lead will work closely with the current and future government in the spirit of friendship, cooperation, and respect.

Our hemispheric policy is based on consolidating democracy, promoting prosperity, investing in people, and protecting the security of the democratic state. Our key issues in Honduras include the rule of law and good governance, regional security, and economic development.

If I am confirmed, I will make the safety and security of United States citizens living and visiting Honduras a top priority. I will support our common efforts to dismantle narcotics and human trafficking organizations. I will work to increase economic opportunities and enable democracy to address the dramatic social obstacles Honduras faces, especially poverty and marginalization, which contribute to insecurity. Criminal organizations and gangs threaten our neighbors, and it is in our national interest to strengthen the capabilities of the Honduran police and security forces.

If approved, the Merida Initiative will be a multifaceted tool to partner with our Central American allies to build a regional strategy against crime and terrorism. In addition, I will support Honduran initiatives to revitalize the judicial system and ensure that the fight against lawlessness and impunity is done in full adherence to the law and respect for individual human rights.

If confirmed, I will support the Millennium Challenge Corporation's compact, signed in 2005, that provides Honduras $215 million for building roads and enhancing rural development. I will also seek to deepen two-way trade and investment derived from CAFTA, promote U.S. business, and protect U.S. property rights.

We have a strong record of programs with the Honduran people thanks to the work of USAID and the Peace Corps, as well as many public/private partnerships with United States organizations. I will vigorously support these supports and all efforts to deepen our engagement with the Government and people of Honduras.

I would also encourage committee members and staff to visit Honduras. When U.S. Senators and staff travel overseas, we're given an enormous opportunity to advance our bipartisan agenda with our democratic partners. If confirmed, I look forward to welcoming the members of this committee and other Senators and Congresspersons.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for granting me the honor of appearing before you today, and respectfully ask for you favorable consideration of my nomination. I pledge to you that I will work hard and to the best of my ability in Honduras to represent our great Nation. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Llorens follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HUGO LLORENS, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, Senators, I am truly honored to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to Honduras. I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of this committee and the Congress as appropriate to advance United States interests in Honduras.

I would like to take a moment, Mr. Chairman, to acknowledge my wife, Lisett. She has been my life partner for 25 years and a dedicated representative of our

country in seven overseas postings. My son, Andrew, a student at Loyola University in New Orleans, and Dirk, who is living with us in Madrid, could not be here today. I consider myself fortunate to have my family's constant love and support.

I came to this great Nation with my family 46 years ago as a 7-year-old Cuban refugee. We arrived with a suitcase in hand and a buffalo nickel in our pocket, but knew we were richly blessed by America's freedoms. We worked hard and had an unquenchable faith in America as the land where dreams come true. It is difficult to convey in words how proud I am to have been given an opportunity to serve my adopted land these many years and what a profoundly humbling experience it is to be in the presence of this committee today.

I have been a career Foreign Service officer for 27 years. I am a Latin America hand by trade, having served in challenging assignments in Bolivia, Paraguay, El Salvador, Honduras, and most recently as DCM in Argentina. In the 4 years I served in Honduras, I traveled the length and breadth of the country and I know the land and its people. I've had the privilege of working Latin America issues in Washington at State and the NSC. In my current posting as DCM in Madrid, I am well grounded on European perspectives on Latin America and our embassy cooperates on these issues with our Spanish counterparts. If confirmed, I will bring both the regional and executive experience to lead our diplomatic team in Honduras.

If I am confirmed, a top priority will be the security of the 7,000 American residents in Honduras and the 60,000 who travel to the country each year. This begins with the safety of our embassy staff and their families and the service men and women who work with our Honduran hosts at the Soto Cano air base.

Honduras has been a faithful and longstanding friend of the United States. This year, Honduras will celebrate its 28th year of unbroken civilian and constitutional rule and will hold elections for a new President in November 2009. The U.S. mission I hope to lead will work closely with the current and future government in a spirit of friendship, cooperation, and respect.

Our hemispheric policy is based on consolidating democracy, promoting prosperity, investing in people, and protecting the security of the democratic state. Our key issues in Honduras include the rule of law and good governance, regional security, and economic development.

If confirmed, I will support our common efforts to dismantle narcotics and human trafficking organizations. I will work to increase economic opportunities and enable democracy to address the dramatic social obstacles Honduras faces, especially poverty and marginalization that contribute to insecurity. Criminal organizations and gangs threaten our neighbors and it is in our national interest to strengthen the capabilities of the Honduran police and security forces. If approved, the Merida Initiative will be a multifaceted tool to partner with our Central American allies to build a regional strategy against crime and terrorism. In addition, I will support Honduran initiatives to revitalize the judicial system and ensure that the fight against lawlessness and impunity is done in full adherence to the law and respect for individual human rights.

If confirmed, I will support Honduran efforts to take full advantage of the Millennium Challenge Corporation's compact signed in 2005 that provides $215 million for building roads, as well as promoting rural development. I also will seek to deepen the two-way trade and investment flows derived from the CAFTA–DR. We have a solid record of programs with the Honduran people thanks to the work of USAID and the Peace Corps, which has one of the largest programs in the world in Honduras. We also have many public-private partnerships with U.S. organizations. I will vigorously support these programs and all efforts to deepen our engagement with the Government and people of Honduras.

I would also encourage committee members and staff to visit Honduras. When U.S. Senators and staff travel overseas, we are given an enormous opportunity to advance our bipartisan agenda with our democratic partners. If confirmed, I will look forward to welcoming the members of this committee and other Senators and Congresspersons to Tegucigalpa.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for granting me the honor of appearing before you today and respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of my nomination. I pledge to you that I will work hard and to the best of my ability in Honduras to represent our great Nation.

Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much.

Ms. Hodges, welcome, good to have you with us.

STATEMENT OF HEATHER M. HODGES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

Ambassador HODGES. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I'm honored and privileged to appear before you today to consider my nomination as Ambassador of the United States to Ecuador. I deeply appreciate the confidence and trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me.

If confirmed by the Senate, I would look forward to working closely with this committee, along with your colleagues in the full Congress, to advance United States interest in Ecuador.

I bring to this assignment nearly 28 years of Foreign Service experience. Much of my career has been spent in countries dealing with the challenges of developing and strengthening democracies. At the moment, I am honored to serve as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Director General of the Foreign Service and Bureau of Human Resources in Washington, DC. Previously, I served as United States Ambassador to Moldova and worked overseas in Venezuela, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, and Spain.

Historically, the United States and Ecuador have been close partners in combating narcotics trafficking, fighting corruption, and fostering economic development. We share a common vision of a democratic and prosperous hemisphere that provides opportunities for all its citizens.

Ecuador is known as a nation of great natural beauty, a nation of tremendous natural resources and biodiversity, a country of peace whose people and diverse cultures are its greatest strengths.

The people of Ecuador are committed to building stronger, more transparent institutions. The United States stands ready to assist them in reaching that goal through continued engagement that reinforces our hemispheric commitment to constitutional democracy, strong and inclusive institutions, respect for the rule of law, the war on drugs, and greater, more widely shared economic prosperity. If confirmed, supporting these objectives would be among my highest priorities.

The United States is concerned about the destabilizing effects of the revolutionary armed forces of Columbia, FARC, on the Andean region. Ecuador's fight against drug trafficking and FARC incursions along the northern border, combined with its efforts to bolster alternative development in the region is crucial for United States interests.

Another priority in the United States-Ecuador relationship is support for economic development and poverty reduction. United States trade and economic growth assistance to Ecuador focuses on technical assistance, training, outreach, financial support for free and open markets, and poverty reduction.

As in most countries, Ecuador also holds both challenges and opportunities for United States investors. I was pleased to learn that Ecuador and Occidental Petroleum recently reached an agreement on payment of an arbitral award in a long-standing investment dispute, and are together addressing another dispute. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our efforts to promote United States exports and commercial interests, while encouraging Ecuadorian economic development.

Lastly, there are approximately 20,000 American citizens living in Ecuador and another 150,000 visit the country every year. Protecting U.S. citizens is the first responsibility of any ambassador and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the embassy in Quito and our Consulate General in Guayaquil continue to provide a high level of service and attention to our citizens.

I thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts about the United States relationship with Ecuador and I'm happy to answer to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Hodges follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HEATHER M. HODGES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored and privileged to appear before you today to consider my nomination as Ambassador of the United States to Ecuador. I deeply appreciate the confidence and trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me. If confirmed by the Senate, I would look forward to working closely with this committee, along with your colleagues in the full Congress, to advance United States interests in Ecuador.

I bring to this assignment nearly 28 years of Foreign Service experience. Much of my career has been spent in countries dealing with the challenges of developing and strengthening democracies. At the moment, I am honored to serve as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Director General of the Foreign Service and Bureau of Human Resources in Washington, DC. Previously, I served as United States Ambassador to Moldova and worked overseas in Venezuela, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, and Spain. I have been especially privileged to work for and with extremely talented people at the Department of State in the Foreign and Civil Service, as well as with our very committed locally employed staff. I would also like to point out that I completed a Pearson Fellowship in the Senate 20 years ago, an experience I still remember fondly and for which I will always be grateful. If confirmed, I hope that all of these experiences and influences in my life will make me an effective ambassador to Ecuador.

Historically, the United States and Ecuador have been close partners in combating narcotics trafficking, fighting corruption, and fostering economic development. We share a common vision of a democratic and prosperous hemisphere that provides opportunities for all its citizens. The United States is the most important source of Ecuador's imports and in turn the primary market for Ecuador's exports. Furthermore, Ecuador is known as a nation of great natural beauty, a nation of tremendous natural resources and biodiversity, and a country of peace whose peoples and diverse cultures are its greatest strength.

These are challenging yet promising times for Ecuador. Since the election of President Rafael Correa in 2006, the country's eighth president in 10 years, there has been strong popular support for a new constitution. A constituent assembly was elected in September of last year and has taken up the charge of creating a new constitution, and the people of Ecuador are committed to building stronger, more transparent institutions. The United States stands ready to assist them in reaching that goal through continued engagement that reinforces our hemispheric commitment to constitutional democracy, strong and inclusive institutions, respect for the rule of law, the war on drugs, and greater, more widely shared economic prosperity. If confirmed, supporting these objectives will be among my highest priorities.

The United States is concerned about the destabilizing effects of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) on the Andean region, and we support regional efforts to eliminate narco terrorism and achieve a lasting peace. Ecuador's fight against drug trafficking and FARC incursions along the northern border, combined with its efforts to bolster alternative development in that region, is crucial for U.S. interests. As a result of an increased presence on the northern border, Ecuador in 2007 was able to destroy three multi-ton cocaine laboratories, eradicated several multi-hectare coca plots near the Colombian border, and reported a record number of land-based drug seizures. Also in 2007, Ecuador unveiled "Plan Ecuador," which is an integrated approach to northern border security and development aimed at countering the influence of Colombian terrorists and narcotraffickers on Ecuador. If confirmed, I will continue our robust support for Ecuador's counternarcotics efforts.

Another priority in the United States-Ecuador relationship is support for economic development and poverty reduction. Supported by favorable global conditions, Ecuador's economic performance in recent years has been strong. Between 2000 and

2007, per capita GDP more than doubled to $3,270, while poverty rates fell. United States trade and economic growth assistance to Ecuador focuses on technical assistance, training, outreach, and financial support for free and open markets, competitiveness and poverty reduction. Among our projects is one focusing on microenterprises. Approximately one million people in Ecuador—nearly 25 percent of the workforce—work in microenterprises. Helping microenterprises grow contributes to poverty reduction and economic growth. Thanks in large part to United States assistance, Ecuador now has the fastest growing microfinance sector in all of Latin America. The Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), enacted in 1991 and extended three times by the Congress in the last year-and-a-half, remains a powerful tool. It has strengthened economic ties between our two countries and helped Ecuador create new, world-competitive businesses such as its flower industry. The Government of Ecuador estimates ATPA has generated over 300,000 jobs.

Ecuador is an important trading partner for the United States. As in most countries, Ecuador also holds both challenges and opportunities for United States investors. I was pleased to learn that Ecuador and Occidental Petroleum recently reached agreement on payment of an arbitral award in a long-standing investment dispute and are together addressing another dispute. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our efforts to promote United States exports and commercial interests while encouraging Ecuadorian economic development.

Lastly, there are approximately 20,000 American citizens living in Ecuador, and another 150,000 Americans visit every year. Protecting United States citizens is the first responsibility of any ambassador, and, if confirmed, I will ensure that the Embassy in Quito and our Consulate General in Guayaquil continue to provide a high level of service and attention to our citizens. Our diplomatic representation in Ecuador includes 11 United States agencies with 155 Americans and 266 locally employed staff. In addition, the Peace Corps has a contingent of over 150 volunteers throughout the country. Providing an appropriate and secure work place for our employees is a critical requirement. To that end, the State Department will soon be opening a new chancery in Quito, a notable accomplishment under Ambassador Jewell's leadership.

I thank you again for the opportunity to share my thoughts about the United States relationship with Ecuador. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you closely, and welcome the opportunity to host you and other interested members of Congress in Quito. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator DODD. Thank you very, very much, Ms. Hodges.

Mr. Callahan, welcome.

I should have said Ambassador Hodges, by the way. I apologize.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT J. CALLAHAN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA

Mr. CALLAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If I may, I'd like to begin by introducing a few of my family members who are here. My wife of 31 years, Debbie, who has been my closest confidante in 28 years in the Foreign Service, our younger son, Emmett, his older brother, our oldest son, Andrew, is living and working in New York and couldn't be here today, my nephew, Tim Morrison, is also here, as are a few of my students from George Washington University, all of them very bright young men and women who are keenly interested in the government and in foreign policy.

Senator DODD. Why don't they stand up and be recognized, you probably got half the room here. [Laughter.]

The Callahans. Welcome all of you, nice to have you with us.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Nicaragua. I am profoundly grateful to President Bush and Secretary of State Rice for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of this committee and your col-

leagues in the Congress to promote our policies in Nicaragua and when appropriate, throughout the region.

Should I be confirmed, this will be my eighth overseas assignment and my fourth posting to Latin America, but my first since I left Bolivia in 1992. As someone who has developed a keen appreciation of Latin American culture, the Spanish language, and the profession of diplomacy, I eagerly welcome the assignment.

I also think that my varied career with the State Department, which has taken me from the diverse cultures of Bolivia to the center of the former Muslim Caliphate in Baghdad, from the enduring charms of San Jose and Tegucigalpa to the imperial legacies of London, Athens, and Rome, has provided me with the experience to lead effectively our mission in Managua, should the Senate confirm me.

I am no stranger to challenging assignments and I do think that Nicaragua will prove to be just that. There is, to begin with, what T.S. Eliot called "the persistence of memory," which of course, is not unique to Nicaragua. I would never suggest that we should ignore history, just that our thought and actions should not become hostage to the past. There are too many common interests between the United States and Nicaragua, too many problems that require our mutual attention, resources, and energy, to dwell on what we might have done to each other decades or even centuries ago. Acknowledge to be sure, and learn from it, but then move on.

Every member of this committee and every American who reads the paper or watches the news has recently come across intemperate words directed against the United States from certain Latin American countries, and unfortunately, Nicaragua has, at times, been among them. This kind of rhetoric can sting, even wound, and national leaders should always be prudent in their language and measured in their criticism. That said, and much to our credit, the United States has paid more attention to Nicaraguan deeds than words, and this would seem to be the right approach.

Our commitment to the Western Hemisphere, to help in consolidating democracy, promoting prosperity, investing in people, and protecting the security of the democratic state is no where more in evidence than in Nicaragua. Working closely with Nicaraguans from the government, police, and military, from business and labor, and from charitable and religious organizations, we have achieved some notable successes on a range of issues. Through the Millennium Challenge account, our bilateral aid, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, and other initiatives, we have helped Nicaraguans develop their economy.

When Hurricane Felix devastated the country's north coast last year, we provided over $15 million in immediate assistance. In the fight against drugs, our two countries have worked together to seize more than 3 metric tons of cocaine so for this year, which follows a seizure of 13 metric tons last year. If confirmed, I will continue to support our efforts to build a strong, sustainable, and mutually beneficial partnership with Nicaragua, and I will regard as my most important responsibility, the protection of American citizens.

Our official presence in Nicaragua includes representatives from a dozen agencies of the Federal Government, as well as 165 Peace

Corps volunteers, all doing extraordinary work under difficult conditions. I will endeavor, as my predecessors have done, to provide a high level of service to American citizens living in and visiting Nicaragua. In addition, and should I be confirmed, I would eagerly welcome your visiting, which would provide excellent opportunities to engage Nicaraguans at every level.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I recognize that there are many challenges in further developing our relationship with Nicaragua. If confirmed, I will work to promote U.S. interest and develop a partnership with the government and people of that beautiful country. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before your committee. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Callahan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT J. CALLAHAN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and pleasure to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Nicaragua. I am profoundly grateful to President Bush and Secretary of State Rice for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of this committee and your colleagues in the Congress to promote our policies in Nicaragua and, when appropriate, throughout the region.

If I may, I would like to take a moment to introduce several people. First, my wife, Debbie, who has been my life partner for over 30 years and my closest confidante during 28 years in the Foreign Service and who, if I am confirmed, will give up her job and accompany me once again on a foreign assignment; next, my younger son, Emmett, who spent all but 3 years of his youth abroad as I served in various cities on two continents, as did his older brother, Andrew, who is living in New York and couldn't be here today; and, finally, a number of my current and former students from George Washington University, who have come to the hearing to witness this committee discharge its constitutional responsibilities.

If confirmed, this will be my eighth overseas assignment and my fourth posting to Latin America, but my first since I left Bolivia in 1992. As someone who has developed a keen appreciation of, and a genuine affection for, Latin American culture, the Spanish language, and the profession of diplomacy, I eagerly welcome the assignment.

I also think that my varied career with the State Department, which has taken me from the diverse cultural expressions of Bolivia to the former center of the great Muslim caliphate in Baghdad, from the enduring charms of San Jose and Tegucigalpa to the imperial radiance of London, Athens, and Rome, has provided me with the experience and knowledge to lead effectively our mission in Managua, should the Senate confirm me.

I am no stranger to challenging assignments, and I do think that Nicaragua will prove to be just that. There is, to begin with, what T.S. Elliot called "the persistence of memory," which of course is not unique to Nicaragua. I would never suggest that we should ignore history; just that our thoughts and actions should not become hostage to the past. There are too many common interests between the United States and Nicaragua, too many problems that require our mutual attention, resources, and energy, to dwell on what we might have done to each other decades or even centuries ago. Acknowledge it, to be sure, and learn from it, but then move on.

Every member of this committee, and every American who reads a paper or watches the news, has recently come across intemperate words directed against the United States from certain Latin American countries, and unfortunately Nicaragua has at times been among them. This kind of rhetoric can sting, even wound, and national leaders should be prudent in their language, measured in their criticism. That said, and much to our credit and forbearance, the United States has paid more attention to Nicaraguan deeds than words, and this would seem to be the right approach.

Our commitment to the Western Hemisphere—consolidating democracy, promoting prosperity, investing in people, and protecting the security of the democratic state—is nowhere more in evidence than in Nicaragua.

Working closely with Nicaraguans from the government, police, and military, from business and labor, and from charitable and religious organizations, we have

achieved some notable successes on a range of issues. Through the Millennium Challenge Account, our bilateral aid, the Central American Free Trade agreement, and other initiatives, we have helped Nicaragua develop its economy. We provided over $15 million in immediate assistance when Hurricane Felix devastated the country's North coast last year. In the fight against drugs, our two countries have worked together to seize more than 3 metric tons of cocaine so far this year, which follows the seizure of 13 metric tons in 2007.

If confirmed, I will continue to support our efforts to build a strong, sustainable, and mutually beneficial partnership with Nicaragua, and I will regard as my most important responsibility the protection of American citizens in Nicaragua.

Our official presence in Nicaragua includes representatives from a dozen agencies of the Federal Government as well as 165 Peace Corps volunteers, all doing extraordinary work under difficult conditions.

I will endeavor, as my predecessors have done, to provide a high level of service to American citizens living in and visiting Nicaragua. In addition, and should I be confirmed, I would eagerly welcome your visiting. Your presence provides excellent opportunities to engage Nicaraguans at every level.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I recognize that there are many challenges in further developing our relationship with Nicaragua. If confirmed, I will work conscientiously to promote U.S. interests and develop a partnership with the government and people of that beautiful country. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before your committee. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have.

Senator DODD. Thank you very, very much.

Mr. McFarland.

STATEMENT OF STEPHEN G. MCFARLAND, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA

Mr. MCFARLAND. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce my family. I'd like to introduce my wife, Karen McFarland—we met at our first post in Venezuela, and my sons—our sons, Christopher, Alexander, Andrew, and Kevin. They've been a source of inspiration and support to me throughout our career.

Senator DODD. Well, welcome. Christopher particularly, welcome, I like you. [Laughter.]

Mr. MCFARLAND. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Guatemala. I'm grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for the trust and confidence that they have shown in sending my nomination to you.

I'm a second generation Foreign Service officer with 31 years of service. I've served nine times in Latin America, mostly in countries with insurgencies, political strife, and post-conflict challenges. My earlier assignments in El Salvador and Peru showed me the human costs when democracy falters and when social cohesion fails. As Deputy Chief of Mission and Charge in Guatemala from 2000 to 2003, I worked closely with a broad range of Guatemalans on bilateral issues.

My most recent assignment was as team leader of a Provincial Reconstruction Team embedded with the 2nd Marine Regiment in Western Iraq. There I saw the accomplishments of interagency leadership and teamwork, and I bear witness to the dedication and sacrifices of Americans and Iraqis. If confirmed as ambassador, I would use this experience to lead an active interagency embassy team.

The United States overarching objective in Guatemala is to support democracy. Democracy, in turn, requires security, prosperity, and the rule of law. These objectives are mutually reinforcing. Gua-

temalans ended their internal conflict through the 1996 Peace Accords. Out of the ashes of a cruel war, they embarked on an admirable, but unfinished effort to incorporate all citizens of all ethic groups, all social classes, into Guatemala's democratic society.

Guatemala's democracy faces great challenges, corruption and organized crime, impunity and human rights abuses, drug and gang violence, and extreme poverty, including child mortality and malnutrition rates in some areas among the worst in the hemisphere. The United States has been a partner with success of Guatemalan Governments and civil society on these interrelated issues, and both countries that major progress is vital. If confirmed, I am committed to working with this committee, with the Congress, with all executive branch agencies, and with the Guatemalan, and other groups to continue efforts to address these challenges.

President Alvaro Colon took office in January 2008 and is building upon Guatemala's friendly relations with the United States. He has pledged to help the poor and the indigenous, and to improve security and transparency. In January, Guatemala and the U.N. inaugurated the commission against impunity in Guatemala. As President Bush said in his visit to Guatemala last year, "Strong democracy requires security from drug lords and violent criminals." The United States provides Guatemala cooperation in law enforcement and the Merida Initiative, if approved by Congress, would greatly increase cooperation on law enforcement and citizen security issues.

The CAFTA agreement has increased trade, greater security, transparency, and infrastructure would encourage even more investment in trade. Health and education, two issues that President Bush raised in his visit, also need more investment for Guatemala to take full advantage of CAFTA. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Guatemalan Government and with Guatemalan and American businesses in our shared interests in trade and economic opportunities.

Civil society, including the private sector, plays an important role in Guatemala. The ties between Guatemalan and American civil society strengthen our bilateral relations. If confirmed, I would seek to support these bonds, including through additional public diplomacy outreach.

Some 350,000 Americans visit Guatemala each year, another 25,000 live there. Many Americans have also adopted Guatemalan children. If confirmed, two of my top priorities would be the safety of American citizens and support for a transparent, efficient, adoption process in accordance with Guatemalan and American laws.

Embassy Guatemala also has some 400 American and Guatemalan employees who work in a dozen agencies, as well as 200 Peace Corps volunteers. Their safety and support would also be a major concern of mine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McFarland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHEN G. MCFARLAND, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Guatemala. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for the trust and confidence they have shown in sending my nomination to you. I would like to introduce my wife, Karin, and to thank her for her support throughout our Foreign Service experience. I would also like to introduce my sons, Christopher, Alexander, Andrew, and Kevin, and to thank them for their support and inspiration.

I am a second-generation Foreign Service officer with 31 years of service; I have served nine times in Latin America, mostly in countries with insurgencies, political strife, and post-conflict challenges. My earlier assignments in El Salvador and Peru showed me the human costs when democracy falters and social cohesion fails. As Deputy Chief of Mission and Charge in Guatemala from 2000 to 2003, I worked closely with a broad range of Guatemalans on bilateral issues. My most recent assignment was as team leader of a Provincial Reconstruction Team embedded with the 2nd Marine Regiment in western Iraq. I saw the accomplishments of interagency leadership and teamwork, and I bear witness to the dedication and sacrifices of Americans and Iraqis. If confirmed as ambassador, I would use this experience to lead an active interagency embassy team.

The United States overarching objective in Guatemala is to support democracy. Democracy in turn requires security, prosperity, and the rule of law; these objectives are mutually reinforcing. Guatemalans ended their internal conflict through the 1996 Peace Accords. Out of the ashes of a cruel war, they embarked on an admirable—but unfinished— effort to incorporate all citizens of all ethnic groups and social classes into Guatemala's democratic society.

Guatemalas democracy faces great challenges: corruption and organized crime; impunity and human rights abuses; drug and gang violence; and extreme poverty, including child mortality and malnutrition rates in some areas among the worst in the hemisphere. The United States has worked as partners with successive Guatemalan governments and civil society on these interrelated issues, and both countries agree that major progress is vital. If confirmed, I am committed to working with this committee, with all executive branch agencies, and with the Government of Guatemala and other groups to continue our efforts to address these challenges.

President Alvaro Colom took office in January 2008 and is building upon Guatemala's friendly relations with the United States. He has pledged to help the poor and the indigenous, and to improve security and transparency. In January 2008, Guatemala and the United Nations inaugurated the Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala. As President Bush said when he visited Guatemala a year ago, "strong democracy requires security from drug lords and violent criminals." The United States provides Guatemala cooperation in law enforcement, and the Merida Initiative—if approved by the Congress—would significantly increase our cooperation on law enforcement and citizen security issues of mutual concern.

The CAFTA–DR Free Trade Agreement entered into force in Guatemala in July 2006. It has increased trade, and President Bush's March 2007 visit to Guatemala underscored the ability of nontraditional producers in indigenous areas to improve their standard of living under CAFTA.

However, greater security, transparency, and infrastructure are needed to encourage more investment and trade. Health and education—two issues that President Bush raised during his visit—also need more investment to foster the workforce Guatemala needs to take full advantage of the trade agreement. If confirmed, I will be work closely with the Guatemalan Government, and with Guatemalan and American businesses, on our mutual interests in trade and economic opportunities.

Civil society, including the private sector, plays an important role in Guatemala. The ties between Guatemalan and American civil society strengthen our bilateral relations. If confirmed, I would seek to support these bonds, including through additional public diplomacy outreach.

Some 350,000 Americans visit Guatemala each year, and another 25,000 Americans live there. Many Americans are close to Guatemala as the birthplace of their adopted children; in the last 10 years, Americans have adopted over 25,000 Guatemalan children. If confirmed, two of my top priorities would be the safety of American citizens, and support for a transparent, efficient adoption process in accordance with Guatemalan and American laws. Embassy Guatemala has some 400 American and Guatemalan employees who work in a dozen agencies, as well as 200 Peace Corps volunteers; their safety and support would also be a major concern of mine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you very, very much.

I should have made note earlier, but I see my former colleague, Ben Gilman, here. Ben, I want to thank you for coming over, a former member of the House, where we served together many years ago, and a wonderful member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and very active in foreign policy issues. So we're honored to have you on the Senate side.

I always tell people the story, when I left the House and came to the Senate, Morris Udall turned to me and he said, "By going to the Senate, you have improved the intelligence of both bodies." [Laughter.]

So, I thank you for coming over.

Let me, first of all, tell you how pleased I am the President has nominated five of you here that are career Foreign Service officers. This doesn't happen often enough and I think it's very exciting, the fact that your careers are being recognized and the value contribution you've made, not only in this region, because I think all of you have had tremendous experience in the region as well, and I know that's always a battle back and forth on how these decisions are made.

And as I mentioned earlier, my brother Tom taught at Georgetown, he was never in the Foreign Service per se, but I think he was almost considered part of the family since he was so closely associated with the issues over the years, but the fact that there are people who work so very hard in this region year in and year out, and many times don't get the opportunity to serve as our ambassadors in these countries, because in so many cases, these ambassadors at embassies end up, sort of, political, so to speak, so there's a value in that, because you can be very good ambassadors.

But the fact that the President has asked those of you who have served so well over the years in these other countries, I commend him for that. I think this is something they need to recognize more often, so I commend all of you on your service to the region.

There's obviously a lot of people in front of us here, and I'm going to ask maybe just a couple of generic questions and ask you to respond to them because I think they apply to all of you.

The Merida Initiative, and my good friend, Bob Menendez, has a strong interest in this subject matter as well, and I'm very interested in hearing his comments and thoughts on it.

I mentioned, Bob, before you came in that I'm supportive of the idea, but it needs to be expanded. I'm worried that if it's just going to be a sort of more equipment kind of a program, where we're talking about high priced equipment, helicopters, weapons and the like—and I'm not arguing, that can't be a major contributor to all of this, but it seems to me it's got to be broader based than that. I mean, is there sufficient attention being paid to civilian institution-building, the rule of law, in this agreement? Should we begin by vetting key units in the police and the judiciary to be sure that there's going to be minimal corruption in the process as we go forward with a major investment in the region? Is serious political will a necessary condition for the success of this initiative, in your minds? Are they willing to take the difficult steps to actually confront the corruption-laden problems that exist in so many of these cases? I say that with a deep regret about what happens in these

nations. And, are you satisfied to the extent you can be at this juncture, that those kinds of concerns are going to be addressed? And I'd like to hear all of you comment on whether or not you agree with this, or if you have a different perspective on this.

I think it would be helpful for the committee at this juncture here, since you are experienced hands in all of this and know the area so well, what are your reactions to this? And as a committee of jurisdiction we're going to be very interested in following this and how it works. And I going to be particularly turning to Bob and asking him to be the lead on all of this as we go through it in this subcommittee.

But I'd be very interested, Mr. Llorens, beginning with you, and maybe on down in the order we've talked to each other to share some thoughts about this initiative. Is it enough, should it be more, are you concerned that it's limited it seems in one area, and how satisfied are you about the will, the corruption issues, the vetting process, and the like?

Mr. LLORENS. Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, certainly, I know that for Central America we're asking for $50 million for this year, and I think it's plussed up to $100 million next year. And again, speaking specifically, I do agree that you need to have a holistic approach to dealing with the whole issue of crime and impunity, rule of law, and it has to be holistic and it has to be strategic.

I've looked at the specific—Merida Initiative and we do have training, we do have equipment, but you also have issues, you know, you do have community outreach, you do have programs to work with prosecutors, with the judicial system. Because I totally agree—I mean, I think if we don't build and focus a lot of our assistance to strengthening those institutions, none of this aid is going to be sustainable.

So, I look at the categories that are involved in institution-building and prevention, and community outreach is a critical component of the Merida Initiative, I agree.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much.

Ms. Hodges.

Ambassador HODGES. Sir, of course, the Merida Initiative is not related to Ecuador, but——

Senator DODD. I'm sorry, I apologize.

Ambassador HODGES [continuing]. But, I would like to comment on the fact that one of the positive things that we have in our relationship with the Government of Ecuador is the government's, and President Correa's firm commitment to combating corruption and to, you know, to work in this area. And much of our assistance already goes to programs that are related to corruption, to working on the judicial system, criminal—working on the judicial system in areas of criminal investigation, we have provided Ecuador with its first-time ever automated database on criminal cases, and things like that.

So, again, I would certainly support something like that.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Mr. Callahan.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

For Nicaragua, yes, I would echo what Hugo Llorens said—there's a very important component in Merida, which addresses the

rule of law and institution-building. And that goes to the heart of trying to reduce, if not eliminate, corruption. Corruption is, unquestionably, a problem. A World Bank study placed Nicaragua in the 23rd percentile.

But in preparing for these hearings, and in talking with a number of my colleagues in the Government, including the DEA and the people at the Department of Defense who deal with the Nicaraguan Police, they have a very high regard for the Chief of Police in Nicaragua, a woman named Aminta Quinera, who is highly professional, and determined to make her police force professional.

So, I would think that we can, with some confidence, trust them to use the money wisely, and attempt to reduce, if not eliminate, corruption, which is a problem.

Senator DODD. That's very good, thanks very much.

Mr. McFarland.

Mr. MCFARLAND. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

I agree with you, Mr. Chairman, that for the Merida Initiative to be successful, there has to be a holistic approach, and there has to be support for the institutions that underpin the rule of law, not just for the agents that actually execute the actions.

I'd like to point out, in the case of Guatemala, the part of the Merida agreement which—if approved by Congress—would focus on gang activities, illustrates some of this approach.

It starts with prevention efforts that are carried out by NGOs and community organizations. Then there is community policing, there is support, with support, training, equipment for the police, as well as support for vetted units. There's communications equipment and other training for the police to be able to link up with counterparts in other countries, there's considerable training and support, and I think here the political will element is crucial, and it's one we have to monitor carefully for prosecutors, as well.

There is support for reform of prisons, to ensure that they are not simply used as another office by gang members. And at the same time, there is additional work on prevention at the prisons, focused on first-time offenders and juvenile offenders. And I think that kind of holistic approach could be a useful model, sir.

Senator DODD. That's very encouraging. And I'd be very interested—I know the committee would be—in any additional thoughts as you end up in your posts, any thoughts for the committee to consider as we evaluate the program.

I want to say to you, Mr. Callahan, I was struck with your testimony and your opening statement, and I appreciate it very, very much. I think the T.S. Elliot quote is a very apt one—probably could be used a lot of places, about the persistence of memory, and I welcome your comments. We've had sort of a troubled history over the last more than 20 years—more than that now—with Nicaragua, and you can get preoccupied with the history. But as you point out, I think, in your testimony—we've got to look ahead, as well. And it's important we do that.

So, your comments, I think, will be welcomed, and it's an opportunity. And I hope that the Ortega Government and others will hear your words this afternoon, and understand what they—as I imply them to be—have as an opening, and to take advantage of that comment that you made this morning. This is an opportunity

to try and get on a better track than we've been on. So, I appreciate immensely your testimony. Very smart.

Let me turn to Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. And I have to say that question you ask about rule of law and institutions, building institutions—I think is dead-on. And I thought that your responses were well-received, I look at the places in the world where so much poverty and other kinds of human dilemma exists, it's in those places that lack those two things. And I do appreciate your focus on that, or your focus here in the next few months.

I also agree that, I think it's wonderful that people of your background and quality are being appointed these jobs. And while certainly political appointees do outstanding work for us all over the world, I personally am very thrilled that people who have worked so long in Foreign Service are going to be representing us in a part of the country—a part of the world—that I actually feel is one of the most important that we have to deal with, and I certainly look forward to working with Chairman Dodd on initiatives in that area.

And actually I had some questions, but because of the background that you all have and because of the opening statements that each of you made, I actually wonder, Chairman, whether they shouldn't be asking us questions. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. Believe me, they have them, too.

Senator CORKER. And as a matter of fact, I'll take any that you might have. [Laughter.]

Senator CORKER. But I think we all know that each of you is very well qualified, you've each demonstrated that by virtue of what you've done already in the way of public service, and I just wanted to thank you for being willing to do this, and look forward to working with you, and actually have no further comments or questions.

Thank you, each.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Bob, very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me congratulate all of you on your nominations, and certainly thank you for your previous service to our country. I echo the chairman's remarks about seeing career Foreign Service individuals nominated for ambassador positions. I think it is incredibly important. And so I'm glad to see the administration is doing that.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your comments on Merida, and my concern as I listen to the answers that you've received—and I agree with Mr. Llorens, for example, that it needs to be holistic and strategic. I'm just concerned that—as presently devised—it is not holistic and strategic, and that is a real challenge.

I think we've learned from Plan Colombia—which I was a supporter of, when in the House of Representatives that, in fact, it came to a point that if you can't give a coca farmer an opportunity to have sustainable development choices, he's going to sustain his family one way or the other.

Mr. LLORENS. You bet.

Senator MENENDEZ. And that won't simply be done at the point of a gun.

And so, part of my concern about how Merida is presently structured is that, that's largely what it is.

The other concern I have, Mr. Chairman, is that I appreciated the answer that you received from the panel about institution-building. And whenever we talk about Merida, everybody focuses on the institution-building, which I think is critical. The problem is, that as presently structured, the institution-building, at least in the Central America part, only gets about $30 million of the $150 million to be proposed. So, it's about one-fifth of the entire effort for Central America. Therefore, it is a small amount of institution-building that is going to take place, compared to the enforcement, the weapons, the machinery, equipment, and what-not.

So, if we really believe that institution-building and rule of law is the long-term, fundamental nature of what we need to do in Merida, then I think the dynamics of how it's structured need to be changed, and I look forward to working with the chairman and the ranking member to see that that can happen.

I think—I agree with you—the spirit of the opportunity, particularly with Mexico, is incredibly important. But the other question I'd like to have for the panel is, you know, you will collectively be part of—except for Ambassador Hodges—you will collectively be part, along with your other colleagues in Central America, of this $150 million, if that's the way it ends up being. And I get a sense that the Central American countries were largely an afterthought in this initiative.

Having traveled to Guatemala this past December, and the visit between that visit and the visit in Mexico, with President Calderon, I got two very clearly different impressions about the thinking. Clearly, Mexico has put a lot of time and effort into the thinking—at least from their part of this—and I think Guatemala wants to do the right thing, but I don't get the sense that they have invested a lot of time and effort in thinking about how they're going to, for example, be at the forefront of this effort.

So, I'm wondering how you all see the engagement of these countries—not from what we hope they will do—but what we expect them to do, and what they've already participated in, in terms of preparation for the initiative. Can you give us any sense of that?

Mr. MCFARLAND. Yes, Senator, if I may speak from the perspective of Guatemala—I do understand that the proposal for Mexico was, came about in perhaps a better-structured format, in part, because they had the unity of effort of being one country, and the Central Americans were coming up with their proposal as part of their own regional integration, institution.

Guatemala also has a new government. If confirmed, sir, one of my tasks, in fact, would be to impress upon the government the opportunities that they have and to get a sense for the amount of real political will that they are willing to invest in this process, and to engage them on that subject.

Senator MENENDEZ. Any of you others have perspectives?

Mr. CALLAHAN. Well, I would just make the point, Senator, that we will be working closely with the Nicaraguans, should I be confirmed, and should the Merida Initiative go through as planned—we'd be working very closely with Nicaraguans on how they spend that money.

And I take your point about institution-building, and it doesn't seem like a lot of money in Merida, but there are other sources of money for institution-building—bilateral aid program, for example, the Peace Corps in Nicaragua—all of these entities, American entities, are working with Nicaraguans in an attempt to create robust and durable institutions.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that—I chair the subcommittee on all of our foreign assistance. The problem is, when we talk about Merida, in the context of what we are pursuing, some of those programs are great, other bilateral assistance, but they're focused in a different way. And so, how we marry them is going to be very important.

Mr. LLORENS. Senator, it's a very good question. I agree with you in the sense that ultimately, an initiative like Merida, or Central America's ability to deal with the situation, social—socio-economic situation that they face. It has to come from within, and they need to be able to take the initiative. So, I would like, certainly I think the SICA, the Central America System, so that the Central Americans coordinate together and engage with us, I think will be critically important.

I would just note with regard to Honduras, that I understand that they have developed their own national security strategy—I think a national security strategy very much focused on some of the issues, sort of the challenges that they face—the issues of crime, gangs, you know, marginalization of society, so in a way there is a challenge there, but it's absolutely critical for the Centrals to make that change.

And I assure you, one of my priorities will be to engage with the Hondurans, and work very closely with them in this regard.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I appreciate your answers, let me just say, capacity, ability, and commitment are going to be essential. Number two is, the amount is in and of itself, when you look at all of Central America, not all that much to try to meet the challenges, which are affected in a variety of ways, including gang violence, and what-not, are all elements of this.

So, we're going to—and you all will be so close to each other that individual national security strategies, I think, are very good, but we need a holistic, regional security strategy, because otherwise you have a balloon in which, you know, you push in one end and it pops out on the other.

And so those are some of the things that I think will be incredibly important.

I have some other questions, Mr. Chairman, but I will wait if you will have a second round.

Senator DODD. We'll do that. Also to let you know, we're going to submit questions, too, so we can be thorough.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I concur completely with your comment at the outset about the qualification of these nominees, and particularly, that they are career Foreign Service individuals. Having traveled and seen what you do in some of the more challenging places in the world, I thank you for being willing to accept this responsibility and certainly hope that you are confirmed.

And Mr. Callahan, you and I had a great conversation about some of my experience with Nicaragua when you came to my office, and I know Ortega, Sandinista, is back in power and was reelected with a plurality. Is there any indication that he has sought aid from either Venezuela and Chavez, or Iran? Further, has he received some commitments for the ports from Iran, and housing from Venezuela? Do you know the extent to which they are working together? The extent to which Chavez is influencing Ortega, and the extent to which he influenced his election?

Mr. CALLAHAN. Yes, thank you, Senator, it's nice to see you again.

There was no question that President Ortega does maintain a close relationship with President Chavez. President Chavez, through the Petrocaribe program is making oil available to Nicaragua at discounted rates. But I would point out that the United States also has an economic engagement with Nicaragua, which is both broad and deep. Not only our bilateral aid program, but the Millennium Challenge Account which, I think, we discussed, which is $175 million over 5 years. There is the CAFTA program, the CAFTA Free Trade Agreement, which has resulted in a dramatic increase in both Nicaraguan exports to the United States and American investment in Nicaragua.

Through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which we play a leading role, about $1.7 billion of Nicaraguan debt has been forgiven. So, the Nicaraguan economy depends greatly on the United States, both for its trade, and for a lot of its bilateral aid.

In addition to that, as I mentioned in my statement, we have a very active Peace Corps program, and these volunteers are all over the country.

To get back to your original point, yes, he does have a relationship with Mr. Chavez, but in a recent poll that I just looked at, the approval rating for the United States in Nicaragua is over 80 percent. So the Nicaraguans clearly have a great affection for the United States, which is something we can work with, as well.

Senator ISAKSON. And he won with 37.6 percent, so we're doing better than he did. [Laughter.]

Right? Well, for all of you, Central and Latin America is critical to the interests of the United States, and I'm troubled by the amount of power Chavez has through the prices of petroleum and how he's leveraging that money. And I think your presence in those countries and your outreach to maintain the great friends that we do have, and maybe win over a couple that we may have lost, is going to be critically important to us, both in the short run, as well as the long run, and I wish you the very best of luck.

Senator DODD. Is that it, John?

Senator ISAKSON. Yes.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you.

This is a good question Senator Isakson's raised, not just about Nicaragua, but generally in the region. And again, you're looking, what is it—a gallon of gas, I think, in Venezuela is about seven cents? And obviously having a huge potential influence in the region, we're aware of it in Bolivia, and the efforts in Ecuador with

the recent events that have unfolded between Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. The relationship with Brazil—it gets complicated.

This is all a rosy picture, the world is changing its views regionally on President Chavez, and Brazil is a classic example. I think there may have been one relationship, or one attitude to begin with, that has certainly been modified, given some of the energy issues that have evolved over the years.

But it's a good question—certainly struggling countries economically where you can offer low-cost energy at a time when you're trying to hold your country together is a very appealing offer to receive, and obviously, he's extracting commitments in return.

But, I hope we will look at some of these ways in which we can expand economic opportunities, as well. I was looking at the remittance issue in Latin America and someone gave me these numbers. In 2005, 22 million people from Latin America worked in the developed world. They returned, the 22 million, $54 billion in remittances to the region. That was more than all of the foreign direct investment and foreign aid for the entire region, in those remittances coming back. And a good part of that $54 billion, I don't know how it breaks out, of the $54 billion, what percentage comes from the United States, but I presume it's a fairly healthy chunk of that, going back.

We have our own downturn in the economy here, and those numbers get adversely affected. In Honduras, $2.7 billion in remittances were sent back to the country in 2007, that made up a quarter, 25 percent of the GDP of the country. And so there's a direct correlation in terms of what happens here.

I noticed in foreign aid, Nicaragua, by the way, 26 percent of foreign aid, makes up 26 percent of Nicaragua's budget in the country. And I presume the bulk of that comes from us, is that true?

Mr. CALLAHAN. Yes, that's——

Senator DODD. I don't know if that foreign aid number is U.S. foreign aid?

Mr. CALLAHAN. It's of all sorts, and it's international foreign aid, as well.

Senator DODD. But I want you to just comment on this general question, because obviously I'm a believer that foreign aid can be of help, and certainly there's a value in all of that.

But the realities of the world in the 21st century—just given our own budget constraints on how much you can actually do, and the importance of wealth creation, immigration policy, I mentioned earlier, 100 million people have left the region since World War II, primarily over economic issues. And, I presume, in some cases political reasons that were intolerable to live the way you live, your family lived, and you made that decision that many of us at this side of the dais families did—to emigrate. The case of Bob Menendez certainly reflects exactly what your family went through.

And yet, obviously, many others are leaving for economic reasons, and how we begin to get our arms around this issue, in the holistic way that I've mentioned, that Senator Menendez has mentioned, Senator Corker has mentioned, would be helpful—the IDB, U.S. aid—do you have any thoughts as a panel, here, on how we might look at this, out of the box, a bit differently? And ways in

which we can address these issues beyond the traditional ways we've been talking about it, over the last number of years?

Mr. LLORENS. That's a very good question, Mr. Chairman. You know, I would say one of the things I think that's very important there, a country like Honduras receives significant economic assistance from the United States. You have $43 million in bilateral assistance, you have the Millennium Challenge Account which is $215 million over 5 years. The United States obviously provides a lot of money through the multilateral banks, so there is significant amount of economic assistance.

I would look at something, for example, in terms of being really effective on the ground, something I'd look at, just to make sure that donor coordination is really effective, and maybe it is. But it's something that, you know, I would like to look at in making sure that the major donors, the multilateral banks, the major bilateral donors are working together, so when you look at the development issues, you really—whether it's education, whether it's health—are we really being holistic and strategic as a donor community, so I'd say that's one thing.

The other thing I would mention is the fact that certainly, I think that the Central America Free Trade Agreement, in the sense that it locks in the trade benefits for both countries, but for Central America region, and for the United States. I think it provides a certain amount of stability so that it's sort of a platform for growth, I think, for Honduras and Central America. But, the overriding issue, of course, is, that you have to get back to the rule of law you have to get—you know, the good governance issues, corruption, which you all mention.

And I think that this is an issue—this is really the task, and it's the task that the Central America democracies have to take the lead on, but I think the United States has to make sure that, you know, our assistance is, comes with the fact that we're going to ask our democratic friends in Central America to raise the standard—to have a better investment climate, to have the rule of law, to improve the basis for an independent judiciary. And that's going to be the key to be able to create sustainable development.

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador Hodges.

Ambassador HODGES. I would say that one thing that's very important is to—well, for many, many years we've been looking at these issues of what's pushing people, what's pulling people, and I feel—I'm very confident in the programs that we're working with that promote economic prosperity, reasons for people to stay, you know, in their countries.

Ecuador has, I think, something like 2 million immigrants in the United States, and probably many of them for many years. I think that in Ecuador, we should be looking at, you know, doing more in terms of again, working with the Government of Ecuador to reduce corruption, the themes that are, you know, corruption really hurts the everyday man or woman, their pocketbook. And to help people realize that it really is in all of our interest to fight against corruption, and any of the programs related to social justice, the same thing. These give people a reason to stay in their own countries,

and to build their institutions, and believe that they will have a better future for themselves and their children.

Senator DODD. Mr. Callahan.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Yes, Mr. Chairman, and as you and Senator Menendez talk about a holistic approach—and I think it's applicable here, as well—progress does come slowly. If we look—as you well know, because you've been following this as closely as any of us in the State Department for the last 25 years—there has been enormous progress in Latin America, not only in the return to democracy, but respect for human rights. Which we should acknowledge, and compliment the Central Americans and the Latin Americans for.

But, I agree with my colleagues talk about corruption. I think this is an enormous problem throughout Latin America and the only way to reduce it or eliminate it, is by encouraging the people who are governing the country to do so honestly and effectively, and I think a lot of our capacity-building, a lot of our money and training goes into that, exchanges can help. But, I think we have to accept that this will be as slow as was the return to democracy.

Mr. MCFARLAND. Mr. Chairman, in terms of Guatemala, I think that if we take a step back, and look at the accomplishments over the last, say, 20 years. Certainly peace, the return to democracy, putting the military back into what we would consider to be the traditional military role of not engage—not carrying out internal security missions, but rather defending borders—promoting free trade. A lot of the important items have been, have been done at least in part—to echo some of my colleagues—several of the missing parts, the parts where I think we really have to focus attention on, are transparency and rule of law and investing in health and education of the people.

I think to echo, again, something that some of my colleagues have said, it's important that we try to coordinate the significant U.S. donor efforts with other donors, with the countries involved. I think the private sector in each of these countries is also a potential benefactor of a better trained workforce, and a potential contributor, if you will, to grassroots programs.

Ultimately, I think that, you know, Latin Americans watch events in Venezuela and Cuba with interest, but I think those models have little direct relevance for them, it's hard to replicate them in other countries. That doesn't mean, though, that they will continue to support blindly their governments, if they perceive that they're not being fair, or they're, if they're behaving unjustly.

Senator DODD. Well, they're aspirational qualities, and I agree with you.

I'll just end on this note, but I spoke last week at the Naval Academy—they had the Forestall Lecture, and they asked me to come and talk about Latin America, and the point I want to make is, Latin America is right on the cusp, with this tremendous advance in democracy, which is no small achievement—it's really been remarkable what's happened. From one end of the continent to the next, with the obvious exception of Cuba, it hasn't been easy, it's gone through an awful lot to get there.

But, we're on the cusp of really breaking open, I think, all of these other issues. So, it's unlike other parts of the world which,

respectfully fall further behind in this effort—Latin America really is on the edge of breaking into a 21st century of achieving all the potential greatness that's capable in this hemisphere. So, this is really a critical moment, in my view, of getting this right. And if we do as Bob has suggested, and expanding this Merida proposal, really working on these other avenues that need to be exploited if we're going to make this program succeed, I think we have an opportunity to really have a big influence, and make a big difference in this hemisphere.

So, it's sitting there, now. You think of other parts of the world, and imagine they had achieved what had been achieved in Latin America, think of how much further along and more hopeful we might be about some of the potential changes.

So, it really is a time of optimism, in my view. With all of the problems out there, this is a time of optimism in Latin America.

So, I welcome your nominations. Any additional questions I have, I'll submit along—and obviously there are a ton of—I could think of just a load of questions I'd love to ask each and every one of you, but I'll restrain myself, and submit them to questions.

Bob, you had some additional?

Senator MENENDEZ. First of all, I appreciate your comments about—you know, one of our challenges is that even as we talk about the Millennium Challenge Account, that's a handful of countries that qualify. And the reality is, is that the one place in the world over the last several years that we have cut overall development assistance is Latin America and the Caribbean.

So, you know, I hope that the chairman will look at the bill that he has cosponsored with me, on the Social and Economic Development Fund for the Americas as part of a tool to try to see if we can reverse that trend, because I think sustainable development opportunities to make people eligible to be part of an MCC compact is equally as important, as well, and I would look at that.

I just have one or two quick questions, the rest I'll submit for the record.

Mr. McFarland, with reference to Guatemala, I'm glad to hear your comments about adoptions. I have a fair number of constituency cases that are going, respecting Guatemalan law, but seems to take forever and find difficulties, so we hope that if you are confirmed, you said it would be one of your priorities, and we look forward for that to actually take place and happen.

Mr. Callahan, let me ask you one thing—I am concerned about Iran's growing presence in Nicaragua. Particularly, Iran has pledged to invest in Nicaragua's ports, agricultural sector, energy network, Venezuela is cofinancing some of these, and I view this as part of a challenge that we have in somewhat of a vacuum that we need to be engaged in. How will you work to limit Iranian influence in Nicaragua if you are confirmed as the ambassador?

Mr. CALLAHAN. Thank you, Senator. Yes, we are all concerned, you are correct to be concerned, we are concerned. President Ortega has visited Iran, and President Ahmadinejad has visited Nicaragua. There have been a lot of promises made, the Iranians have established a diplomatic mission in Managua, we are monitoring it closely, but to date, we really haven't seen much of these promises

and the rhetoric that President Ahmadinejad had talked about when he was there.

But it is of great concern, it's something that we are looking at, and I can assure you that if I am confirmed, it will be a priority for me to keep my eye on this, and that the—we have to convey to the Nicaraguans that Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism, and that any kind of close relationship with them would have an effect on how we dealt with Nicaragua.

Senator MENENDEZ. They have a Millennium Challenge Account agreement?

Mr. CALLAHAN. They do, $175 million over 5 years, yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Ambassador Hodges, one quick question—Ecuador's obviously been in the news, with Colombia, President of Ecuador said he's going to file a new complaint with the OAS. How do you see the circumstances, and what role do you think the United States should be playing—you would be playing as ambassador if, in fact, you were confirmed?

Ambassador HODGES. Well, sir, obviously we value our friendship with both Colombia, and with Ecuador, and with respect to the ongoing incidents or crises between, or the—in the relations between Colombia and Ecuador, we look to the OAS and its good offices to work with the two countries to see if we can come to a good resolution to these issues between them.

Now there are a couple of issues in the ICJ, and again, this is a matter for both of them.

No matter what, we—I recognize that both countries really need to be talking to one another, we need to—we all have regional interests there, the issues of narcotics trafficking in Colombia are, you know, very serious. We are fortunate that in Ecuador there is no coca cultivation, but that doesn't mean that they don't have to worry about the transportation of narcotics coming through Colombia, precursor chemicals and things like that.

So, it is really something that we all have to work on to get the two countries back together, and continuing their cooperation.

Senator MENENDEZ. And finally, Mr. Llorens, I don't have a question for you, but if, in fact, you are confirmed, there are some commercial transactions of U.S. citizens that I think have been dealt with unfairly along the way and we would want to pursue them with you when that opportunity comes, should you be at the post.

Mr. Chairman, I'll submit the rest of my questions for the record.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Senator, we'll do that, we thank all four of you, and wish you the very best. We'll try and move this along. Over the coming weeks, Senator Biden will schedule the appropriate timing for confirmation votes. I don't know when that will happen, but I'm sure we'll keep you posted and informed. I presume all of your paperwork and everything else has been complete, and there may be some additional questions that will come in, and we'll try to get them to you quickly, and urge you to respond to them quickly, as well, that would certainly move the process along.

I thank all four of you, for your service and for your responses today.

Let me invite the second panel to come up, sorry, I apologize, we sit on the banking committee together, too, so we do a little banking. [Laughter.]

I apologize.

Senator CORKER. I'm going to step out to another meeting, and I know that you all are in wonderful hands with the two Senators. I want you to know that's not out of any kind of disrespect—we are really, have wonderful, wonderful appointees coming before us right now, and I do hope there's a speedy confirmation, and I want you to know that I respect you very much.

But, with that, Mr. Chairman——

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Senator CORKER. Since you all already have me two to one, anyway, two to zip won't matter, so thank you. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. Well, thank you all very much and welcome to the committee. You've been appropriately introduced, I guess, except for you, Ms. Stephenson.

Why don't we begin with you, Ms. Stephenson, I'll start with you. And welcome to the committee, and welcome again for your service.

STATEMENT OF BARBARA J. STEPHENSON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

Ms. STEPHENSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a great honor to appear before you today, as the President's nominee to serve as the next American Ambassador to Panama.

Mr. Chairman, throughout my career, I have appreciated the constructive role that you, personally, have played in achieving our foreign policy goals. First, when I was a young officer starting out in Panama, and then in El Salvador, and then more recently when I was Counsel General in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and you were on the right side of the issues over and over. So, I thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you. Don't put your nomination in jeopardy, now. [Laughter.]

Ms. STEPHENSON. And I do look forward to working with you and the other members of the committee, and indeed, Congress, in general, if I'm confirmed as Ambassador to Panama.

I would like to take the opportunity that you've given us though, to introduce my family.

My husband, Matthew Furbush, served as our community liaison officer during our first Foreign Service assignment in Panama, about 20 years ago—a little more than that—when we were newlywed. And he's served with me at every single Foreign Service post since—six so far.

And our daughter, Claire, has also earned her Foreign Service stripes—six schools on four continents by the 9th grade. And she hopes to visit us in Panama when she's not studying at the University of Virginia.

And our little son, Brewster, who opted to go to elementary school today, hopes to earn some Foreign Service stripes of his own to compete with his sister, by joining us in Panama, as well.

Senator DODD. Welcome, delighted to have you here. And thank you for your service, as well.

Ms. STEPHENSON. It's the whole family.

Senator DODD. Good.

Ms. STEPHENSON. If confirmed as ambassador, I would be embarking on my fourth tour in the region. In addition to my first tour in Panama, I served in El Salvador during the final years of the civil war there, and more recently in Curacao as our Counsel General, leading a big interagency law enforcement effort, essentially.

As I prepare to return to the region, Mr. Chairman, I am struck by the dramatic positive changes that have taken place over the years. Instead of wrestling with how to get military governments to give way to democratic leadership, with the ravages of war, with devastating human rights abuses, we talk today, instead, about free trade agreements, about ensuring that the fruits of an expanding economy reach all of the citizens. About strengthening the various institutions that are vital to democracy, and about bolstering partnerships with these countries so that we can tackle hemispheric and even global challenges together.

I look forward, if confirmed, to drawing on the deep well of support for the United States—over 80 percent of Panamanians have a favorable image of us—to pursue this positive agenda.

Approval ratings this high are one of the greatest gifts any diplomat can be given. They mean that our voice counts, and that Panamanians who share our enthusiasm for achieving this agenda, from President Torrijos, to civic action groups, welcome us as partners.

But the Trade Promotion Agreement, if approved by Congress, would also be a very powerful tool. Because, beyond the Trade Promotion Agreement's benefits—trade benefits—for both of our countries, the agreement directly supports our broader goals for Panama, such as encouraging transparency and accountability, and seeking to ensure that all citizens, including the nearly 40 percent of Panamanians who continue to struggle in poverty, benefit from Panama's impressive economic growth and maturing democratic institutions.

As much as some things have changed beyond recognition, other things have remained constant, such as an ambassador's fundamental obligation to look out for fellow Americans abroad. If confirmed, I assure you that protecting Americans will be one of the top priorities of my embassy, and with over 25,000 Americans now living in Panama, this is a growing part of the embassy's work, and a task I've always taken very seriously.

Of course, geography remains destiny for Panama. As a vital crossroads for the movement of goods, people, and ideas, Panama is a third border for the United States. Two-thirds of the 14,000 ships that transit the Panama Canal each year are either coming from or going to United States ports. So, I recognize that protecting the Canal and Panama's core infrastructure is critical to the homeland security of the United States.

I would want to underscore here that the Panama Canal Authority, the Panamanian Government entity that's been in charge of running the Canal since the handover in 1999, has done a really impressive job of running it. And we're also really pleased to see that U.S. firms are getting a very fair shot at work on the ambitious multibillion dollar Canal Expansion Project.

Our shared history has allowed us to forge an effective and enduring partnership to increase the benefits of Panama's unique geography, while countering the threats that flow from it.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading a strong interagency effort to help Panama in its efforts to push back against the drug traffickers and the criminals who would exploit Panama's growing transportation hub for illegal ends.

Close cooperation with Panamanian law enforcement has already yielded some important successes—increased drug seizures, a more effective police force, and an enhanced capability to counter money laundering.

And the Merida Initiative, if it's approved by Congress, would also add considerably to these efforts, both in Panama and the region.

As Panama's democratic institutions mature—and I look forward to the 2009 elections—when Panamanians will once again go to the polls to bring about a democratic transfer of power—seems humdrum today, it did not awhile back, it's a miracle—and the country enjoys impressive economic growth, it was more than 11 percent last year—we recognize Panama's progress, and bright prospects for the future by thinking and speaking of Panama increasingly as a partner in the region.

We're pleased to see Panama taking a leader role, not only regionally like last summer, when Panama effectively hosted the OAS General Assembly, but also more, in global terms as exemplified by Panama's current work, as a member of the United Nations Security Council.

Mr. Chairman, if would be my great honor, if confirmed, to return to Panama as ambassador to build on this partnership, especially now at this profoundly promising moment in Panama's history.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for granting me the honor of appearing before you, and I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.

The prepared statement of Ms. Stephenson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BARBARA J. STEPHENSON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

It is a great honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the next American Ambassador to Panama. Mr. Chairman, throughout my career, I have appreciated the constructive role you have played in achieving our foreign policy goal—first as a young officer in Central America and later as Consul General to Belfast—and I look forward to working with you and others members of this committee and indeed with Congress more generally if I am confirmed as Ambassador to Panama.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize my husband, Matthew Furbush. Matt served as our community liaison officer during our first Foreign Service assignment—in Panama—over 20 years ago when we were newlywed, and he has served with me at every overseas post since then—six so far. Our daughter Claire, who has also earned her Foreign Service stripes—six schools on four continents by 9th grade—hopes to visit us in Panama when she is not studying at the University of Virginia. Our son Brewster, who opted to go to elementary school today, hopes to earn some more Foreign Service stripes of his own by joining us in Panama.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will embark on my fourth tour in the region. In addition to Panama, I served in El Salvador during the final years of the civil war there and more recently in Curacao as our Consul General, heading a robust interagency counternarcotics effort, partly in support of Plan Colombia. As I prepare to

return to the region, I am struck by the dramatic, positive changes that have taken place over the years. Instead of wrestling with how to get military dictatorships to give way to democratic government, with the ravages of war, with devastating human rights abuses, we talk instead today about free trade agreements, about ensuring that the fruits of an expanding economy are shared by all citizens, about strengthening institutions vital to democracy, about bolstering our partnership to tackle hemispheric and indeed global problems together.

I look forward, if confirmed, to drawing on the deep well of support for the United States—over 80 percent of Panamanians have a favorable image of us—to pursue this positive agenda. Approval ratings this high are one of the most precious gifts any diplomat can be given. They mean that our voice counts and that Panamanians who share our enthusiasm for pursuing this positive agenda—from President Torrijos to civic action groups—welcome us as partners.

But the Trade Promotion Agreement, if approved by Congress, would also be a very powerful tool. Beyond the TPA's trade benefits for both countries, the agreement directly supports our broader goals for Panama—such as encouraging transparency, and seeking to ensure that all citizens, including the nearly 40 percent who continue to struggle in poverty, benefit from Panama's impressive economic growth and maturing democratic institutions.

As much as some things have changed beyond recognition, other things have remained constant—such as an ambassador's fundamental obligation to look out for fellow Americans abroad. If confirmed, I assure you that protecting American citizens will be a top priority of my embassy. With over 25,000 Americans now living in Panama, this is a growing part of the embassy's work, and a task I have always taken very seriously.

Of course, geography remains destiny for Panama. As a vital crossroads for the movement of people, goods, and ideas, Panama is a "third border" for the United States. Given that two-thirds of the 14,000 ships that transit the Panama Canal each year are bound for or coming from United States ports, I recognize that protecting the canal and Panama's core infrastructure is critical to the homeland security of the United States. I would want to underscore here that the Panama Canal Authority, which has been in charge of the canal since the handover at the end of 1999, has done an impressive job of running it, and we are very pleased to see that United States firms are getting a fair shot at work on the ambitious multibillion dollar canal expansion project.

Our shared history has allowed us to forge an effective and enduring partnership to increase the benefits of Panama's unique geography while countering the threats that flow from it. If confirmed, I look forward to leading a strong interagency effort to protect our homeland by helping Panama in its efforts to push back against drug traffickers and other criminals who would exploit Panama's growing transportation hub for illegal ends. Close cooperation with Panama in law enforcement and security has already yielded many successes, including increased narcotics seizures, a more effective police force, and enhanced ability to combat money laundering. The Merida Initiative, if approved by Congress, would add considerably to our efforts both in Panama and the region.

As Panama's democratic institutions mature—and I look forward to the 2009 Presidential elections, when Panamanians will once again go to the polls to bring about a democratic transfer of power—and the country enjoys enviable economic growth—more than 11 percent last year—we recognize its progress and bright prospects for the future by thinking and speaking of Panama increasingly as a partner in the region. We are pleased to see Panama taking a leadership role, not only regionally (such as last summer, when Panama effectively hosted the OAS General Assembly) but also globally, as exemplified by Panama's current work as a member of the U.N. Security Council. It would be my great honor, if confirmed, to return to Panama as ambassador to build on this partnership, particularly now, at this profoundly promising moment in Panama's history.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for granting me the honor of appearing before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you very, very much. And we thank you, as well as the previous nominees, for your wonderful service to the country—and that of your family. We don't often recognize the family's contribution but thank you immensely for that great work.

Ms. STEPHENSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Well, since we'll stay in the region, here, we'll go north in a minute Mr. Speck, but if you don't mind I'll turn to a fellow New Englander.

And I've got to tell you one quick story, Mr. Cianchette. You'll know the individual, I think he's a majority leader in the State Senate in Maine—Brennan, is that his last name? Or was the President Pro Tem, I forget what office he holds——

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Assistant leader.

Senator DODD. Assistant leader. I'll just tell you a wonderful story—he introduced me back a number of months ago in an event in Maine, and he told me a wonderful story—his grandmother is from a little island off of the West Coast of Ireland, which just so happens, about 15 years ago, I bought a little house on this island off the West coast—about 20 people live on the island. And Senator Brennan went back to see the site where his grandmother had left in 1911, and there's one individual on the island, Paddy Folan, who's 94 years old, born on the island, and a great character. And he showed Mr. Brennan, Senator Brennan and his family, around the island where I have this little cottage, and he turned to Senator Brennan and he said, "And what do you do in the United States?" and Mr. Brennan said, "Well, I'm a Senator." And Paddy Folan said, "Wow," he said, "the island's overloaded with them." [Laughter.]

So, I couldn't resist when I saw you're from Maine.

Mr. CIANCHETTE. I'll be sure to tell him that you——

Senator DODD. Please do.

Mr. CIANCHETTE [continuing]. Recanted that story this afternoon.

STATEMENT OF PETER E. CIANCHETTE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Senator Dodd, Senator Menendez, other members of the committee thank you for granting me this opportunity to appear before this august body. I am honored and I'm humbled to be here as President Bush's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Costa Rica. I'm grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for their confidence and their trust in sending my name to the Senate for your consideration.

I'm further humbled by the comments during the introductory remarks by your colleagues and my beloved Senators, Senators Snowe and Collins. I agree with you that they set the bar fairly high for me in their introductory remarks, and I will always do my best never to disappoint them, nor this institution.

With the committee's indulgence I, too, would like to introduce my family. I have with me my wife of nearly 22 years, Carolyn. We have our children, Evan, who is 16, our daughter, Maria, who is 14. My family is very excited about the prospect of living and serving in Costa Rica along with me, and they've been very supportive as we've contemplated this major transition.

I'd also like to introduce my parents, Bud and Priscilla Cianchette, and they probably prefer I don't give their ages, as well as my brother, Earl, and my nephew, Dave Toomey.

Would you all——

Senator DODD. We've got the whole gang here, why don't you—

Mr. CIANCHETTE. They're all right here.

Senator DODD. All right here—why don't you all raise your hands so we can see which of you—there you go, all right, right in the front row. Welcome, all of you. Nice to have you with us.

Mr. CIANCHETTE. I might add that my nephew, Dave Toomey, works over at the EPA and he's taking the afternoon off to be here. So, I'm grateful for that. I may have to slip him a few bucks to make up for his lost compensation.

Mr. Chairman, I'm truly honored by this potential opportunity to serve in Costa Rica, and if I'm confirmed, I believe my extensive business and public service experience will help me strengthen our relationship with this important regional ally.

My service in the Maine State legislature gave me valuable experience that I'm confident will be useful if I am confirmed. Legislative work, as you know, requires the ability to demonstrate leadership and build consensus. An effective legislator listens to the citizens he serves, responds to their concerns, as well as those of his colleagues and the other stakeholders, in any particular policy initiative.

Everything I've learned suggests that an effective ambassador must lead the embassy, staff, and country, but build consensus as a team player within the interagency community, so that all U.S. equities are well-represented.

In business, as in public service and diplomacy, the ability to connect with people is essential. My experience as an executive with a Spanish-owned manufacturing company has prepared me well to take advantage of the opportunities presented by working in a different cultural context. Indeed, decades of work with people at all levels in business, public service, and civic organizations, have taught me that one sure way to connect with someone is to tap into their aspirations.

And Costa Rica is a nation of great aspirations. With its rich traditional of individualism and democracy, this staunch U.S. ally is a model for other countries in the region, in several respects.

A bastion of stability in an often troubled region, Costa Rica abolished its military in 1948 to channel investments into social services such as health care and education. Costa Rica has progressively preserved its abundant national resources. Last year, the poverty rate fell to a 30-year low, a historic achievement.

However, at this critical moment, Costa Rica faces new challenges. Costa Rica, the United States and other countries in the region face shared security threats from human and drug traffickers, terrorists, and other criminals.

In 2006, a greater amount of illicit narcotics was interdicted in Costa Rica than any other country in Central America with the exception of Panama. Costa Rica is grappling with domestic crime on an unprecedented scale.

Fortunately, we have a willing partner in the Arias administration that seeks for Costa Rica to play an important and pivotal role in the integrated regional response to these threats. If the President's Merida Initiative is approved, Costa Rica's law enforcement personnel would receive training and equipment to improve their ability to disrupt drug traffic, and to combat crime.

Security concerns already affect hundreds of thousands of United States citizens who visit and reside in Costa Rica each year. If con-

firmed, I would have no greater priority than protecting American citizens. Having traveled and conducted business abroad, I understand what a tremendous resource the U.S. Embassy can be, whether it's for replacing a lost or stolen passport, or communicating lifesaving information during a natural disaster.

From among other issues, if I'm confirmed, I would do my utmost to help Costa Rica become a full partner in the Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement. The United States has a vibrant trade relationship with Costa Rica that is likely to make the Costa Ricans the biggest beneficiary of the free trade in this region, once this agreement is fully implemented.

From 2005 to 2006, trade between Costa Rica and the United States rose by almost 14 percent. Having long enjoyed access to our markets through the Caribbean Basin Initiative, Costa Rica is now ready for CAFTA. President Arias' leadership on this issue has been impressive, and if confirmed, I will use my professional experience to foster stronger trade, tourism, and investment ties between our two nations.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Menendez, members of the committee, I truly appreciate the opportunity to be before you today, and I would be grateful for your support in this nomination process.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cianchette follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PETER E. CIANCHETTE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for granting me the opportunity to appear before this august body.

I am honored and humbled to be here as President Bush's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Costa Rica. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Rice for their confidence and trust in sending my name to the Senate for your consideration.

With the committee's indulgence, I would like to introduce my wife of nearly 22 years, Carolyn, who is here with me today, along with my son, Evan, and my daughter, Maria. My family is excited about the prospect of serving in Costa Rica and has been extremely supportive when contemplating the possibility of this major transition. Also with us today are my parents, Bud and Priscilla Cianchette.

Mr. Chairman, I am truly honored by this potential opportunity to serve in Costa Rica. If confirmed, I believe my extensive public service and business experience would help me to strengthen our relationship with this important regional ally.

My service in the Maine state legislature gave me valuable experience that I believe will be useful if I am confirmed. Legislative work requires the ability to demonstrate leadership and build consensus. An effective legislator listens to the citizens he serves and responds to their concerns, as well as those of colleagues and the many other stakeholders in any particular policy. Everything I've learned suggests that an effective ambassador must lead the embassy staff in the country, but build consensus as a team player within the interagency community so that all U.S. equities are represented.

In business, as in public service and diplomacy, the ability to connect with people is essential. My experience as an executive with a Spanish-owned manufacturing company has prepared me well to take advantage of the opportunities presented by working in a different cultural context. Indeed, decades of work with people at all different levels in business, public service, and civic organizations have taught me that the one sure way to connect with someone is to tap into aspirations.

And Costa Rica is a nation of great aspirations. With its rich tradition of individualism and democracy, this staunch U.S. ally is a model for other countries in the region in several respects. A bastion of stability in an often-troubled region, Costa Rica abolished its military in 1948 to channel investment into social services such as healthcare and education. Costa Rica has progressively preserved its abundant natural resources. Last year, the poverty rate fell to a 30-year low, a historic achievement. However, at this critical juncture Costa Rica faces new challenges.

Costa Rica, the United States, and other countries in the region face shared security threats from human and drug traffickers, terrorists, and other criminals. In 2006, a greater amount of illicit narcotics was interdicted in Costa Rica than any other country in Central America except Panama. Costa Rica is grappling with domestic crime on an unprecedented scale. Fortunately, we have a willing partner in the Arias administration that seeks for Costa Rica to play a pivotal role in an integrated regional response to these threats. If the President's Merida Initiative is approved, Costa Rica's law enforcement personnel will receive training and equipment to improve their ability to interdict drug traffic and combat crime.

Security concerns already affect the hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens who visit and reside in Costa Rica each year. If confirmed, I would have no greater priority than protecting American citizens. Having traveled and conducted business abroad, I understand what a tremendous resource a U.S. embassy can be, whether for replacing a lost passport or communicating lifesaving information during a natural disaster.

From among other issues, if confirmed, I would do my utmost to help Costa Rica become a full partner of the Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA–DR). The United States has a vibrant trade relationship with Costa Rica that is likely to make Costa Ricans the biggest beneficiaries of free trade in the region once the agreement is fully implemented. From 2005 to 2006, trade between Costa Rica and the United States rose by almost 14 percent. Having long enjoyed access to our market through the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), Costa Rica is now ready for CAFTA–DR.

President Arias' leadership on this issue has been impressive. If confirmed, I will use my professional experience to foster stronger trade, tourism, and investment ties between our two nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, for the privilege of appearing before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, we appreciate that.

Mr. Speck, thank you. Thank you for joining us.

STATEMENT OF SAMUEL W. SPECK, NOMINEE TO BE COMMISSIONER ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION, UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Mr. SPECK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. I'm honored to also have the opportunity to appear before you, and grateful for the trust that the President placed in me by nominating me to serve on the International Joint Commission.

I have a special request, however, for this committee, and that is, I didn't have an appreciation that families were also invited, and I would greatly appreciate that my wife does not learn of that opportunity, as well as the rest of the family. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. You've got some diplomatic work to do. [Laughter.]

Mr. SPECK. Yes.

The United States and Canada share a stewardship over the largest concentration of fresh surface water on this planet. Americans and Canadians share a vital interest in the effective management of our shared water resources at the border. And despite some occasional, localized disputes, the degree of cooperation between the United States and Canada in managing transboundary environmental concerns, remains unprecedented in the world.

If confirmed, I would bring to the position of IJC Commissioner significant—and I believe—successful experience in State and Federal Government, and in higher education, and a strong background in resolving boundary water issues.

My educational/professional background includes—as Senator Voinovich mentioned—Master's and Doctorate degrees in govern-

ment, extensive college teaching, 13 years of experience as a State Representative and as a Senator in the Ohio legislature, where I specialized in natural resources issues, including chairing the Senator Natural Resources Committee, and appointment as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's associate Director for State and Local Programs and Support, which included responsibility for some natural resources issues like flood plain management and preparation for dealing with natural resources disasters.

I also served as the President of Muskingum College for some 11 years, and of course that was John Glenn's alma mater, so you know it had to be a good institution.

Most recently, I served as Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and at present, am involved in natural resources consulting, and on a number of boards, including Ohio State Nature Conservancy board, and Audubon board, and on International Joint Commission's International Upper Great Lakes Studies Public Information Advisory Committee—or group, I should say—known as a PIAG.

During my tenure as Director of Ohio's Department of Natural Resources, I was an active member and chair of the Lake Erie Commission, the Great Lakes Commission, which also included representatives of the Great Lakes Provinces—essentially Quebec and Ontario—the Ohio Water Resource Council.

In 2004, I was one of three State officials in the United States to receive the National Governor's Association's Annual Award for distinguished service in State government, and I think that was related primarily to my work in water resources issues, including perhaps my most important experience as it relates to the position before you, in that I served over 4 years as chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers Water Management Working Group, which developed the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement.

And, in part these were stimulated by the encouragement Congress gave in WERTA, and particularly, WERTA 2000, in urging the States to work together, and the Canadian Provinces alike, to try to develop a more effective management of the waters of the Great Lakes to protect that resource for the future. And during our development of those agreements, we received helpful guidance from the International Joint Commission.

In December of 2005, the Ten-Party Agreement was signed by the Great Lakes governors and premiers, and the compact was endorsed by the governors and sent on to the State legislatures. The compact and agreement represent an unprecedented commitment to preserve and protect the world's largest single source of fresh water.

And I'm pleased to report to you, that as of March 2008, four of the State legislatures have enacted the compact. The legislation is pending in the other four, three of which have passed it in one of the two houses in their respective States. So, I hope that the compact is something that will soon be ready to be presented to Congress for its consent.

The commission is uniquely positioned to assist the United States with cooperatively addressing a number of continuing and

emerging challenges that exist along the boundary, including responding to the change in demographics and water use and water levels and supply conditions along the border, reducing the threats to human and ecosystem health from toxic substances, encouraging the development of watershed boards that will build cooperative relationships among local stakeholders, like the one recently developed, indeed the first, up in the St. Croix area, between the State of Maine and Canada.

With that, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I would be glad to answer any questions you might have, either now or in writing.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Speck follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAMUEL W. SPECK, NOMINEE TO BE A COMMISSIONER ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION, UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today and grateful for the trust placed in me by the President in nominating me to serve on the International Joint Commission.

The United States and Canada share stewardship over the largest concentration of fresh surface water on the planet. Americans and Canadians share a vital interest in the effective management of our shared water resources at the border. Despite occasional localized disputes, the degree of cooperation between the United States and Canada in managing transboundary environmental concerns remains unprecedented in the world. For almost 100 years, the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 has guided our two countries in developing shared water resources for domestic supply, navigation, hydroelectric power, and irrigation in an amicable and mutually beneficial manner. It also provides a framework for preventing and resolving disputes over water quantity and quality issues. The International Joint Commission (IJC) plays a pivotal role in giving impartial science-based advice to assist our countries in attaining the goals of the Treaty.

If confirmed, I would bring to the position of IJC commissioner significant and successful leadership experience in State and Federal Government and higher education and a strong background in resolving boundary waters issues. My educational and professional background includes earned masters and doctoral degrees in government (Harvard University), extensive college teaching, 13 years of service as an Ohio State representative and Senator where I specialized in natural resources issues, appointment as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Associate Director for State and Local Programs and Support (l983–1986), and President of Muskingum College (l987–1999) during which time the college cut tuition by $4,000. Most recently I served as Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (1999–2007). At present, I am involved in natural resources consulting and serving on a number of nonprofit boards (including the Ohio Nature Conservancy and Audubon boards) and on the International Joint Commission's International Upper Great Lakes Study's Public Information Advisory Group (PIAG).

During my tenure as Ohio's Director of Natural Resources, I served on the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (member and chair), Great Lakes Commission (member and chair), and Ohio Water Resources Council (member and chair). In 2004, I was one of three state officials in the United States to receive the National Governors Association's annual award for Distinguished Service in State Government.

Perhaps most significant, I served for over 4 years as the chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers Water Management Working Group which developed the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. In December 2005, the agreement was signed by Great Lakes Governors and Premiers and the compact was endorsed by Great Lakes Governors. The compact and agreement represent an unprecedented commitment to preserve and protect the world's largest single source of fresh water. I am happy to report that as of March 2008, four of the eight Great Lakes States have enacted the compact and legislative action is pending in four others. I hope that the compact will soon be ready to be presented to Congress for its consent.

The International Joint Commission has had a long history of carrying out the scientific work and consultations that provided the basis for approving the development of hydroelectric power along the border and providing advice to governments

in defining transboundary water quality objectives and managing shared water resources.

In addition, the commission is uniquely positioned to assist the United States with cooperatively addressing a number of emerging challenges that exist along the boundary. These include:

- Responding to changing demographics, water use, and water levels and supply conditions on the border;
- Reducing the threats to human and ecosystem health from toxic substances; and
- Encouraging development of watershed boards that will build cooperative relationships among local stakeholders on both sides of the border and foster a sense of shared responsibility for the health of the watershed.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward continuing communication with appropriate executive branch agencies and with the Congress to help maintain the strong and productive relationship with Canada that is so important to our country and the shared water resources upon we depend.

I look forward to answering any questions that you might have for me.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you very, very much. I appreciate that.

We've been joined by Senator Feingold, from Wisconsin, thank you Senator for being with us.

I'll just ask a couple of questions of you, and then I'll quickly turn to my colleagues and have them raise any other issues that they're interested in.

Ms. Stephenson, let me ask you about the plans on the Panama Canal. This was a remarkable event, I happened to be there in nineteen—I'm trying to think what year it was, now, we celebrated—I think it was 1979, and then 1989, it was the 10th anniversary that I went down to celebrate that anniversary, and I was very impressed at how things were working.

At that time, obviously, a very controversial issue, and it was before I arrived in the Senate, but that was about as heated a debate in the country and where you stood—and people like Howard Baker, Paul Sarbanes, who played a critical role in that issue—and a lot of people, Barry Goldwater, people like John Wayne, I recall, people have forgotten some of the people who were heroic in that effort, and the importance of that conclusion.

But I know there's some talk about plans for expanding the canal, and the like. Do you want to share with us what you know about that?

Ms. STEPHENSON. Yes, sir. It's good to have someone who remembers just how controversial that was. Because I certainly—when I arrived in Panama—the feelings about that were still very raw and bubbling near the surface, I mean certainly with, here on the Senate.

And I think both sides feel really good about the way that it's unfolded. The handover happened in 1999, so the Panama Canal Authority runs the canal. Revenues are up, accidents in canal waters are down, transit times have been shortened—so really, by every measure, the canal is being run efficiently and effectively, and it's a source of pride for Panamanians, and it's an excellent source of transit for us.

Panamanians had a referendum in 2007, and decided yes, indeed, they would expand the canal. So, it would add a third set of locks, and the work will go on for about the next 10 years. The budget right now is about $5 billion—you will remember that are

ships that are actually built called Panamax which are, you know, big boxy ships that just slide through those locks. The third set of locks would be bigger, so that you could actually have, not only more traffic going through, but you could take through ships that are bigger than those specifications.

So, it's broken into a number of phases, some U.S. companies have already won portions of it, CH2M Hill won the project management contract, an American law firm won the legal advice contract, and there's a design-build contract that's going out also—some U.S. companies are part of some of the bids that are there for that.

I was reading a piece in the Spanish press, the Spanish-language press, boning up on my Spanish, and see that the Canal Expansion Project won a big award in Verona, Italy, for sort of the best civil engineering going forth this year, so it's a source of real pride.

And I think the concerns we've had that were very present in the 1977 debate about whether our interests could be preserved if we handed it over to Panama, I think it's another thing to look back on with a real sense of pride, is that our ships still transit it, we're still by far the biggest user. But it runs very well, and it's a source of great pride for Panama, too.

So, I think it's one of those where we can all look back on it, and feel very good about having done the right thing.

Senator DODD. Yeah. It's a remarkable history.

I was in London about a month ago, and I love maps. I went to an old map store and I found an old map, an 1850 map of Panama, that identified the potential sources of a canal, drawn onto the map, including the one that's the Panama Canal, but also the San Juan River going to Lake Managua——

Ms. STEPHENSON. Right, remember?

Senator DODD [continuing]. Which was the earlier idea that the Vanderbilts were promoting at that time.

Ms. STEPHENSON. Right.

Senator DODD. So, it's a wonderful little piece of history to know that 50 years before any of this started, there were people already moving in that direction.

On Costa Rica, you know, and I was thinking, in a way, you've got Torrijos in Panama, you've got Oscar Arias in Costa Rica, you've got Dan Ortega in Nicaragua——

[Laughter.]

Senator DODD [continuing]. You've got the Bushes in the White House——

[Laughter.]

Senator DODD. I mean, I'll tell you, sort of, nothing's changed a lot in terms of names around the region.

Oscar Arias is someone that all of us have worked with over the years in various points, and explain a little bit about how this is working you're optimistic in your statement about how the CAFTA agreement is working in Costa Rica. It was a major election item for Oscar Arias in his campaign, he survived, and won the election. And it's the process of ratifying and implementing CAFTA, but it's clear the public remains divided on this issue, still, I think is reports say that we get out of Costa Rica. But you seem to indicate otherwise. It is divided, or not? How is this going?

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Well, Senator, certainly that was a very close election. As you most likely well know, there was a public referendum, a country-wide referendum on CAFTA. It was ratified, it was narrowly passed, but yet now enjoys a greater level of support than when it did, when it went out for that referendum in last fall, in October of 2007.

I think at this—there's been much discussion around the country, certainly a referendum of that nature causes lots of people to be educated, and discussion, and I really believe that from everything that I've learned, and the intense research I've been doing the last couple of months, that Costa Ricans understand, by and large, that they've been given a unique opportunity to partner with other allies, or with other countries in the region, and most importantly with the United States and this is—truly presents them with a unique opportunity.

So, I believe that the support for this agreement has increased, and certainly the President, President Arias, has been steadfast in his support, and his belief that it is in the best interest of his country. And he's continued to work with the assembly, they've made great progress, as you may know, they did receive an extension to enter into the agreement fully—had the ratification, but now it's required that they have a number of modifications to their laws and regulations to fully implement.

They're making very good progress on that. I believe that that will happen, and if I am confirmed, and fortunate enough to serve there, I will continue to work with the President and other stakeholders to make certain that they understand that this is a last, best chance, if you will, for them to join this unique opportunity, and I believe they will, and I will lend whatever support I can to that.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you very, very much.

I've got a couple of questions for you, Mr. Speck, but I want to respect my colleagues' presence here and their time constraints, and I know Senator Feingold probably has some strong questions.

But I understand, Bob, you've got about 10 minutes before you've got to be at another meeting, if you have any questions here, and then we'll jump to Russ.

I'm going to step out for one second, just excuse me, I'll be in the back room, here, so Russ, take over.

Senator FEINGOLD [presiding]. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I won't ask for unanimous consent for anything while you're gone. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. Again, congratulations to all of you on your nominations, and Mr. Speck, I won't say anything to your wife, but I'm not sure today's proceedings are on C-Span or not, and hopefully she's not watching if that's the case, so——

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. So, let me—Mr. Cianchette, I appreciated our two colleagues introduction of you, and your own statement, and you come from a bit of a different background than some of the other nominees, so you'll—I hope you'll understand the nature of my questions, in that respect.

Have you traveled to Costa Rica?

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Sir, I have not, to date.

Senator MENENDEZ. How—what is your depth of your command of Spanish—I know you said you worked with a Spanish-related company—what is the depth of your command of Spanish?

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Well, during the mid-1980s, I worked for a company based from Madrid, Spain, and I traveled often to board meetings, and conduct—other opportunities to conduct business with them—and tour around Spain. And during that time, I completed a total immersion course in Spanish, and became—what I felt was—very comfortable with business and social discussions, and able to communicate, both verbally and to understand what's being discussed in Spanish.

I will admit, sir, that my—I haven't had many opportunities to work with my language in the last—in the Spanish language—in the last years, and I have engaged actively with the FSI in distance-learning programs and others, I will avail myself to boost my knowledge of the language and to regain much of the ability that I had during the time when I worked for this international company.

Senator MENENDEZ. You know, an ambassador has a lot of skill sets that are involved here. Certainly, language is always very helpful, customs—an understanding of customs—a sense of the politics of the country, a sense of strategy within the country. I—could you give me a sense of the experiences that you've had, how you believe that some of those skill sets that you've had—will help you in this regard?

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Sir, thank you for your question, and I understand the nature of this. I will address that in a number of different ways.

One, is to say very clearly that since receiving the nomination, and having it been sent forth to you all for consideration, I have devoted my time to understanding Costa Rica, its history, its culture, and its current issues, and sort of political climate, as well as other geo-political issues. So, I have spent a great deal of time, so that I can be fully learned about those issues.

I have sought the counsel of the three most recent ambassadors to Costa Rica. One happens to be Chairman Dodd's brother, who I had the great opportunity to make his acquaintance last week, and I have sought their counsel from each of those.

So that's really what I've done to fully immerse myself, and understand the issues that would confront me if I am confirmed.

Again, I would underscore my work with an international company based in Madrid, Spain, in other years where I—in order to really, fully understand their issues and their philosophy, as we were business associates—I really needed to understand their cultural, things in their cultural context, and pride myself on the ability to have done that in the past, so that I could be fully engaged in a productive way with them.

Senator MENENDEZ. One last question, on the question of drug interdiction in Costa Rica—it's going to be a significant part of our efforts, here—I heard what you said about Merida, which all of you have said, to the extent that those previous panelists were involved, as well. But, what do you believe is the extent of the United States cooperation with Costa Rica in terms of the whole narcotics

interdiction effort? And what role do you see yourself playing if you were to be ultimately confirmed?

Mr. CIANCHETTE. Sir, I think we can point to a great deal of success that the United States and Costa Rica has had recently, working collaboratively. There was a bilateral maritime agreement that's been in force and been in place, that gave us great cooperation, with great success in interdicting drugs. Again, as we've said, we've had more cocaine seized in Costa Rica—or they have had more cocaine seized in Costa Rica—than anywhere else in the region, with the exception of Panama.

Their—our opportunities to work with their law enforcement organizations, their security personnel, their Coast Guard, if you will, those institutions and those organizations to make sure they are highly effective, I believe, has been successful.

Furthermore, I believe that the willingness that we have from the Costa Rican—the interest in our support, in our aid, in our assistance—in training their personnel and building their capacity is a very positive sign. And that we've been cooperating with them, and that they're a willing partner, we can contribute—excuse me, we can build stronger capacity—and that we will continue to have successes, and that's why the initiatives, such as the Merida Initiative—and I understand you are all still contemplating that—but the components, or similar components, that underlie that program, I think can help us continue to have those types of successes so that we can disrupt the flow of drugs coming into Costa Rica, and ultimately, hopefully, prevent them from also coming into the United States.

Senator MENENDEZ. All right.

Finally, Ms. Stephenson, let me ask you, we have put nearly $4 million toward Panama in the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Assistance component for Panama. I wonder if you have a view as to whether or not the way we presently have it structured—do you think that is the best way we can engage with Panama?

And second, can you give me a sense of what you think the banking situation is in Panama as it relates to money laundering?

Ms. STEPHENSON. Yes, Senator Menendez, certainly I'll have a much better feel once I'm actually, if I'm confirmed, I'm in Panama, but I have had extensive consultations with the Department of Justice, and the various components of the law enforcement team leading up to this, and I'm pretty happy with this.

There are things like the vetted units, are a key component, the fingerprint system has been flagged for me by senior Justice officials as kind of if there's, "the one thing I could do, this is what I would do." So, even in the Pillar 1 part, which is the part that's more hard-core counternarcotics, even in there, I think it's, we've placed it on the things that really do pay the big dividends.

And the other component of it is an information sharing capability, so I think that that's—I think it's quite good.

I really agree with what you say about the importance of a holistic approach and of the institution-building. It's slow work, it's hard for us to measure institution-building, you know, on a year-by-year basis and so I think that that sometimes leads us to question whether it's working, when you look back you see that it did.

The other thing, though, about institution-building is sometimes it's not as expensive as some of the other things. And so, even though it's a core part of it, measuring it by the dollars that go into it is only one of the indicators of its relative importance. And I welcome you insisting that we have a holistic approach, and that we build the institutions, but I do flag that the kind of institution-building you're doing—training just doesn't cost as much as equipment does, it's just less expensive.

I'm happy with this, I have to say, if I had the chance to write it, it wouldn't look very different than this. I am happy that the amounts we've requested for 2009 are considerably greater. My experience over the years has been that when you go in that first year, you've got the political will—the Central Americans have asked for help in this. You go in, your initial aid money really does allow you to scope the problem, and explore the system and see where the weaknesses are, and then it allows you to spend larger amounts of money in the following years in a much more targeted and effective way.

So, I have to say, I'm very pleased with this, and I'm pleased with the political will the Central Americans showed. I'm also really pleased with the amount of inter-agency cooperation that has been generated in Washington, in the effort to put this together. Because when we pull together with the strategy, we get much better results than when we work competitively.

Senator MENENDEZ. And money laundering?

Ms. STEPHENSON. Money laundering—it's a sophisticated financial system. You know, it's situated right there where the drugs are flowing up, and Colombia is right below it. I think that unmistakably there is—there is some black market peso exchange activity that is going on there. We work closely with the Panamanians, like with the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, to strengthen the systems that fight it, but it is something that I want to get—I want to work on when I'm down there. It was a huge problem when I was there 20 years ago. I asked this with—at every level of my consultations, and to be honest, I got varying views. With some agencies feeling like it was really looking awfully good, and others worried that perhaps it wasn't as good as it looked.

So, I want to get a good assessment of just what's going on, and where we can strengthen the systems to discourage it. But Panama is going to be a vulnerability, because of its geography, and because of a very robust banking sector.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I appreciate you recognizing that, I thank my colleague from Wisconsin.

Ms. STEPHENSON. Thank you, sir.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

And I thank the chairman and the ranking member for holding this hearing, I congratulate all of you on your nominations. I'd like to first make some brief remarks and then I do have a few specific questions for Samuel Speck.

Mr. Speck is nominated to be a Commissioner representing the United States on the International Joint Commission. The IJC plays an important role in the management of the Great Lakes and preventing water disputes between Canada and the United States.

Every year I hold town meetings or listening sessions in each of Wisconsin's counties, and last year I heard from many concerned Wisconsinites about the near-record low lake levels in both Lake Superior and Michigan. As anyone who has ever visited the Badger State knows, those lakes are near and dear to all Wisconsinites. Studies of water levels in the Great Lakes suggest that both man-made changes, and abnormal weather conditions may be contributing to the falling levels.

In September, I was joined by several other Great Lakes Senators in urging the IJC to expedite both its study of potential erosion in the St. Claire River, and its updating of the regulatory plan for Lake Superior's water level and its outflow. I greatly appreciate the IJC's attention to this request, and its announcement last October that part of the study—which is looking into the St. Claire River—would be expedited by a full year.

The IJC's International Upper Great Lakes Study is also looking at updating its 1979 plan for Lake Superior, to determine if its regulation of the lake's outflows can be improved to take into consideration changing interests, and the impact of climate change and other factors on Great Lakes water levels.

The Great Lakes undoubtedly require our continued commitment if they are to remain a vibrant economic and environmental resource for Wisconsin, the Mid-West and the entire nation.

Mr. Speck, I thank you for joining us today, and again, I congratulate you on your nomination. Given your natural resources background, I'm confident you have a strong grasp of the importance of the Great Lakes ecosystem. I know you've been involved in the International Upper Great Lakes Study, and to your knowledge, let me ask you, is the IJC still on schedule, and will you—as a commissioner—commit to meeting the expedited February 2009 deadline for the St. Claire River Study?

Mr. SPECK. I share your concern, and as I think is reflected on my agreeing to serve on that PIAG. To the best of my knowledge, it is on course, it is being given priority, as it was reprioritized.

The issues that you mentioned are proving to be very complex issues, as you look at what has been causing the drop in the waters of both Lake Ontario—I don't mean Lake Ontario, that's the lower Great Lakes study—in Huron and Michigan. And we want to make certain that we bring—as one of the main contributions of the IJC—the best science for making decisions, and have our arms around all of the factors that may have been causing that drop, which perhaps was masked by that higher water period a few years ago, and we didn't recognize it maybe as quickly as it should have been recognized.

But yes, we—that's critical, it has been reprioritized, and we are moving ahead—indeed we are holding public hearings throughout the area, we're commencing some at the end of this month.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, will you commit to meeting the expedited February 2009 deadline?

Mr. SPECK. Certainly, we'll make every effort to do that.

Senator FEINGOLD. I hope so. Is the IJC planning to make recommendations to the U.S. Congress about necessary actions, such as potentially having the Corps of Engineers finish its environ-

mental mitigation work from several decades ago on the St. Claire River?

Mr. SPECK. I would, you know, Senator Feingold, and members of the committee, the IJC is sort of a strange organization, in that it is binational and the role of the IJC is to make recommendations to the Federal Government and the same goes with Canada. And we would certainly be coming back to do that, because it will be—Congress will likely have a critical role in the future there.

Senator FEINGOLD. We look forward to getting some of those recommendations. There are some very serious concerns, as you're aware, and I hope the IJC continues to work with and listen to all of the stakeholders, and I look forward to the final results.

In regard to the second part of the IJC study assessing low lake levels, can you tell me when the IJC intends to complete its recommendations for updating Lake Superior's regulatory plan—is this still expected to take 5 years?

Mr. SPECK. At this point, that's the best of my information, but I have no, you know, I can't tell you if there's any change afoot on that, but I certain can get back to you that, and to the committee on that.

Senator FEINGOLD. Good.

Do you personally think, sir, that we can maintain Great Lakes water quality protection if discharges of pollution are no longer regulated at the source, as required by the Clean Water Act of 1972?

Mr. SPECK. That is a matter of justifiable concern, and we'd want to give attention to that.

Senator FEINGOLD. As you're probably aware, due to recent Supreme Court decisions, currently over 50 percent of the Nation's streams, and millions of acres of wetlands are in jeopardy of losing Clean Water Act protections, which means discharges of pollution into these waters could no longer be regulated. I don't see how the United States can fulfill its obligations under the United States-Canada Water Quality Agreement, which I understand the IJC wants to update—if these waters do not remain protected.

The agreement and the Clean Water Act share the same goal of reducing the discharge of pollutants into the Great Lakes system, in an effort to restore or maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. I hope that as commissioner, you'll support my efforts, and those of Chairmen Oberstar, Dingell, and Ehlers, to restore the Clean Water Restoration Act, to restore the 35-year old protections, and fulfill our obligations under the Water Quality Agreement.

As you know, the Great Lakes supply drinking water to more than 40 million United States and Canadian residents, so a lot is at stake, if you'd like to respond to that.

Mr. SPECK. I am not prepared to make a commitment—I understand the problem, and would certainly be glad to work within the commission to see where it would be appropriate for us to address it, in terms of recommendations that might be made.

As you know, with what you mentioned, in terms of the Great Lakes Protection Act itself, one of the things that the IJC has been recommending is that it be more active in this area. Those recommendations, I think, have been submitted to the respective Fed-

eral Governments. And so, something has been underway in that regard.

Senator FEINGOLD. Good, well, I just wanted to put that issue and legislation on your radar screen, and I wish you well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator.

And I want to thank all three of you, and I wish you well in the coming days. You may have heard what I said to the previous panel. We'll try and move this process along, and any additional questions members have, and I suspect there may be some, we'll try and get them to you very quickly.

For those who are staff, I'd like you to notify your respective members of how important it is to get these questions asked, and then responses to it, and we'll try and see if we can't schedule a mark-up of these nominations.

Congratulations to all three of you. And thank you, again, for being here today.

The committee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:00 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. SHERROD BROWN, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am pleased to offer my strong support for the nomination of my fellow Ohioan, Dr. Samuel W. Speck, Jr., to the International Joint Commission. There are numerous important issues affecting the international boundary waters that separate the United States and Canada, including ballast water and other issues related to the continued presence of invasive species, and ongoing water quality concerns, just to name a few. We must have smart, confident U.S. representation on the commission. Samuel Speck is a perfect fit for this job.

Dr. Speck has a long and distinguished career as a public servant and as an educator, including his longtime service to his alma mater, Muskingum College, as a faculty member and then college President, his work as a State legislator and with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and more recently his tenure as Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. At ODNR, Dr. Speck was greatly involved in improving Lake Erie and championing new protections for the Great lakes, both as ODNR Director and as Chairman of the binational Great Lakes Commission. His knowledge of the Great Lakes—home to ⅕ of the world's fresh water—and familiarity with the numerous issues affecting our shared waterways would be of great benefit on the IJC.

As a former colleague of Dr. Speck's, I can speak to his willingness to bring different sides together, his integrity, and his dedication to the task at hand. He has spent his life committed to educating our children, protecting the environment, and improving our world for future generations. I offer my wholehearted support for the nomination of Dr. Samuel W. Speck, Jr., to the International Joint Commission.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATE OF OHIO,
Columbus, OH, April 15, 2008.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.,
U.S. Senate,Committee on Foreign Relations, Washington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BIDEN: On behalf of the people of the Great State of Ohio, please accept my letter of support for the nomination of Dr. Samuel W. Speck to the position of Commissioner on the part of the United States on the International Joint Commission, United States and Canada. I support this nomination based on Dr. Speck's proven expertise, experience, and leadership in the area of natural resources at both the State and Federal level.

Dr. Speck served as Ohio's director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for 8 years and in this position Dr. Speck was responsible for the management of Ohio's 74 State parks, 20 State forests, and 125 State nature preserves, in addition to numerous other management responsibilities. Dr. Speck chaired the Council of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers Water Management Working Group that led to the development of the Great Lakes Annex Agreement and Compact—an historic and much needed protection for our Great Lakes.

Dr. Speck worked collaboratively and in a bipartisan manner over the years to protect our natural resources and build a consensus around some of the most important issues for the State of Ohio. I am confident that he will continue to offer vision and perspective in this position.

I appreciate the attention your office and your committee have directed to this important appointment. Please be assured that I am available to lend any assistance to the process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kindest Regards,

TED STRICKLAND,
Governor.

RESPONSES OF PETER E. CIANCHETTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. President Arias nearly lost reelection because of his support for CAFTA. Costa Rica is in the process of ratifying and implementing CAFTA but it is clear that the public remains seriously divided regarding this trade agreement. What are some of the key concerns the public has raised on this issue?

Answer. CAFTA was narrowly ratified in a historic public referendum on October 7, 2007, but the Costa Rican public has come to view the agreement more favorably in the ensuing months. Public opinion polls conducted in Costa Rica in January 2008 revealed that two-thirds of Costa Ricans expect CAFTA to benefit the country, and that a strong majority—even among those who voted "no" to the referendum—want CAFTA to be implemented. In addition, President Arias currently enjoys the highest approval rating—64 percent—among Central American leaders.

This shift in public opinion about CAFTA can likely be attributed to three factors. First, in Costa Rica's vibrant, long-standing democracy, the will of the people is paramount. Now that the public has spoken in the referendum, the national debate is largely over. Second, the public, in addition to the political sector, including most of the parties that had opposed CAFTA, is anxious to complete CAFTA in order to focus on other priorities, such as addressing Costa Rica's growing domestic security problems. Third, the public remains confident that the Arias administration is proceeding along the right track.

There is still a vocal, very small minority opposed to CAFTA, but they are out of the political mainstream. This minority argues that CAFTA would weaken the statist model that has historically provided Costa Ricans a generous social welfare safety net, and would jeopardize small farmers, once the backbone of Costa Rica's economy. Environmentalists also fear that the rapid economic development CAFTA is expected to promote will come at the expense of environmental protection.

Question. How is the United States working with President Arias to address these issues?

Answer. The Arias administration believes that the state institutions to be opened by CAFTA (telecommunications and insurance) need reformation in order to provide better service to the people. The Arias administration, with other political parties, is also working on legislation to offset any CAFTA-related impact on small businesses and farmers.

The United States and the other CAFTA signatories agreed to grant Costa Rica sufficient time to implement CAFTA. At Costa Rica's request, all of the CAFTA countries agreed to a one-time entry-into-force extension from March 1, 2008, as required in the agreement, until October 1, 2008.

The United States is also providing $100 million in regional Trade Capacity Building assistance from fiscal year 2005–2007 to improve environmental protection and labor rights protection as CAFTA is implemented. Costa Rica is receiving a share of those funds, and has invested in the strengthening of the capacity of the Ministries of Environment and Energy, and Labor. If confirmed, I will support CAFTA-linked environment and trade capacity building. USAID has funded training and programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and En-

vironmental Protection Agency (EPA) to strengthen Costa Rica's regulatory systems and ultimately increase trade with the United States.

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes. I have read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes. I understand and unreservedly agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 STATE 258893. The more than 3,000 Peace Corps volunteers who have served in Costa Rica since 1963 have advanced United States objectives significantly and contributed to Costa Rica's development through a variety of projects including health, education, environment, agriculture, small business development, and youth development. If confirmed, I will strongly support Peace Corps Volunteers in Costa Rica in their mission to focus on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable populations throughout the country, strengthening agencies and communities to serve these populations.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps' role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. government agencies"?

Answer. I understand that the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy and wholly accept and endorse this separation. I comprehend the Peace Corps' unique role and realize that its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission is not comparable to those of other U.S. government agencies.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. I pledge that, if confirmed, I will exercise my chief of mission authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSES OF PETER E. CIANCHETTE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. Throughout my career and in my public service, I've worked with people at all levels in manufacturing, investment, personnel, public, and other sectors. I have found that the one sure way to connect with someone is to tap into aspirations. I have then sought to use those aspirations to promote an appreciation for individual and human rights, democracy, and decency. As examples, I would cite my support, as a state legislator, for expanding the Maine Human Rights Act to extend protections from discrimination (in employment, housing, credit, etc.) based on sexual orientation. As a legislator and private citizen, I have also broadly encouraged individuals to participate in the democratic process at all levels. Further, I am especially proud of my work with charitable foundations including the Make-A-Wish Foundation, YES! to Youth, and the Greater Portland Big Brothers/Big Sisters. These opportunities have allowed me to witness the impact that the time and attention of concerned community-oriented citizens can have on the scores of children and families served by these programs.

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

Answer. Costa Rica is a stable, long-standing democracy with an admirable history of protecting and defending human rights, domestically and internationally. While there are far fewer in Costa Rica than elsewhere in the region, the most pressing human rights issue in Costa Rica is trafficking in persons. Costa Rica is

a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and to a lesser degree, for labor exploitation. Other urgent human rights concerns the U.S. government has noted in recent years focus on prison overcrowding, a slow and complex legal justice system, and the protection of refugees.

If confirmed, I will make promoting human rights a central issue. I will support use of the ambassador's fund for programs that help resettle refugees. I will encourage Costa Rica to adopt comprehensive legislation to criminalize all forms of human trafficking and to provide greater legal protections and assistance for victims. Through these actions, I hope to promote human rights and democracy through the reduction of trafficking in persons and increasing governability.

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 Costa Rica in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. Embassy San Jose's Mission Strategic Plan notes that the broader challenge is not to make Costa Rica more democratic, but to make it a more effective democracy by increasing the effectiveness of the legislative and judicial systems, a key governability issue. If confirmed, I will work with the Arias administration with the goal of increasing governability through new legislation, improve intragovernment coordination, devote additional resources for prisons, and increase the focus on trafficking in persons issues. Lack of staff resources and funding are the main obstacles to combating trafficking in persons. Prosecutors and the judiciary are woefully understaffed and underfunded, resulting in relatively few prosecutions.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the activities of the United States Embassy-Costa Rica? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. If confirmed as ambassador, I would emphasize the importance of monitoring, promoting, and reporting on human rights and labor rights as a fundamental goal of the U.S. Mission. I would ensure that the embassy cooperates with the Costa Rican Ministry of Labor on child labor prevention and school retention programs. I would ensure that embassy personnel continue to make much-needed judicial and other training available to the Costa Rican public sector through our various assistance programs. The Merida Initiative, if approved, includes funding to improve prison management.

As a businessman who has managed hundreds of employees, I would take a highly personal approach to motivating embassy staff to excel in promoting human rights. As ambassador, I would recognize and reward embassy employees who are proactive in this area by nominating them for Department of State-wide awards as well as recognizing them in the presence of peers to indicate that this issue is a high priority.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Costa Rica who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will regularly meet with major nongovernmental organizations that share our interest in combating sexual exploitation and forced labor. If confirmed, I will also encourage embassy personnel to actively engage with these NGOs and to broaden their social networks to allow the mission to gain a fuller understanding of the conditions that drive these crimes. Through consultation with civil society, we will be better able to generate innovative means of helping Costa Rica to address root causes.

RESPONSES OF HEATHER M. HODGES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Poverty and inequality are enormous problems in Ecuador, particularly among indigenous populations. According to a recent World Bank study, 87 percent of indigenous Ecuadorians live in poverty. What can the United States do to assist Ecuador in reducing poverty and inequality?

Answer. Economic development and poverty reduction are priorities in our relationship with Ecuador. The Andean Trade Promotion Act (ATPA) is an important tool in our continuing efforts to assist the people of Ecuador in creating economic opportunity and alleviating poverty through market-based solutions. Our trade and economic growth assistance to Ecuador focuses on technical assistance, training, fi-

nancial support for free and open markets, competitiveness and poverty reduction. Our programs help farmers increase productivity and product quality, link them to end users, and improve family incomes. We also work with local governments to increase tax collection and improve transparency. Last year, our infrastructure programs financed the construction of 14 bridges, 20 water systems, and 9 sewage systems, which benefited 70,000 of the poorest Ecuadorians.

Question. The Andean Trade Preference Act is an enormously important trade provision for Ecuador and for the Government of Ecuador. ATPA was recently extended by Congress, but is scheduled to expire in the fall. Is it your expectation that the administration will seek an extension beyond this fall? What are the implications of letting ATPA lapse?

Answer. ATPA is a key component of our continuing efforts to assist the people of Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia in combating drug production, creating economic opportunity, and alleviating poverty by using the power of the free sector. This people-to-people program has strengthened economic ties between businesses and workers in Ecuador and the United States, and has helped Ecuador create new, globally competitive industries in such areas as its flower sector. The Government of Ecuador estimates ATPA has generated approximately 350,000 jobs in Ecuador.

ATPA will expire on December 31, 2008. I believe it is premature to speculate what the administration's position will be when Congress must again deliberate extending this important program.

Question. My understanding is that the Andean Parliament is going to convene a regional security conference next month in Quito. Do you believe that these regional efforts can be productive in reducing tensions and fostering greater regional cooperation and integration on a host of issues?

Answer. The Andean Parliament has stated that one of the issues that will be addressed during the May 29–30, 2008 conference will be the tensions between Ecuador and Colombia over Colombia's raid of a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) camp across the Ecuadorian border. The overall purpose of the conference will be to discuss with experts how to avoid such incidents from occurring again.We value our strong relationship with both Colombia and Ecuador and support efforts that reduce tensions between them. However, the countries of the region must also address the underlying cause of this tension, which is rooted in the presence of the FARC in the territory of Colombia and its neighbors and the need for the affected states to work together to combat the threat of the FARC.

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes. I have carefully reviewed this cable.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes. I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 State 258893 regarding Peace Corps-State Department relations.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day to day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy and that the Peace Corps role and its need for separation from the day to day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies?"

Answer. Our mission in Ecuador assiduously respects keeping the Peace Corps removed from any and all policy areas. As an illustration of that principle, the Peace Corps will be the only United States Government element that will not be colocated at the New Embassy Compound when the Embassy in Quito moves this summer.

I understand the need to keep the Peace Corps substantially separate from the day to day conduct of our foreign policy and, if confirmed, will strongly support this policy.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. When I was ambassador in Moldova we had a large and successful Peace Corps program (approximately 115 volunteers). I considered the Peace Corps one of our greatest assets and did everything to support and promote their programs. Whenever I traveled outside Chisinau, I made it a point to meet with our volunteers and visit their programs. I was extremely proud one day when Moldovan President

Voronin started talking about the Peace Corps volunteers with genuine admiration and knowledge of their grassroots activities. He seemed particularly pleased that there were English language programs.

I am sure the Peace Corps directors I worked with would concur that I exercised my chief of mission authorities to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in their day-to-day operations as possible. If confirmed, I pledge to do the same in Ecuador.

RESPONSES OF HEATHER M. HODGES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. Democracy and human rights have been an important part of the agenda in most of the countries I have worked in overseas and in Washington.

My assignment to Moldova, however, provides the best recent examples of work I have done to promote human rights and democracy. In the early post-Soviet period, Moldova had a good reputation for free and fair elections, but over time this reputation was becoming tarnished. Just before I arrived in 2003, municipal elections throughout the country had clearly been flawed. I realized that the upcoming national elections in 2005 would be a challenge. I worked closely with the OSCE and a few other diplomatic missions, especially the handful of European Union embassies, to carry out both private and public activities to promote free and fair elections.

One of the best things the embassy did was to support the creation of the "Coalition for Free and Fair Elections," a group of over 60 nongovernmental organizations that represented the range of the political spectrum in Moldova and became a watchdog for independent assessment of the way in which the Government of Moldova was organizing and carrying out the elections. Our support to the coalition cost us little money but throughout the elections we saw evidence that the coalition's vigilance was contributing to the democratic process all over the country. Although it was a close call, the national elections were declared by the OSCE and other international observers to be free and fair. I am convinced that the results would not have been the same without the coalition.

Also in Moldova we had a large program to combat trafficking in women and young girls, a serious problem in one of Europe's poorest countries. Meeting battered victims who had managed to return to their country thanks to improved police work in Moldova and in the region was an experience I will never forget. It also convinced me we had to do more to educate the population about this terrible scourge. The embassy organized dozens of conferences, workshops, and focus groups around the country. And I persistently discussed our program with the highest levels in the government. Soon the Deputy Prime Ministers started holding monthly meetings outside the capital with municipal authorities and NGOs to monitor progress in fighting trafficking. We also helped vulnerable youth learn job skills that would help them earn a decent living and resist the ploys of the traffickers.

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

Answer. Inconsistency in the judicial process, issues of overcrowding, lack of medical care, and suspicious deaths of prisoners in Ecuadorian prisons are the most pressing human rights issues in Ecuador. The United States is working with Ecuador through our assistance programs to help address rule of law issues. One of our projects is to create automated data bases that will streamline criminal prosecutions and enhance the use of precedent in trials.

If confirmed, it will be one of my priorities to continue and strengthen programs such as this one. It is my hope that these efforts will make a long term contribution to improving the human rights situation in Ecuador.

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 Ecuador in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. The largest potential obstacle to addressing human rights concerns in Ecuador is lack of enforcement of existing laws. The United States is working with the Government of Ecuador, especially the judicial sector, to provide training to prosecutors and other legal professionals.

I believe that education is one of the most important ways in which we can advance human rights. If confirmed, I would strongly support our existing training and outreach efforts and look for opportunities to expand these initiatives.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the activities of the United States Embassy-Ecuador? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Promoting human rights is one of the highest priorities of our mission in Ecuador. The United States stands ready to assist Ecuador through continued engagement and programs that reinforce our commitment to constitutional democracy, strong and inclusive institutions, respect for the rule of law, counternarcotics efforts, and greater, more widely shared economic prosperity.

If confirmed, supporting these objectives will be among my highest priorities. I believe that every member of our mission in Ecuador can play a role in meeting this objective, and I will support and encourage each member of the team to contribute to this effort. As appropriate, I will recognize Foreign Service officers on my team for their human rights contributions by using the Department's evaluation and employee rewards programs.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Ecuador who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If confirmed as ambassador, I would make it a priority to reach out to all segments of society in Ecuador. You have my assurances that I would meet regularly with a range of American and Ecuadorian nongovernmental organizations, in particular those working to promote human rights.

RESPONSES OF SAMUEL W. SPECK TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Concerns have been raised in the past that both the United States and Canadian Governments are often too slow in implementing the International Joint Commission's recommendations. How will you work with both countries' governments to ensure better United States and Canadian compliance with and expedited implementation of the commission's decisions and recommendations?

Answer. If confirmed, I will carefully look into delays in implementing the International Joint Commission's recommendations. I would work with my fellow commissioners in continuing to urge United States and Canadian compliance through our semiannual meetings with governments, commission reports and letters, and in personal contacts with policymakers.

Question. Since 2005, the IJC has been reviewing its management plans for controlling the water level of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence Seaway. The current management regime minimizes fluctuations in water levels, which some scientists have argued has produced significant changes in shoreline ecosystems. After months of study and review, it proposed several alternatives to the current management regime. Just last month, the IJC released a proposed plan for public comment, called Plan 2007. New York State has had concerns with Plan 2007, but the IJC released it despite earlier promises to work with the State to find a compromise. Can you assure this committee that, if confirmed, you will work with the State of New York to address their concerns with Plan 2007?

Answer. Since I was not involved in the study or development of the plan or in any subsequent discussions with New York State, I am not positioned to comment on the issues you raise. I can assure you that, if confirmed, I will participate actively in public hearings and review all public comments received on the IJC's plan. I have an open mind on the merits of the plan and will carefully consider the views of the public and key stakeholders in forming my opinion on its merits and any needed modifications. If confirmed, I will look into the concerns of all stakeholders impacted by the plan and do everything I can to ensure that views of all interested parties, including the State of New York, are taken into consideration as the commission makes its decision.

RESPONSES OF BARBARA J. STEPHENSON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. As a member of the generation of Foreign Service officers whose careers began with the writing of the annual human rights report, I have always seen respect for human rights as a central and integral part of U.S. foreign policy. My service in the Netherlands, where Dutch Foreign Ministry colleagues vied for a copy of the annual human rights report reinforced for me how important it was that our human rights reports be accurate, balanced, and credible. With too small a diplomatic service to produce their own reports, they relied on ours for key judgments.

Beyond my work in various assignments to ensure the quality of our human rights reporting, I would cite my work in 1991 in El Salvador to ensure that the legislative assembly elections could take place peacefully. Week after week, I organized teams of embassy observers to cover significant campaign events—hoping that our presence would discourage violence and knowing that, if violence occurred, we would, at a minimum, bear witness to it. Partly because of our observer effort, leftist candidates returned from exile, participated in the political process, and won some seats in the legislative assembly, where they became articulate advocates for their political point of view. When the peace agreement was signed 10 months later, a Salvadoran friend, who was a member of the government's negotiating team for the peace talks, told me he believed that the key difference between war and peace in El Salvador was that now there was "espacio politico"—political space. The embassy's observer effort helped open up that political space.

I would also cite my work as Consul General to Belfast, Northern Ireland, from 2001–2004. Friends from Northern Ireland tell me how much they value the time and attention I devoted to modest community workers attempting to build peace and decent lives for working class people from the ground up. Some of those friends see the platform I gave them—opening up the official residence to them for strategy sessions, helping shift the focus of the White House St. Patrick's Day events from political leaders to these everyday heroes—as central to the ultimate success in achieving a major shift in government policy. Under the "Shared Future" policy, the government moved away from segregated schools and public housing (which reinforced the divisions at the heart of the conflict) toward a deliberate policy of increasing contact between Catholics and Protestants through shared schools, neighborhoods, recreation facilities, and the like. Many of the community leaders whose efforts I championed with all the resources available to me as Consul General have grown in influence and become powerful voices for social justice and peaceful resolution of conflict, not only in Northern Ireland but abroad as well.

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

Answer. The most significant human rights problems in Panama include harsh prison conditions, with reports of abuse by prison guards; prolonged pretrial detention; corruption, ineffectiveness, and political manipulation of the judicial system; political pressure on the media; citizenship determination; discrimination and violence against women; trafficking in persons; discrimination against indigenous communities; and child labor.

If confirmed, I intend to build upon the embassy's work with civil society, human rights defenders, and the Government of Panama to discuss and find ways of addressing these issues. As I have in previous assignments, I will bring concerned stakeholders together to develop strategies to support adherence to the rule of law, government accountability and transparency, and strengthening the role of civil society and an independent media. My embassy would continue to consult with nongovernmental organizations, indigenous communities, and other groups to continue to bolster those groups in their work to support and strengthen human rights in Panama.

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 Panama in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. Corruption, lack of transparency, and an ineffective judicial system are some of the obstacles Panama faces in addressing its human rights situation. If confirmed, I will seek to overcome these challenges by working with civil society to build its capacity to hold government accountable. I will also work with the Pan-

amanian Government to encourage them to continue to work to adopt transparent systems to fight corruption and impunity particularly within the judicial system. I will also work with the press to encourage a free and open debate on the issue of human rights.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the activities of the United States Embassy-Panama? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Because I see respect for human rights as so central to our foreign policy, I have no doubt that, if confirmed as Ambassador to Panama, I will give human rights a central place in our strategy discussions, our public diplomacy outreach efforts, our reporting, and other facets of the embassy's work. I will, of course, reward officers who share my passion for human rights, both with formal tools such as evaluation reports and awards, and informally, by devoting my own time and attention to these issues.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Panama who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. Certainly. As my discussion of most important actions indicates, I am proud of my association with such NGOs and of the success of my efforts to give their voices greater weight.

RESPONSES OF ROBERT J. CALLAHAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. What effect, if any, has the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact had on poverty reduction in Nicaragua, and on United States-Nicaraguan relations? Please describe the current status of MCC work in the country.

Answer. MCC's 5-year (2006–2011), $175 million compact with Nicaragua will help the country to build the necessary productive capacity to seize opportunities to achieve growth by taking advantage of regional economic integration and trade openings. The compact focuses on improving insecure property rights, underdeveloped infrastructure, and rural business activities that were identified as the greatest barriers to economic growth that could be addressed with Millennium Challenge Account assistance. We expect the MCC program to improve the lives of the 800,000 residents of León and Chinandega by raising household incomes in the region and transforming the region into an engine of economic growth.

The MCC compact is helping Nicaragua accomplish this objective through:

1. A property regularization project to provide secure, registered titles to an estimated 70 percent of rural and 50 percent of urban properties;
2. A transportation project upgrading roads to reduce transportation costs between the region and domestic, regional, and international markets for an estimated 3,300 current road users per day; and
3. A rural business development project to benefit directly thousands of farmers by providing help in transitioning into higher-value agriculture, creating an estimated 7,000 jobs.

Examples of how the MCC is effecting poverty reduction are steadily growing. The rural business project has helped producers develop and implement nearly 1,000 business plans. New investment commitments are expected to create 1,300 jobs in León and Chinandega. Through the MCC, 1.2 million trees have been planted to improve soil conservation. More than 1,000 clean property titles have been issued, allowing landholders access to the credit needed to fulfill their business plans.

MCC's works with Nicaragua not as a recipient of aid, but rather as a full partner in this program that aims to reduce poverty through economic growth. This has yielded enormous benefits in our bilateral relations. MCC's CEO Ambassador John Danilovich visited Nicaragua in January 2008 to inaugurate the beginning of road construction and to deliver clean property titles, forest fire prevention equipment, and irrigation systems to beneficiaries. His visit produced many examples of how MCC's engagement has strengthened our bilateral relations and enjoys the strong support of both the Nicaraguan people and the country's leaders, including President Ortega.

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. I understand and wholeheartedly and unreservedly agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that 11the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I understand, accept, and fully endorse the fact that the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy and that the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. I pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise my chief of mission authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSES OF ROBERT J. CALLAHAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. Throughout my career I have been intimately involved in promoting human rights, especially during my assignments to Honduras and Bolivia. Both countries were making the transition from military rule to democracy—Honduras in 1982, while I was there, and Bolivia a few years before my arrival in 1989. I encouraged the press in those countries to monitor human rights and speak out on any abuses they uncovered. Through seminars and training sessions organized by the public affairs office in the embassy, in talks to journalism guilds and schools, we reminded reporters and editors of their duty to serve as guarantors of human rights, most notably when the government remained silent or unresponsive.

We also regularly brought American experts, many of them practicing journalists, to talk to their counterparts in those countries. Our intention was to show solidarity with them and to let them know that they had powerful supporters elsewhere. We also used many of our international visitor grants for reporters, again hoping to provide them an object lesson in how American journalists guard tenaciously their independence, comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable.

While serving in Rome, and shortly after Milosevic left power in Serbia, my office organized a week-long seminar in Italy for about 20 Serbian journalists. As they emerged from years of governments that attempted to control and intimidate the press, we thought that they needed some training and encouragement, both of which our team of experienced American writers and editors, including the managing editor of the American Journalism Review, provided.

In my one year in Baghdad, where I served as the embassy spokesman and press attaché, I regarded as my most important responsibility the nurturing of a woefully inexperienced and timid press corps. We told them of the role of a free and active media in a democratic society. We emphasized that paramount among their duties was ensuring that human rights of every sort—freedom of the press, speech, and religion, freedom from fear, exploitation, and arbitrary arrest—be respected. I also worked closely with the Commission on Public Integrity and the Human Rights Commission and detailed officers to work with each. This gave them both confidence to pursue their mandates and a sense of security.

If I am confirmed as Ambassador to Nicaragua, I will ensure that respect for human rights, and the honest and timely reporting on them, be a priority for the mission. I think that this is one of our most effective foreign policy initiatives and that it is perfectly consonant with—in fact, reinforces—our other policy objectives.

I believe that respect for human rights is a core American value, a source of pride for our Nation, and a universal imperative.

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

Answer. Nicaragua is a constitutional democracy that still struggles with the issue of human rights. Arbitrary application of justice, lack of respect for the rule of law, widespread corruption, the politicization of the judiciary and other government organs, intimidation and harassment of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and journalists, widespread child labor, discrimination against indigenous communities, and trafficking in persons are some of the most pressing human rights issues in Nicaragua. If confirmed, I will devote our resources to ensuring that supporting human rights and democratic principles remain central elements of our foreign policy in Nicaragua.

This will mean focusing our efforts on programs that support adherence to the rule of law, government accountability and transparency, and strengthening the important role of civil society and an independent media. I will consult with civil society, nongovernmental organizations, indigenous communities, and other groups to develop a human rights strategy that is responsive to the needs of Nicaraguans suffering from human rights abuses. These consultations will guide us as we draft the Annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Nicaragua, which will bring attention and much-needed information about this issue in Nicaragua.

As part of the implementation process of the Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA–DR), the United States will provide additional resources that will be essential in improving Nicaragua's labor justice system, its capacity to enforce labor laws and reduce the adverse affects of gender and other forms of discrimination in Nicaragua's labor sectors. I believe these efforts together will advance the recognition and respect of human rights in Nicaragua.

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 Nicaragua in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. Some principal obstacles Nicaragua faces in addressing its human rights problems are widespread government corruption, arbitrary application of justice, politicization of the Supreme Electoral Council, and a fragmented and fragile civil society and divided political opposition that lack unified strategies for furthering democracy and respect for human rights. If confirmed, I will seek to overcome the challenges I will face in advancing human rights, the lack of transparency and accountability within the Nicaraguan Government, and fragile judicial and prosecutorial institutions to name a few, by working with civil society to build its capacity to meet the needs and interests of the Nicaraguan people. I will also work with the Nicaraguan Government to encourage respect for the rule of law and address widespread corruption and arbitrary application of justice. To overcome the challenge of advancing human rights in Nicaragua, I will also advocate for greater technical and financial assistance to aid civil society groups in their efforts to depoliticize the judiciary and increase citizen awareness of these issues.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the activities of the United States Embassy-Nicaragua? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make the advancement of human rights in Nicaragua one of the central tenets of the embassy's mission to fulfill our commitment to the Nicaraguan people. To accomplish this objective, I will encourage the embassy staff to meet with civil society groups and to conduct outreach programs to foment greater ties with remote communities, like Puerto Cabeza or Bluefields, which historically have been overlooked. Providing technical assistance to nongovernmental organizations, civil society groups and the Nicaraguan Government will help build their capacity to develop plans specifically tailored to Nicaragua's human rights situation and will be critical for us to achieve our objectives. I will also continue to support the embassy staff in its preparation of the Annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Nicaragua. In recognition of staff efforts to promote human rights, I will recognize exemplary work through the embassy and Department of State's evaluation and employee rewards programs.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Nicaragua who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. I intend to make outreach with Nicaraguan and United States nongovernmental organizations a central element of the embassy's policy for advancing human rights. I will encourage and seek to ensure that embassy personnel, including myself, extend our outreach throughout the country to work with historically disenfranchised communities and other populations that live in remote or difficult to reach areas within Nicaragua. I believe the embassy must demonstrate to these communities that their voice, concerns, and livelihood is no less important by virtue of who they are or where they live.

RESPONSES OF HUGO LLORENS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Many human rights defenders in Honduras peacefully protest their displacement by large landowners and corporations and as a result are often attacked or threatened. How will you support Honduran human rights defenders and ensure that those who attack them are prosecuted?

Answer. Over the past several years, embassy staff has met with several environmental justice advocates to discuss these threats with the Honduran security authorities and have advocated for prompt and effective investigation of these incidents. In addition, the mission sponsored a joint letter with other G–16 donor countries, which requested that the Government of Honduras take action to properly investigate the death of an environmental activist. If confirmed, I will make support for democratic governance and the protection of human rights a top priority of my embassy. I am committed to ensuring that the mission continues to strongly advocate on behalf of human rights defenders in our discussions with the government, particularly through underscoring our deep desire that the government take appropriate steps to ensure security for defenders and investigate promptly and effectively abuses committed against them.

Question. Many human rights violations occur in remote areas of Honduras. How will you work to support the rights of marginalized communities in Honduras?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to continue the embassy's efforts to reach out to the marginalized communities throughout Honduras. It is my intention to lead my country team in promoting human rights in Honduras. Along with the embassy team, I will travel widely throughout Honduras to raise human rights issues with local and national government officials, NGOs, and civil society groups. Moreover, on certain matters, constructive comments from the ambassador on human rights receive positive press coverage, stimulate discussion, and could lead to positive action. Through speeches, op-eds, and meetings with relevant officials, I will continue to highlight the issue of human rights with the objective of moving, as appropriate, Honduras toward increased legal protection and guarantee the rights for all communities.

Question. What is the status of CAFTA implementation in Honduras? What are the major issues that need to be addressed?

Answer. The United States-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA–DR) entered into force for Honduras on April 1, 2006. Honduras has not made as much progress as some of its neighbors in implementing CAFTA–DR or in enacting the reforms necessary to benefit fully from the agreement. CAFTA–DR requires modernization and greater transparency in government procurement and services, such as locking in structural reforms, especially opening up the telecommunications industry to competition and greater levels of private investment. Passage of the new telecommunications law and implementing regulations for the intellectual property rights laws passed to implement CAFTA are is still pending.

The embassy continues it work with the Government of Honduras to increase capacity and compliance of environmental requirements under CAFTA. If confirmed, I intend to work hard to ensure full implementation of CAFTA.

Question. Has there been any improvement in worker's rights since the implementation of the free trade agreement with the United States? What is the status of Honduran cooperation with the International Labor Organization to improve working conditions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will build upon the Mission's current active dialog with the government, employers, and workers to underscore the importance of full adher-

ence to labor rights in a democracy. Along with the embassy team, I will work to strengthen the Honduran labor ministry's ability to enforce labor law, modernize labor justice systems, seek to eliminate gender and other types of employment discrimination, build a culture of compliance with labor law, and support the ILO in its State Department-funded tripartite benchmarking/monitoring work in the region. One such successful example is the "Cumple y Gana" (Comply and Win) project implemented by the Department of Labor with Department of State funding. I will also ensure that we continue our support for the International Labor Organization's IPEC program and similar U.S. Department of Labor-sponsored initiatives to eradicate the worst forms of child labor, which include plantation, agriculture, and commercial sexual exploitation.

While Honduras had a comprehensive labor code, worker education has been the most significant area of improvement for workers under CAFTA. Basic and detailed brochures on worker's rights, a well-publicized Web site with information on labor rights (www.leylaboral.com), and a number of radio spots that play widely on local and national radio stations have helped disseminate information on workers rights. Embassy officials routinely meet with the Honduran Ministry of Labor officials, NGOs, labor unions, and others to discuss CAFTA–DR issues, progress, and areas for improvement.

Question. The State Department's report last month on human rights conditions in Honduras notes that "Representatives of sexual diversity rights NGOs asserted that their members were killed, beaten, and subjected to other mistreatment by security authorities." The State Department also noted that "the government [of Honduras] required, as a condition for legal registration, sexual diversity rights organizations to remove any reference in their bylaws to promotion of respect for the rights of gay, lesbian, or transgender persons. In March the secretary general of the Ministry of Governance and Justice commented publicly that the government denied registration to gay rights advocacy NGOs because their stated purposes did not comport with 'good custom.'" Would you, Mr. Llorens, be willing to meet some of the leaders of the LGBT human rights community in Honduras once you take up this post to discuss these serious findings? How do you think the United States Embassy in Honduras should address these findings and help convey to the Honduran Government that they represent a serious human rights issue?

Answer. Respect of human rights is central to any thriving democracy. If confirmed, very early on in my tenure, I will seek a meeting with members of the LGBT community in Honduras to develop a strong working relationship and to discuss the findings. Consolidating democracy and strengthening adherence to the rule of law is crucial for human rights. There are no discriminatory laws based on sexual orientation, but in practice there is widespread social discrimination against persons based on sexual orientation in Honduras. I intend to include the findings of human rights violations in the LGBT community as integral to our overall effort to improve the human rights situation in Honduras, and convey the importance of this issue to senior officials of the Government of Honduras.

Question. Honduras has the highest HIV prevalence rate in Central America. Can you please describe how the United States is assisting Hondurans as they combat this epidemic?

Answer. Honduras has the second-highest rate of HIV prevalence in Central America, after Belize. The U.S. Government's HIV/AIDS program focuses on five objectives:

(1) To prevent transmission of HIV through activities to reduce high-risk behavior;

(2) To expand voluntary counseling and testing for most-at-risk populations;

(3) To provide care and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS;

(4) To strengthen the Ministry of Health's (MOH) HIV/AIDS epidemiologic surveillance and monitoring and evaluation systems; and

(5) To provide the Global Fund and MOH assistance for improved service delivery, including supply chain management.

The U.S. Government supports an umbrella grants program that provides technical and financial assistance to 13 local NGOs to reduce high-risk behavior among most-at-risk populations. In fiscal year 2007, this program trained 2,256 community volunteers to promote HIV prevention through abstinence and fidelity. These volunteers reached 29,663 people with abstinence/be faithful messages, mostly Garifuna youth, an Afro-Caribbean population highly affected by HIV/AIDS.

Through these NGOs, condom marketing, and mass media communications activities, 173,420 additional people were reached with prevention messages beyond "abstinence/be faithful," including correct and consistent condom use and prevention of

drug and alcohol abuse. The social marketing program expanded sales of affordable condoms to 359 new high-risk outlets, such as brothels, for a total of over 800 high-risk outlets now selling condoms. The scale-up of rapid HIV testing services by 10 NGOs in highly affected communities has been highly successful. In addition, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Health for the operation of three sentinel surveillance sites that provide testing for HIV and sexually transmitted infections for commercial sex workers.

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read the cable.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. I agree to abide by the principles set forth in the cable.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps' role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. Yes. In preparation for my possible assignment as ambassador, I met with the Peace Corps to get a full understanding of Peace Corps activities in Honduras and its need for separation of the day-to-day activities of the mission. I pledge to keep the Peace Corps day-to-day activities substantially separate.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. I pledge to keep the Peace Corps day-to-day activities substantially separate, as per Secretary Rice's request in 3.B of the cable.

RESPONSES OF HUGO LLORENS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. As a 27-year veteran of the Foreign Service, I have been engaged in support of human rights and democracy in one way or another in every one of my assignments. In my very first tour as a junior consular officer in the Philippines, colleagues and I met with Filipino citizens opposed to the Marcos dictatorship. We learned from them about the repression against the democratic opposition and independent media, as well as the thousands in jail or exiled because of their political views. As U.S. diplomats, we encouraged their efforts and reported what we learned to our supervisors. I was in Manila on the terrible day in August 1983 when Benigno Aquino was murdered. I remember volunteering with fellow officers to cover the massive and spontaneous anti-Marcos demonstrations, and I provided political reporting of the Filipino people's public demand for elections and democracy.

Serving in Bolivia in 1984 was a challenging assignment. Our embassy's principal objective was to support the newly-elected government of President Hernan Siles following 20 years of authoritarian rule by a long succession of military governments. Our embassy team played a critical role in the democratic transition, which included helping to block a coup attempt by disgruntled military officers. As an economic officer, we worked with Bolivian workers to strengthen the trade union movement and nominated several young Bolivian labor leaders to travel to the United States on international visitor programs. It was also greatly gratifying for me to serve as one of the embassy's observers in the free and fair elections of 1985 that resulted in the constitutional transfer of power to a new civilian president, Victor Paz Estenssoro. I also worked with the Bolivian Government and local business organizations to promote the rule of law and more transparent judicial systems. Indeed, in my many economic assignments in Latin America, my work to create a trade and investment climate favorable to U.S. commercial interests invariably meant promoting good governance, openness, democracy, and human rights.

I am particularly proud of my work temporarily running a combined political and economic section in 1989 in the immediate aftermath of the coup that overthrew the

35-year-old dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay. During this historic transition, our embassy played a crucial role. In this effort, we supported democratic forces in Paraguay to bring about radical positive change. For example, over a 6-month period, we worked closely with the new Paraguayan authorities and civil society that resulted in the release of political prisoners, the recognition of banned political parties, the restoration of press freedoms, including the reopening of the main opposition newspaper—ABC Color—and the holding of the first truly free elections in Paraguay's 150 year history. Today Paraguay faces many difficulties and challenges, and its democracy is highly imperfect and still fragile. However, for the Paraguayan people and for many of us who remember the repression and total impunity of the Stroessner era, Paraguay has moved in freedom's direction.

Over the years, I have continued to engage actively to support human rights and democracy. As an economic officer in El Salvador and Honduras, I worked with colleagues in the American Institute for Free Labor Development to advance labor rights and push for the recognition of trade unions. Serving as Director of Andean Affairs on the National Security Council, I made sure the protection of human rights continued to be a front burner issue for us in Colombia. We pressed for the investigation of extrajudicial killings of journalists and labor leaders and made sure that a significant chunk of our assistance dollars were devoted to good governance, strengthening the rule of law, and civil society. Finally, over the 5 years that I have served as deputy chief of mission, I have sought to make sure that both the Governments of Argentina and Spain worked closely with us in multilateral fora to support democracy and human rights around the world.

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

Answer. Honduras suffers from human rights problems that include: unlawful killings and beatings by members of the police, government agents, vigilantes, street gangs, and former members of the security forces; failure to provide legal due process; politicization, corruption, and institutional weakness of the judiciary; erosion of press freedom; intimidation of human rights defenders; government restrictions on recognition of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); trafficking in persons; and ineffective labor law enforcement.

If confirmed, I will make the promotion of democracy and human rights a top priority. I will advocate forcefully for the rule of law and transparency. I will work with the Government of Honduras to support free and fair elections in November 2009. Along with my embassy team, I will consult with government institutions, NGOs, labor unions, and other organizations. I will work closely with these groups to encourage reforms and discuss problems related to human rights and democracy.

Addressing corruption and institutional weaknesses is a major part of the mission's current activities, and if confirmed, I will continue this work. The United States offers technical and financial resources to public and private organizations, including providing speakers and training to Honduran Government officials, NGOs, and civil society representatives on transparency, rule of law, citizen participation and accountability. I will also advocate for the implementation of the new transparency law and civil procedure code to provide greater access to public information and modernize the civil justice system.

By continuing to focus on the broad theme of human rights in Honduras, I hope to further the important and historical goals of United States engagement in Honduras, to broaden participation in the democratic system to assure ordinary citizens have a role in the political process; and to assure that the economic opportunity brought to Honduras by CAFTA will increase Honduran citizens' ability to lift themselves out of poverty.

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 Honduras in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. Corruption, impunity, and insecurity are principal obstacles to addressing the human rights situation in Honduras. In addition, weak institutions and the difficulty of making necessary microeconomic and national changes to extend the benefits of democracy and free markets to all people has generated impatience and frustrations.

If confirmed, my team and I will continue to help the Honduran Government reach Millennium Challenge Corporation compact goals through a remediation plan that promotes transparency and combating corruption. We will support compliance with this plan, and we will promote respect for the rule of law and general good

governance by providing training to government officials, NGOs, law students, and others on the newly enacted civil procedure code and transparency laws.

If confirmed, I will also work with the Honduran Government to encourage them to respect the rule of law and address widespread corruption and the ineffective judicial system. I will also work with civil society and the press to create an open, honest debate on the issue of human rights and the challenges corruption and impunity place on the development of Honduras.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the activities of the United States Embassy-Honduras? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. If confirmed, the advancement of human rights in Honduras will continue be one of the top priorities of the embassy's mission. I will encourage the embassy team to meet with civil society groups and to conduct outreach programs to strengthen ties with communities, which historically have been overlooked.

The promotion of human rights objectives is central to all of our work to encourage representative democracy, economic integration, and faith in the transformative power of freedom in individual lives. We will work to encourage the consolidation of sustainable economic growth and political stability so that all Hondurans can benefit from the political system, economic opportunity, and social justice, especially for poor and marginalized populations.

I will lend my voice to my team's work and acknowledge and reward their efforts through formal means of recognition and promotion of human rights.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Honduras who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If I am confirmed, I plan to reach out early in my tenure and develop strong working relationships with NGO representatives from both the United States and across Honduras who are working to advance human rights in Honduras. NGOs and civil society members are integral to the effort to promote human rights in the country and will be valued allies for me and the embassy team.

RESPONSES OF STEPHEN G. MCFARLAND TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. How will you work to encourage the Guatemalan Government to bring to justice former military officials accused of committing these crimes? How will you support Guatemalan human rights defenders and ensure that those who attack them are prosecuted?

Answer. If confirmed, I will stress in my discussions with the President, Attorney General, and other key government officials the importance of promoting the rule of law, and to achieve justice, national reconciliation and closure for families of the victims of the human rights abuses committed during the internal conflict. I will engage with the Ministry of Government, the Attorney General's Office, and the Judiciary to press for investigation and prosecution, as well as raise the issue with senior military authorities to ensure their continued cooperation in legal proceedings.

As other U.S. ambassadors before me, if confirmed, I would continue to meet with human rights defenders, particularly in public, to raise the profile of the work they are doing on behalf of all Guatemalans. I will continue the embassy's practice of showing public solidarity with human rights defenders who have been the victims of threats and urge the government to strengthen efforts to protect those defenders. And I will continue to raise the investigation and prosecution of crimes against human rights defenders with appropriate senior-level government officials.

Question. What will you do to support the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) important mandate? How will you encourage the Guatemalan Government to provide CICIG with the necessary cooperation to enable it to fulfill its critical mandate? How do you plan to encourage lasting improvements to the judicial system, both through CICIG's recommendations and by other means?

Answer. If confirmed, I will maintain the vigorous United States support for CICIG by continuing the embassy's strong relationship with CICIG Commissioner Carlos Castresana and other CICIG staff; by advocating for CICIG technical and financial resources within the U.S. Government, the diplomatic community, and multilateral institutions; and by continuing to highlight the importance of CICIG in

combating Guatemala's culture of impunity and violence, and promoting the rule of law.

I will encourage the Guatemalan Government to meet and go beyond its obligation to provide its best investigators, prosecutors, and security professionals. I will continue to raise the United States' and broader interest in the success of CICIG in my meetings at the highest levels of Guatemalan Government, including the President, Vice-President, and Attorney General, as well as with members of civil society and the private sector.

By Mr. Castresana's and others' intentions, a good portion of the CICIG staff is Guatemalan, which is crucial if the effects of CICIG are to last. I think the key to lasting improvements is CICIG's own performance in the 18 months remaining on its mandate. If Guatemalans understand that impunity is not inevitable, that violent criminals can be held accountable, then they will come to expect no less from their own institutions. I know that the United States Embassy has already begun to plan for rule of law assistance for coordination between CICIG and Guatemalan institutions, and if confirmed, I will earnestly advocate to make available the additional resources needed for the United States to assist Guatemalan institutions to carry on the work started by CICIG.

Question. What information do you have about the recent assassination of President Colom's security advisor? Does this assassination reflect the same corrupt influence that resulted in the killing of Salvadoran parliamentarians recently in Guatemala?

Answer. Former Security Advisor Victor Rivera was murdered April 7 at 11:30 p.m. by unknown assailants who intercepted his vehicle on a main thoroughfare in Guatemala City. His companion, who was a passenger in his car, was wounded. The murder occurred one week after he was dismissed from his position in the Ministry of Government.

Investigation of his murder is ongoing. Thirteen investigators of the National Civil Police and the Attorney General's Office have been assigned to the case.

This high-profile murder, like the February 2007 PARLACEN murders, demonstrates the extent of Guatemala's climate of violence and the need for continued Guatemalan efforts, with international assistance, to improve the rule of law.

Question. The Hague Conventions on adoption came into force in the United States on April 1. Is the United States permitting adoptions from Guatemala now that this convention has been adopted? Have all outstanding issues surrounding adoptions been resolved?

Answer. The Guatemalan Government has started creating the structure necessary to process adoptions in accordance with the Hague compliant provisions of its new internal legislation. However, they are not yet ready to initiate new adoptions that meet these provisions. The embassy is working closely with the new National Adoption Council (CNA) so as to be in a position to confirm the CNA's ability to process Hague compliant adoptions once regulations are drafted and implemented, and the critical portions of the new adoption procedures are functional. Meanwhile, both the United States and Guatemala continue to process under pre-Hague rules adoptions initiated in Guatemala prior to December 31, 2007, the date Guatemalan adoption reforms took effect.

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read the cable on Peace Corps-State Department Relations (04 State 258893).

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I do.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps' role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. government agencies"?

Answer. Yes, I understand and I accept that the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy, and the Peace Corps' role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. government agencies. These principles have guided my earlier work as Deputy Chief of Mission and Charge in Paraguay and in Guatemala, which have large Peace Corps programs.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I pledge to exercise my chief of mission authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSES OF STEPHEN G. MCFARLAND TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. Support for democracy and human rights has been a major U.S. objective in my previous posts, and it has been an important component of my work, as well as a personal commitment. As the human rights officer in Peru, 1985–1988, I visited human rights and community leaders in areas affected by the internal conflict. These meetings sent a message of support for human rights groups—some of which were threatened by security force members as well as the guerrillas—and they provided accurate information on human rights abuses that the United States used to engage the Government of Peru. As political counselor in El Salvador, I led the U.S. reporting and assessment of the 1988 San Francisco killings, and I contributed to our reporting on the cover-up of the Jesuit murders; these cables assisted the United States in challenging the government to punish human rights abusers. I also carried out considerable outreach to the political left and right in El Salvador to support the emerging peace process, and I made personal recommendations to the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs at the State Department to leverage United States assistance to better support the peace process and the Jesuit murders investigation. As political counselor in Peru, I led the reporting effort on the clandestine "Colina" death squad supported by then-national intelligence chief Vladimiro Montesinos. These cables contributed to a vigorous debate within the U.S. Government about our relationship with Montesinos. I also reported on the increasing authoritarian measures of the Fujimori government, and I met often with the opposition as well as government officials to express our concerns about democracy. As the United States representative on the 1995 interim cease-fire monitoring group on the Peru-Ecuador border, I contributed to United States efforts to disengage the opposing military forces and to facilitate the eventual diplomatic resolution of this dispute. As Charge in Paraguay, I led the rapid United States response to oppose the April 2000 coup attempt; I then made a public (and successful) request for the government not to mistreat the captured coup participants. As Charge in Guatemala I led the embassy's support for human rights; as part of that effort, I made public visits to human rights workers who had received threats, and I attended two high-profile human rights trials. These actions underscored U.S. concerns about the protection of human rights groups and about impunity. I also led U.S. efforts to engage the Portillo government, first privately and then publicly, on official corruption, organized crime, and narcotics trafficking. This initiative led to subsequent public expressions of concern by other international donor countries about corruption, and it encouraged Guatemalan civil society groups that advocated greater transparency and accountability. Guatemalan prosecutors subsequently began numerous judicial actions against corrupt officials.

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

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Guatemala are a weak judicial and law enforcement system that does not protect citizens from violent crime; impunity of human rights offenders; and organized crime and clandestine armed groups. These human rights issues in turn are one of the most important challenges to Guatemala's democracy; other major challenges are corruption, poverty, and social exclusion. If confirmed as ambassador, I would continue the vigorous United States support, in public and in private, for human rights and democracy, to include meeting throughout Guatemala with members of the government and with civil society. I would also support ongoing U.S. programs that address these issues, to include community policing, rule of law, police professionalization, human rights, transparency, and programs in rural and indigenous areas. I would also work closely with the U.N.-Guatemalan Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), to

which the United States is contributing, and which will support Guatemalan judicial authorities in investigating clandestine groups. The Merida Initiative, if approved by the Congress, would increase significantly our ability to cooperate with Guatemalan institutions on citizen security and rule of law issues. If confirmed, and if the Congress approves the Merida Initiative, I would scrutinize any Merida-funded proposals in Guatemala to ensure that they support our broader democracy and human rights goals, particularly Guatemala's ability to strengthen transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. I would also use ongoing assistance programs, as well as public diplomacy outreach, and our engagement on CAFTA, to work with our Guatemalan partners to improve living standards for those Guatemalans most in need, in particular the indigenous.

Question. 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 Guatemala in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. The principal challenges to democracy in Guatemala are security, transparency, prosperity, and social inclusion. Greater citizen confidence in the ability of elected government to address these issues in a fair and timely way will strengthen democracy. A weak judicial and law enforcement system is the primary obstacle to protecting human rights in Guatemala. This manifests itself in extremely low prosecution rates for all crimes, and in particular homicide, and violent crimes against women, which in turn lowers citizen confidence in police and prosecutors, and increases the temptation for some to take the law into their own hands. The police have not been able to provide sufficient security for most citizens, and in many cases have been involved in crimes. Guatemalans acknowledge that corruption and intimidation are two additional obstacles to improving the judicial system. While gangs and drug traffickers are responsible for considerable violent crime, there are also organized crime groups that seek political influence and protection, who pose a major challenge to democracy.

These obstacles notwithstanding, there are important partners with whom the United States can work with on these issues. The Colom administration, which took office in January, seeks to work with the United States on a broad range of human rights, democracy, and economic issues, to include improving rule of law institutions, and citizen security. There are also many members of the police and the judicial institutions committed to improving the rule of law and human rights, in addition to Guatemalan human rights, media, private sector, and other civil society groups.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post activities? What steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Human rights are an integral part of Embassy Guatemala's activities. The embassy has an interagency Rule of Law Committee that addresses human rights in a collective forum. The political section has the lead on tracking and promoting human rights, but personnel throughout the embassy regularly promote human rights through public outreach, exchanges, training, and dialog. The embassy has undertaken human rights programs with the military, the police, prosecutors, and immigration authorities, among others. Promoting human rights is a priority in the mission strategic plan. If confirmed as ambassador, I will ensure that human rights remain of critical import across the range of embassy functions, including my own duties; I believe that ambassadorial involvement in human rights outreach also underscores within the embassy the importance of this effort. I will also ensure, as I have in the past, that Foreign Service officers and other personnel who work on human rights receive due recognition through the employee evaluation and award processes. I will also ensure that the embassy continues to have a spirit of openness in which issues such as human rights can be freely and frankly discussed and assessed.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Guatemala that are working to promote human rights?

Answer. Yes. I have worked with human rights organizations throughout my career in the Department of State, both in the United States and abroad. As DCM and charge in Guatemala I met frequently with human rights NGOs, and I participated in activities that they organized to promote human rights; if confirmed as ambassador, I will continue to do so. Human rights NGOs are important partners in the quest to protect and promote human rights. The embassy team maintains close

contact with a range of human rights leaders and civil society leaders, and if confirmed, meeting with them will be among my first acts.

Question. With regard to international adoptions, how many adoption cases initiated prior to December 31, 2007 remain to be processed? What efforts are the U.S. Embassy and the Bureau of Consular Affairs making to resolve these cases? Does the embassy have sufficient resources in the consular section to devote to this issue? Can you provide an estimate of how long it will take to conclude processing of these cases?

Answer. Statistics of the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) section at the United States Embassy in Guatemala City show 2,965 pending adoption cases as of April 1, 2008, down from 3,387 on March 1. Before USCIS and the Consular Section can complete processing of any of these cases, they must have a finalized adoption according to Guatemalan law. The embassy believes that nearly all of these cases have been registered with the new National Adoption Council (CNA) before the February 12, 2008 deadline created by Guatemala's new Hague compliant legislation, and will, therefore, be entitled to be processed under the notarial adoption system that existed prior to the new law. Completed adoption documentation is being presented daily to the embassy, currently running at a rate slightly slower than last year's record numbers (4,729 adoption immigrant visas issued in fiscal year 2007). Current USCIS and consular staff at the embassy is therefore sufficient for timely processing of these cases. The average number of days from receipt of final adoption documentation by the embassy's USCIS office to issuance of the immigration visa by the consular section is now under 14 calendar days. For most of last year this processing and scheduling time averaged approximately 21 days. If Guatemalan Government adoption processing continues at rates similar to March and April, most such "grandfathered" cases (barring problems discovered in individual cases) should be completed by the end of calendar year 2008.

Question. What is the status, in particular, of cases involving the children from Casa Quivira? How many prospective adoptions involving American citizens remain pending?

Answer. Thirty-five children remain in Casa Quivira, though one child's adoption has been completed adoption and is scheduled for final visa interview on April 22. We believe that 30 of these children continue to be matched with American prospective adoptive families, according to the records of USCIS. However, we have recently learned of several withdrawals by U.S. families, and we have not been informed of new matches for those children. Eight of these children (counting the April 22 final interview above) have been released by the investigating prosecutor's office for completion of adoption processing. In 18 more cases, the prosecutor has been unable to locate birth mothers for interview. Several parents, however, have engaged additional assistance to help locate these mothers and to bring them for interviews by Guatemalan authorities. In nine cases, the prosecutor has discovered serious irregularities, mainly consisting of false identifications of the birth mothers. All such cases will have to be processed as abandonment cases, requiring court determinations, and almost certainly requiring processing in accordance with the new law. The embassy and the Bureau of Consular Affairs continue to dedicate extensive efforts to these cases.

NOMINATIONS

MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2008

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

Burns, William J., to be Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
Jacobs, Janice L., to be Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs
McMahan, Vance, to be the U.S. Representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:53 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert P. Casey presiding.

Present: Senators Casey and Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Senator CASEY. The hearing of the Committee on Foreign Relations will now come to order.

Today, the committee meets to consider three important nominations: Ambassador William J. Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; Ambassador Janice L. Jacobs to be Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs; and Mr. Vance McMahan to be the U.S. Representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

I want to congratulate all of you on your nominations and express the gratitude of the Senate for your willingness to engage in public service on behalf of our Nation.

Ambassador Burns, you've been nominated for what is, in effect, the third-ranking position in the State Department—the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. Like Secretary of State Rice and Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte, you're responsible for not just one region or one functional area, but the broad sweep of U.S. foreign policy. While this position is always important, if confirmed, you will be assuming it in an especially important time. Regardless of who is elected President this fall, you may be the senior official at the State Department during the transition period, and even perhaps during the first weeks of the new administration.

And I know you have some big shoes to fill. Your predecessor as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Ambassador Nick Burns, played a key role on leading foreign policy challenges, in-

cluding the United States-led initiative to halt Iran's nuclear activities that violate a series of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and the efforts to hammer out a civil—or, I'm sorry—a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement with India. I'll be interested to hear your views on how you intend to approach the upcoming presidential transition as the senior career officer at the State Department and which foreign policy challenges you intend to focus upon when you assume your new position.

I'm also happy to learn, today, that you've got some roots in Scranton, PA. We always appreciate that.

Ambassador Jacobs, you have been nominated to assume the leadership of the State Department's Consular Affairs Bureau, which, unfortunately, has been in the news, of late, for the wrong reasons. Last summer, we witnessed thousands of Americans having to postpone or cancel their trips abroad due to lengthy delays in receiving their passports. Unfortunately, the State Department had badly miscalculated the level of demand for U.S. passports in the wake of new rules established under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.

While passport processing times have now returned to normal, many of us in the Congress are concerned about a repeat of this scenario next year, when new regulations come into effect requiring all Americans transiting our borders by land or sea to have U.S. passports or passport cards. I look forward to your views on how the State Department plans to assess likely demand, and the steps it is taking to get ready.

More recently, we learned the disturbing news that State Department employees and contractors illegally accessed the passport files of the three remaining presidential candidates. Perhaps of greater concern, there was a significant lag before these unauthorized disclosures were reported to senior Department officials and the three candidates themselves. I understand that the State Department inspector general is conducting an investigation, and I look forward to hearing the status of that investigation and the steps the Department is taking to better protect the privacy and integrity of passport files for all Americans.

Finally, Ambassador Jacobs, I want to raise an issue raised by a number of our constituents in Pennsylvania. Many families, including those in Pennsylvania, have encountered lengthy delays and uncertainty in the processing of adopting children from foreign nations, especially Vietnam and Guatemala. While I understand the critical need to follow careful rules and regulations, especially to deter intolerable kidnapping and selling of infants for adoption, too many families have often been left in the dark regarding individual cases.

I strongly urge the Department of State and your Bureau to recommit to frequent communications with both congressional casework staff and the general public so that affected families receive regular updates on their adoption cases and suffer less unneeded stress.

Our final nominee before us today, Mr. McMahan, has been nominated for the position of United States Representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, or ECOSOC—"ecosock," for those of us who focus on acronyms. The ECOSOC is

a U.N. body that addresses international economic, social, and cultural issues and is currently undergoing significant reform efforts. However, I was disappointed when ECOSOC, last year, voted to deny—to deny—the Jewish National Fund of the United States general consultative status at the body, a status that roughly 2,800 other nongovernmental organizations already enjoy.

Such actions, which appear to stem from an anti-Israel bias, only serve to undermine the trust of the American people in the evenhandedness of the United Nations as a whole. I look forward to your views on how to make ECOSOC a more effective and nondiscriminatory organization.

With Americans dying in combat in foreign lands and our international prestige at an all-time low, our Nation demands capable representatives to advocate for our interests overseas. I look forward to hearing your views on how you intend to serve as representatives of our great Nation.

And at this moment I think we'll go to our nominees. We may be joined by other members of this committee. We'll turn to our nominees for their opening statements. And I'd encourage you to keep your remarks brief, as we always say, no longer than 5 minutes each, if you can hold to that, so we can move to questions. And if you're summarizing your statement, the text of your full statement will be included in the hearing record.

And I also know this is a proud moment for each of you, and also for your families, and maybe friends, as well, so I'd encourage you to introduce family and friends who are present today when you deliver your opening statement.

And at this moment I think we'll start, first of all, with Ambassador Burns.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM J. BURNS, NOMINEE TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It truly is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to become Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for their confidence in me and in our diplomat service, in which I am proud to have served for the last 26 years. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work closely with you and all of your colleagues on this committee, as I have throughout my career.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to begin by expressing deep appreciation to my family—to my wife, Lisa, and daughter, Sarah, who are still in Moscow, and my daughter, Lizzy, now in the midst of her final exams at Duke University. As in so many Foreign Service families around the world, their love and sacrifice are a very large part of why I am here today. I can never repay them adequately.

This is the fourth time, Mr. Chairman, that I've appeared before this committee for confirmation. I approach this new challenge with considerable humility, with great respect for Nick Burns, Mark Grossman, Tom Pickering, and all those who have come before me, with an abiding commitment to public service, with faith in the power of clear-eyed diplomacy in the pursuit of American in-

terests and human freedoms, and with few illusions about the complicated world around us.

It is a world with no shortage of troubles, but also plenty of opportunities for creative and determined American leadership. It is a world which faces the spreading dangers of weapons of mass destruction, new and more malignant forms of terrorism, unresolved regional and sectarian conflicts, failed and failing states, global economic dislocation, and transnational health, energy, illegal narcotics, and environmental concerns. It is a world in which American vision and leadership are essential in crafting relations with emergent and resurgent great powers, in deepening their stake in global institutions and a stable international system. It is a world in which other people and other societies will always have their own realities, not always hospitable to ours. That doesn't mean we have to accept those perspectives, or agree with them, or indulge them, but it does mean that understanding them is the starting point for sensible policy. It is a world in which a little modesty in the pursuit of American interests is often a good thing, and in which there's still no substitute for setting careful priorities and connecting means to ends.

But, it is also a world in which the power of our example and our generosity of spirit can open the door to profound advances, as President Bush has shown in his historic initiative against HIV/AIDS in Africa. It is a world in which our leadership should serve as a catalyst for making common cause with others. Nowhere is that more true today than in the broader Middle East, where it is hugely important to build on the Annapolis Conference and realize the promise of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and where we must strengthen regional and international support for a better future for Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is a world, as Secretary Rice has said, in which America has no permanent enemies and in which tough-minded engagement of our adversaries, such as North Korea and Iran, is a mark of strength and confidence, not weakness. And it is a world, as Secretary Gates has argued, in which the many instruments of American soft power ought to be expanded alongside the tools of hard power.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward, if confirmed, to assisting Secretary Rice and Deputy Secretary Negroponte in coordinating our diplomacy across the major regions of the globe and toward the alliances and international organizations which are so important to U.S. national security. I will draw, as best I can, on my experience in Russia and the Middle East, two regions of the world which are rarely dull, but always central to American interests. I will work hard, with my friends and colleagues in other agencies, to promote an effective policy process. And I will also wholeheartedly support Secretary Rice's efforts, building on the world of Colin Powell, to transform and strengthen America's diplomatic capabilities for the new century before us.

Taking care of our people, of the members of the Foreign and Civil Services and the Foreign Service nationals who serve our country with such dedication and courage in so many hard places around the world, is not only the right thing to do, but also a powerful contribution to America's best interests.

Thank you, again, Mr. Chairman, for your consideration. I know the period ahead is an important one, with a political transition looming in our country in a world which doesn't stop for our political processes. I'll do all I can, if confirmed, to work with all of you to help meet the formidable challenges before us.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Burns appears at the end of this hearing transcript.]

Senator CASEY. Thank you, sir.

I wanted to note the presence of our distinguished ranking member, Senator Lugar, who joins us, as well, and I appreciate his presence here at the hearing.

Ambassador Jacobs.

STATEMENT OF JANICE L. JACOBS, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Ambassador JACOBS. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lugar, it's a distinct honor to appear before you today.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to President Bush and Secretary Rice for nominating me to be Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs.

I would also like to introduce and give special thanks to my husband, Ken Friedman, who is here with me today.

Consular work is fundamentally about service to our mission, to our citizens, and to the security of our Nation. As a career consular officer for 28 years, I have gained a broad perspective of the many and varied consular challenges our country faces. In leadership positions, as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, I have worked on the full range of consular issues, implementing changes that have transformed the security and efficiency of consular work across the range of our activities.

As Deputy Chief of Mission in Santo Domingo, and as Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, I have seen, firsthand, the outstanding work that all consular personnel—officers, locally engaged employees, eligible family members—do at our posts overseas. If confirmed, I will consider it my great privilege to lead the Bureau of Consular Affairs in protecting our Nation's security and providing the highest-quality services to our citizens.

One of those services is providing American citizens with reliable, secure passports. The Bureau took immediate action when we learned, recently, that the passport records of Presidential candidates had been improperly accessed by Bureau employees. As Acting Assistant Secretary, and under the guidance of the Under Secretary for Management, we informed the candidates, reminded all Bureau employees of their legal obligation to safeguard the privacy of passport records, and requested the Office of the Inspector General to begin an investigation, which is ongoing. We are exploring further measures to protect the privacy of American citizens and strengthen the integrity of the passport process.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will be vigilant in ensuring that the American public's trust in the Bureau is well placed and that the personal information they provide to us is kept safe.

CA has greatly improved the efficiency of passport processing. Despite demand that now runs 7 percent above last year's record 18.4 million passport issuances, I'm pleased to report that there is no backlog of passport applications. We are meeting higher demand by hiring hundreds of new staff, establishing new passport agencies, expanding existing facilities, and producing a passport card to meet the needs of our citizens on the northern and southern borders. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to provide reliable passport services to our citizens.

In discharging our visa responsibilities, consular officers sit literally on the front lines on the global war on terror, contributing to national security. They strengthen our borders by detecting and deterring the entry of those who seek to break our laws. They strengthen our society by helping reunite American families through legal immigration. Since 9/11, the Department's challenge has been to enhance the security of our borders while keeping America's doors open to the world. Our commitment to the "Secure Borders, Open Doors," joint vision of Secretaries Rice and Chertoff has transformed visa processing and enabled us, for example, to issue an all-time record of 651,000 student and scholar visas last year. If confirmed, I will continue this commitment to improve the security and efficiency of visa processing and ensure that America continues to welcome legitimate international visitors.

Of course, our primary responsibility is to serve and protect American citizens overseas. We provide our citizens with services around the cycle of life. We register births, replace lost passports, help people vote, and comfort families when Americans are sick, in jail, or have died. Consular officers touch people's lives.

We devote special effort to protecting children. On April 1st, we implemented the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption to provide better protections and transparency for children and families in intercountry adoptions. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure CA continues our outstanding record of service to our citizens.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will look forward to working with the Secretary to ensure consular support for America's foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the committee to ensure that the world's finest consular corps continues to meet its obligations to our citizens and to our Nation.

Thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today, and I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Jacobs appears at the end of this hearing transcript.]

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Ambassador.

Mr. McMahan.

STATEMENT OF T. VANCE McMAHAN, NOMINEE TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR AND AN ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. McMAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee. I'm honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. I'm deeply grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for their confidence in me.

I hope that my legal background in the field of banking and finance, as well as my extensive experience in government and work on a number of public policy issues, from education to healthcare to global competitiveness, will contribute to my effectiveness in this position.

I strongly believe the United States role as a force for good in the world, that, working with global community, we can help free people from hunger and disease, poverty and illiteracy, tyranny and violence, allowing them to realize their full potential as human beings.

The United States has led an effort to bring new ideas and fresh approaches in a number of areas, including the economic policy debate at the United Nations. Our approach, in line with the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development, emphasizes the importance of sustainable economic growth in development policy, linking new aid from developed nations to real reform in developing ones.

Our guiding principle is based on building partnerships. It's a balanced approach which promotes a central role of national governments in their own development and the importance of international investment, trade, and credit markets, and expanding economic opportunities for the world's poor. If confirmed, I will continue to advance our view that foreign assistance, in the context of good governance and sound domestic policy, can play a catalytic role, but it cannot substitute for open international trade and the ability to attract private capital.

The Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC, is at the center of these activities, and, through its resolutions, functional commissions, and regional commissions, is an important venue to promote key U.S. interests. The United States, as an ECOSOC member, has worked closely with our member states to integrate our shared views into U.N. policies on the role of economic growth and national development strategies that can bring real change to the lives of many.

Through the work of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, we are also pursuing the global goals, in the Millennium Declaration, of reducing poverty and hunger, improving health and education, and combating major diseases. Achieving these goals will require greater focus on, and innovative approaches to, sustainable development in the fragile and failing states where many of the so-called "bot-

tom billion" live, those who have been left behind as the rest of the developing world has moved ahead. The extreme poverty and instability in these states affects the entire global community. If confirmed, this will be one of the most important items on my agenda.

In addition to its important work on economic growth and development, ECOSOC also plays a critical part in the promotion of human rights and social justice. Unfortunately, the Geneva-based Human Rights Council, which, in 2006, replaced the former Commission on Human Rights, has been a grave disappointment in this regard. To date, that body and many of its members remain unwilling to meet the council's mandate of addressing gross and systematic violations of human rights. Until the council improves, we will not legitimize it with our formal participation. If confirmed, I will continue to press for the council to approach its work with the seriousness that the United States and the international community expect, and to eliminate the selective bias that we've observed in its work so far.

I would also continue to work with our partners to push for action by the General Assembly's Third Committee to hold accountable violators of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In addition, I would also work to build on existing initiatives of the United States in the General Assembly and other fora to fight human trafficking, to improve the status of women, and increase their political participation and economic influence around the world.

I would also like to emphasize our strong commitment to the promotion of democracy. The United Nations Democracy Fund, created by Secretary General Annan in 2005, plays an important role in strengthening democratic institutions at the level of civil society. The fund is already supporting 122 projects in 110 countries, and, if confirmed, I will look forward to continuing our work as members of the Advisory Board to further the goals of the fund.

Finally, I would like to underscore that I believe our work at the U.N. will only succeed insofar as the U.N. as an institution succeeds. The United States is spearheading the U.N. Transparency and Accountability Initiative to improve the organization's efficiency across the entire U.N. system. The U.N.'s daily impact on the well-being of so many around the world makes it vital that the entire U.N. system join this initiative to safeguard the U.N.'s resources and its credibility.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify today and for considering my nomination. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with members of the committee and the committee staff to advance U.S. efforts at the U.N. to promote international peace and security, sustainable economic development, and respect for human dignity.

I'd be happy to respond to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McMahan appears at the end of this hearing transcript.]

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Mr. McMahan. I appreciate it.

And we appreciate the presence of the ranking member, Senator Lugar, and he'll start our questioning.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, it's a privilege to have you before the committee once again and to have an opportunity to thank you and

commend you for remarkable service in Russia and, before that, in the Middle East—many people are not as well aware of your achievements in that sector—in addition.

I was pleased just to note, over your right shoulder, former Ambassador Jim Collins, who is here today, and it is wonderful to have Jim Collins in the audience, likewise, an old comrade in spirit regarding Russia.

Let me just ask—turning, a moment, to a near neighbor of Russia—about recent Georgian actions. Without attempting to characterize the motivation for movement in those two parts of Georgia in which Russia continues to play an active role, what do you perceive is the motivation? Is this coercion of Georgia or, really, an attack upon NATO in the discussion of Georgian membership or—give us some feel for where that is headed.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you very much, Senator Lugar.

As you know, the United States has made very clear our support for Georgia's territorial integrity and our strong concern about some actions, which the Russian Government has recently taken, which undermine Georgia's territorial integrity. Part of the calculation on the part of the Russian Government may have to do with its clear opposition to the further enlargement of NATO along its own borders. I think, in terms of our response, it's very important for us to do all we can to make common cause with our European partners and to stress, in a strong and steady fashion, that ours is a collective concern. As one small indication of that, in Moscow in the next couple of days we're going to be approaching the Russian Foreign Ministry again—not separately, but collectively, along with the Germans and some of our other key European partners in the so-called Friends of Georgia—again, to underscore our concern.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I appreciate that response. I am certain he reached out in directions to friends, wherever he can find them, but I received an urgent call from President Saakashvili last Thursday, in which he was most hopeful that our administration would speak out; likewise, individual Members of Congress. Senator Biden and I drafted an op-ed piece, which appeared in the Washington Times yesterday, trying to affirm the importance of Georgia, and, likewise, the importance of its territorial integrity and its aspirations to us. So, I appreciate your statement today, and we look forward to the administration's vigorous pursuit of that idea.

Let me just ask, for a moment, about the START treaty. We had an opportunity to discuss this privately earlier today, but, just for the record, is the administration now committed to trying to reach agreement with regard to a START treaty verification regime before that expires next year? What are the sticking points? What do you foresee, really, to be the course of activity of the United States and Russia with regard to the START situation?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, sir, President Bush reaffirmed, when he met with President Putin in Sochi earlier this month, the U.S. commitment to a legally binding post-START agreement, and I think the administration feels a sense of urgency about this, not only because of the importance of a post-START agreement for relations between the United States and Russia and for our bilateral interests in strategic stability, but also, I think, because Russia

and the United States have both unique capabilities and unique responsibilities in the nuclear field, and I think the successful conclusion of a legally binding post-START agreement would send a powerful signal to the rest of the world of our responsible exercise of that leadership in managing our own remaining nuclear arsenals. And at a moment when the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons is as serious as it's ever been in human history, I think that kind of United States-Russian leadership is very important.

Senator LUGAR. How vigorous do you perceive our leadership in the remainder of this current Presidential term?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, President Bush was very clear when he met with President Putin and President-elect Medvedev in Sochi, and also in the Strategic Framework Declaration that was released by the two presidents afterward, about our commitment to trying to conclude a legally binding post-START agreement.

As you know, Ambassador Boyden Gray has a new assignment; namely, to go out and visit with countries about energy issues—Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, a good number of other countries in which the need for the flow of oil and natural gas to the rest of the world—it's a portfolio that increases the flow from something that is more exclusively Russian to much more worldlike, on behalf of our European allies, as well as our own country. How can we work with the Russians or others for them to understand this, in addition to these countries that Ambassador Gray will be visiting? How coordinated is the administration's point of view in taking a look at potential hazards to our European allies, quite apart from the need for us to work in developing relations with other countries through personal visitation?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Senator Lugar, I can think of two or three steps which are very important for us to take.

The first is to recall the set of principles which were agreed at the G–8 Summit in St. Petersburg that was hosted by Russia in the summer of 2006, principles which emphasized the importance of diversity, of diversification of sources, of transit routes, principles which emphasized the importance of sanctity of contracts, as well as transparency in the way in which the global energy market works. And so, I think it's very important, at the upcoming G–8 Summit, in our own diplomatic efforts with our partners in the European Union and directly with Russia, to strengthen adherence to those principles.

Second, I think it is also very important, just as you discussed with Ambassador Gray, for the United States to engage in the most active diplomatic efforts possible throughout Central Asia, because active personal diplomacy, it seems to me, is extremely important in the pursuit of those principles from the St. Petersburg G–8 Summit, especially diversification.

And finally, it is important to engage Russia. It is, today, the world's largest producer of hydrocarbons, of oil and gas. It is, by any definition, a major player in the global energy market. There are some overlapping interests with regard, for example, to energy efficiency, especially as Russia moves to the liberalization of its domestic gas prices; that's going to become a more important goal for Russia itself, and there are things we can learn from each other

on that. So, engaging the Russians is also an important element of any successful strategy.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, this concludes the questions I have for Ambassador Burns, so I would either relinquish or carry on, as your instruction.

Senator CASEY. Go ahead and carry on.

Senator LUGAR. Let me, first of all, introduce a statement for the record by Senator Hagel, our colleague.

Senator CASEY. Without objection.

[The information previously referred to appears at the end of this hearing in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section.]

Senator LUGAR. Now, let me now turn to questions for Secretary Jacobs.

Many of us have been contacted by constituents specifically regarding adoptions in Vietnam, Guatemala, and Romania. I know these issues have come to your attention. But, what can you tell us about the situation in these and other countries of concern? And how has our formal adoption of the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoptions changed our situation in these or other countries?

Ambassador JACOBS. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

First of all, let me say—in my statement, I talked about how CA touches people's lives. And, I think, on the issue of intercountry adoptions, perhaps there's no issue that is more emotional for everyone involved—for the adoptive parents, certainly. We are looking out for the interests of the adopted child and the biological parents, as well. The State Department has long supported intercountry adoptions as a viable option for children in need of placement in a permanent home. And, as we have done that, we have also supported two principles: one of transparency, another is the practice of ethical standards and procedures in carrying out the adoptions in the adoption process itself.

Our recent accession to the Hague Convention, on April 1st, we think really reaffirms our commitment to those principles. We are strong supporters of the Hague's processes and abilities to introduce more transparency into the system and to really have the protections necessary for all parties involved in the adoption process.

With regard to the countries that you mentioned, Guatemala is a member of the Hague. They actually joined in 2003, but they did not pass the implementing legislation necessary to create the infrastructure necessary to do processing until December of last year. And so, they are still going through what we went through, quite frankly, for a number of years, in setting up the rules and the infrastructure in order to allow adoptions under Hague standards.

We, as a Hague country now, have to wait until they have their infrastructure in place before we can do new adoptions; however, there are cases that were in process before December 31, which we are working on, and we are working very closely with the Guatemalan Government and others to see how we can do those on a case-by-case basis.

In Vietnam, the situation is a little more troubling. Vietnam is not a member of the Hague. It is something that we strongly encourage the Vietnamese Government to do. We and the Govern-

ment of Vietnam actually stopped adoptions in 2002 because of serious irregularities. We signed a memorandum of agreement with them in 2005 that allowed adoptions to begin again, and we saw a resurgence. We processed about 800 adoptions out of Vietnam last year. However, over the course of time, our embassy in Hanoi has discovered a number of troubling practices, suggesting corruption, perhaps baby-buying, baby-selling, things that we really cannot condone. We have raised our concerns with the Vietnamese Government. We have told them that we are not going to be able to renew the current agreement in its current form because there has been little progress on some of the things that we were looking for in that agreement: transparency—transparency in the fees that are paid is especially important. And so, the Vietnamese Government announced, just today, that, in fact, we are not going to be able to renew the memorandum.

So, our plan is to continue to work with the government to try to address some of these concerns, the fraudulent patterns that we've noticed, and perhaps, once we have been able to work those out, to sign another agreement. In the meantime, cases that are already entrained—we will be working on those on a case-by-case basis, up until the time that the MOA expires in September.

We do certainly want to work with the families. We have a 60-day standard that we have in place, where we try to answer families with any questions or concerns. And I know that people in the Bureau are in frequent contact with the families. If I'm confirmed, I commit to you that we will continue that close interaction with the families.

Senator LUGAR. How about Romania?

Ambassador JACOBS. Romania is another situation where the government itself has decided to limit adoptions, and we are in the process of talking to them, as well.

Senator LUGAR. Let me just indicate that I'm certain all committee members are pleased with your report that the wait times for passport applications have not only dramatically dropped, and you're back to normal. As you've stated, there's not a perceptible backlog. Can you, just for the sake of the record, remind each of us of the cost of a U.S. passport, as well as the new passport card that can be used for Mexico and Canada? And, likewise, how much does it cost to apply for a U.S. visa to enter this country? Are there cost problems there that you perceive, with regard to foreign students and/or other entry persons to the United States, that deserve your attention or congressional attention?

Ambassador JACOBS. Thank you, Senator.

The current cost for a first-time passport applicant is $100; and for a renewal, is $75. The passport card—I have a sample of it, actually, here—we've talked a lot about this new card that we're getting ready to start printing in June—will be in full production by July. If you are renewing—if you have a passport book, and you are getting a card, it's only $20. If you are simply buying the card itself, it's $45 for adults, $35 for children.

All of our costs, of course, are based on what it costs us to provide the service. The Bureau of Consular Affairs is fee-based; and so, we do carry out periodic cost-of-service studies in order to tell us what it is costing us to provide the services that we do.

We know, on the student visas, that there is a lot of concern about trying to keep the price as low as possible in order to encourage foreign students. We are very happy to see that the number of foreign students is increasing; in fact, the overall number of foreign-student enrollment in the United States went up by 3 percent last year. I mentioned the number of visas that we actually issued. We're very happy about that.

We are doing a cost-of-service study right now. The current fee for, not just students, but for nonimmigrant visas—applicants around the world—is $131. We had to raise that in January, primarily because of a new fee that the FBI is charging us in order to check the fingerprints that we collect on applicants against the FBI database. We are doing this cost-of-service study now. It is possible that that fee may change once that study is completed, later in the fall. I don't know how that's going to come out. But, I certainly remember, sir, sitting before you in previous hearings, and you raised concerns about that fee, and I can commit to you that we will try to keep it to cover just our costs, and try to keep it at a reasonable level.

Senator LUGAR. I think you made an excellent explanation of how you arrive at it, and I hope the study can lead to a more favorable result. The fact that there are 3 percent more students, as opposed to the trend the last time we met—and the committee has been concerned with this, really, for 5 years, as we saw, really, a caving-in of the numbers, and now some resurgence, which is very promising. And, of course, the more volatile hearings of the committee on the subject were with regard to the long lists of constituents who were calling all of our offices in a state of emergency, or worse. The fact that that has been relieved is further a godsend for all of us, and we appreciate work that has accompanied that.

Let me just ask, How is the status of passport production components going along—specifically, the microchip security issue? And why is it that no American companies are capable of manufacturing the chip domestically, as I understand it? Why do we have the chips made overseas? And are there security implications involved in that production?

Ambassador JACOBS. Thank you, sir.

First of all, I want to assure you and the American public that the State Department is committed to providing the most secure document possible in compliance with ICAO standards that allows international travel. Back when we decided to do our electronic passport, in 2003, we did a request for information; and, at that time, it was apparent to us that there were not going to be any U.S. suppliers who could provide the type of chip that we were looking for. And so, we did turn to overseas companies, primarily European, to produce both the chip and the antenna that goes into the electronic passport. Those components, though, are all sent by secure delivery to the GPO here in the United States, and the passport itself is assembled in secure facilities here in the United States. The components themselves are commercially available. They are used in other documents, such as DHS's Trusted Travel Card and credit and debit cards. And when they are sent to the GPO, they are actually locked, so there's no way to enter information on them or fool around with them in any way.

And so, once, the chips and the antenna that are put together—just really actually glued on a piece of plastic overseas, and it's that piece of plastic that gets sent to the GPO. It is only when we receive the books that the personal data is put on the chip, and it's locked down so it cannot be tampered with or changed in any way.

The GPO, at some point, will be recompeting the contract, and if, at that time, there are American suppliers who can provide the chip in the quantity that we need, then I'm sure that that will be taken under consideration. But, let me just say that, at the time, there really were no U.S. suppliers.

Senator LUGAR. You've gone backward and forward on the security situation, convinced yourselves and others that this is okay? In other words, we're not going to come back to the committee with people indicating that some devious practice, something is known in the United States that we did not want to have known?

Ambassador JACOBS. No, sir. Our whole process has been looked at by NIST and others who have really looked at the process and also the security features of the document and the passport card themselves, which have been looked at by a number of scientists and the forensic document lab at DHS. And we are quite confident that it is secure.

Senator LUGAR. Finally, I'd just note that, really, through your data, that the visas are rising in requests from China and from India. Not surprising, given the economic activity, students, everybody. Are we prepared to meet this rising demand? This, hopefully, will not cause a crisis at the desks, but you've sensed the demand. And maybe there are other demand situations you also have sensed. Can you give us reassurances in that area?

Ambassador JACOBS. Yes, sir. Certainly, one of the biggest challenges that Consular Affairs faces right now is this growing demand; and it's not just on the visa side, but across the board, in all the services that we provide. But, you correctly point out that in China, India, Brazil, Mexico—really those are the big-four countries for us, where we're seeing double-digit growth every year right now—we are very focused on the problem, the challenge of trying to meet that demand. And I can assure you that, if I'm confirmed, that we will do the planning necessary so that we have the resources in place to address those challenges.

Senator LUGAR. May I continue?

Senator CASEY. Sure.

Senator LUGAR. All right.

Let me ask Mr. McMahan—you've already addressed the problems of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, as we perceive it. And why does this persist, at least in your judgment? Clearly, the United States has been offering suggestions. You even suggested our lack of participation, if things don't shape up. What are the fundamental causes of this malaise that spreads over this Geneva situation?

Mr. MCMAHAN. Thank you for that question, Senator.

I know we've been very disappointed, as you said, in the failure of the Council to address gross violations of human rights, and we've been working closely with our allies to try to improve the Council. But, at this point, we feel like we have more leverage from the outside, and that actually joining the Council, as some people

have urged, would actually legitimize it, and the Council has not earned that, at this point. I think we'll continue to work with our allies to try to change the Council, to try to make it more effective and fair.

What I think we could also do is work with the Third Committee at the United Nations, where we've had more success in passing country-specific resolutions. Last year, we passed resolutions on Belarus, Iran, and North Korea, and Burma.

So, while we will continue to work to improve the Human Rights Council, we'll also continue to work through the Third Committee at the General Assembly to make sure our concerns in the human rights area are addressed.

Senator LUGAR. For the sake of information and the hearing record, try to differentiate the Third Committee, as opposed to the Human Rights Council, or the relationship between the two, and why one might work, apparently, more effectively, and the other, Third, is not.

Mr. MCMAHAN. To the best of my knowledge, the Human Rights Council is a separate council, and the membership blocs there can prevent—well, so far, effective response on the more egregious human rights violations. Working through the Third Committee—it's part of the General Assembly, a broader group of member states—we feel like we can form more effective coalitions to address——

Senator LUGAR. So, it's a broader membership.

Mr. MCMAHAN.—Right.

Senator LUGAR. You have a larger constituency in the Third Committee.

Mr. MCMAHAN. Correct. Yes, sir.

Senator LUGAR. Please discuss, for just a moment, the current relationship between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, which seeks to ensure that recently recovering fragile states not lapse into chaos. What bearing does this have on our agenda? Of what assistance is it to us, or what assistance can we give to that effort?

Mr. MCMAHAN. Thank you, Senator.

If confirmed, this would be an important issue for me, in the sense I believe that we need to focus on the fragile and failing states. There's a—quite a bit of discussion on the Millennium Development pact goals to reduce poverty and hunger, to improve health and education, to combat diseases. And we think that those challenges are particularly acute in those failing states. And to the extent that we can build infrastructure, institutions of good governance, sound economic policies, and aid civil society, provide civilian expertise, and increase capacity, then we will have better success in addressing those fundamental challenges.

So, I look forward, if confirmed, when I'm up there, to evaluating the effectiveness of that organization, and working with you and your staff to see if it can meet those goals.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I appreciate the responses of each of the witnesses.

And let me just pay tribute, again, to our distinguished chairman, Senator Casey, for stepping forward to chair the hearing. It's very important that the nominations have a very timely action in

the committee and the Senate, because each of the roles that you play, for the very reasons we've been discussing this afternoon, are tremendously important to our country and to international organizations. So, thank you very much for stepping forward. I appreciate very much my chairman's indulging these questions, ad seriatim.

Thank you.

Senator CASEY. Senator Lugar, I want to thank you. I've learned a great deal from you in my time—short time in the Senate, and I'm—we're honored to have you here.

I want to just start, Ambassador Burns, with you, with regard to Iran. We hear an awful lot about Iran in the news, as we have for many years. I guess, if you're an American who is not following the news closely every day, or not following every development in our relationship with a lot of countries, but especially Iran, you might miss some things. I guess from your vantage point, as someone who's had broad experience, not only most recently in Russia, but your experience in the Middle East and your experience in diplomacy, generally, what do you think is our central challenge when it comes to Iran? If you can please do two things. One is, identify the threat, as best you can articulate it, and then, the challenge that that threat presents to us.

Ambassador BURNS. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I think, first, it's important to understand that the challenge that Iran poses is a challenge to the international community, and that the problem that we face today with regard to Iran is not just about the United States and Iran. I think we, like other members of the international community, have serious concerns about Iranian behavior, the behavior of this Iranian regime across a wide range of issues, whether it's the support for extremist militias in Iraq or whether it's Iran's continuing efforts to develop a nuclear weapons program. I would say those are the—are among the principal challenges we face today.

I think it's very important, as we've been trying to do, to make common cause with others, with other countries who share those concerns and trying to deal with Iranian behavior. We have dealt directly with the Iranians in the past over Afghanistan, we deal directly with Iran today with regard to our concerns over Iraq, and we may have another meeting in the coming weeks which will be an opportunity for us to emphasize the seriousness of our concerns about support for extremist militias. Because it seems to me, in Iraq, that the issue is not whether or not Iran has interests; Iraq is a big neighbor which has a complicated history with Iran. The issue is how it pursues those interests and whether or not it's pursuing those interests in a way which destabilizes Iraq or contributes to stability in Iraq.

With regard to the nuclear issue, we've worked hard in recent years with the other Permanent Members of the U.N. Security Council, as well as Germany, to try and sharpen, for Iran, international concern about its nuclear weapons program, about the—of its nuclear program, the importance of Iran meeting its obligations to the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as to the U.N. Security Council, where Iran is still in defiance of three U.N. Security Council resolutions, as well as the IAEA. And I think we need to continue to pursue that kind of strong, steady, diplomatic

approach with regard to Iran, because the nuclear issue, I think, remains one of the most serious challenges that we face anyplace in the world today.

Senator CASEY. And when you look at the—upon your confirmation, when you look at the next 9 months, the remainder of this administration, what do you see as the game plan? What do you see as the strategy for the administration over the next 9 months? Because I think there are those who would say—in fact, I think your predecessor said that the Iranian problem will remain for the next administration, at least with regard to—if not beyond—the nuclear threat. But, what do you—how do you see the next 9 months playing out, in terms of—if you were able to choreograph, as none of us can—but, if you were able to choreograph the positive set of developments for the next 9 months, how would you see that?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think, as I said, our aim is to try and find a diplomatic resolution to the Iranian nuclear challenge. And what we've tried to do with our partners in that effort is to sharpen the choice for the Iranian regime, to make clear what's possible if Iran meets its obligations to the U.N. Security Council, to the IAEA, if it agrees to suspend enrichment and reprocessing activity. What's possible is a suspension of the existing U.N. Security Council sanctions, as well as a direct engagement at—even at the ministerial level, with the United States and our other partners to talk about a range of issues. But, at the same time, it's important, as we did in the most recent Security Council resolution, to reinforce the point that there are consequences for noncompliance, as well, with the requirements of the international community.

I think the sanctions which have been implemented so far have begun to have some impact on the Iranians; there are 35 or 40 major banks which don't do business with the Iranian Government anymore, it has become a little bit more difficult for the Iranians to finance projects, there's greater scrutiny of materials and cargo that passes toward Iran, and of individuals who have been connected with a nuclear program before. And so, we need to reinforce that track of our efforts, as well.

But, as I said before, Mr. Chairman, I have no illusions. I mean, this is a very complicated problem, but it's one which is going to require a really determined diplomatic effort.

Senator CASEY. And I would argue that there needs to be a strategy to this. We know we have to deter their ambitions, we know that the effects—the positive effects, from our vantage point, that financial sanctions can have. I think what a lot of Americans are confused by, or sometimes misled by, often because of what some public officials say, but also because of the way these issues are covered—they see Mr. Ahmadinejad make incendiary statements, but they also, at times, have seen our government say some things that sometimes aren't consistent with what the diplomatic strategy should be—and often, it is. I don't think it helped when the President used the phrase "World War III," although I would agree with a lot of the strategies that have been employed with regard to sanctions, with regard to developing an international—or a response by the international community to the threat. So, I think language is important.

But, how do you see—when our Government talks about leaving options on the table, how do you see that playing out in the next 9 months? I think there's a sense that this administration might skip over or not fully discharge every option on the table before it gets to a military option. How do you view that? And how do you view that threat from our Government? Do you view it as credible, or do you view it as something that's been dissipated by recent events?

Ambassador BURNS. Mr. Chairman, I think the President and Secretary Rice have been very clear about our determination to pursue a diplomatic approach, as complicated as that is. And that remains our policy. It's prudent not to take options off the table, but our focus right now is very much on the diplomatic effort on which we've been engaged for some years now. It's often frustrating, but I think it's very important to pursue that with all the vigor that we can.

Senator CASEY. How do you see—in your recent experience in Russia—the significant role that Russia is playing in a lot of our foreign policy challenges, not the least of which is the challenge posed by Iran, and we know that Russia recently initiated fuel shipments to the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran. How do you see the impact of that kind of relationship, generally; but, in particular, that particular economic relationship with the shipment of fuel?

Ambassador BURNS. Mr. Chairman, the Bushehr Project and the recent shipment, I think, actually can provide an opportunity to drive home to the Iranians that the nuclear issue is not about their right to pursue civilian nuclear power, and that if the Iranians are simply interested in having a civilian nuclear plant, they have no need to enrich fuel on their own or to master the fuel cycle on their own, because the Russians, through the Bushehr Project, are providing fuel for the plant, and then have very carefully arranged for the spent fuel to be returned to Russia, which strikes us as being a sensible approach, not just in Iran, but, more widely, with regard to the challenge of making civilian nuclear power available to developing countries and to countries around the world, but to do it in a way which guards against the dangers of weapons proliferation. So, I think Bushehr, about which, in years past, we have had quite legitimate concerns, has evolved into a project which can be an opportunity to sharpen the reality that, if the Iranians are only interested in developing civilian nuclear power, they don't have a need to enrich fuel at this stage, because Bushehr doesn't require them to do that.

Senator CASEY. So, you see it as more helpful than harmful.

Ambassador BURNS. I think it can be. Yes, sir.

Senator CASEY. I wanted to ask you—and I know we want to move to our other witnesses, as well, but I wanted to ask you also about Russia, your most recent assignment.

We've seen a lot of changes. Most recently, President Putin has presided over a lot of developments. Just by way of a quick summary: cracking down on civil society groups and democratic reformers—in a sense, creating almost a de facto one-party state, employing energy resources to intimidate and coerce neighbors into engaging in bellicose rhetoric against proposed U.S. missile defense de-

ployments; and finally, suspending compliance with the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, something that I raised months ago. What's your sense of the—of our relationship, in the context of those developments? And also—just broadly, in terms of the past or history—recent past—and also in the context of a new President, Mr. Medvedev, who we're learning a little bit about, but we don't yet know, (a) what kind of leadership style he'll bring, and (b) whether or not he'll be unduly influenced by Mr. Putin.

Ambassador BURNS. Mr. Chairman, we have a big, complicated relationship with Russia which combines elements of cooperation in some very important areas with elements of competition and conflict. And I think those are going to be the contours of our relationship for some time to come. You rightly listed a number of areas where we've had real differences with the Russian Government, whether it's as a result of the overcentralization of power at home in Russia, differences over missile defense, differences of NATO's enlargement, but, at the same time, I think, when you look at nuclear cooperation, what we can do together to set a good example for the rest of the world to work against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, when you look at our increasing economic ties, when you look at ways in which we can work well together in resolving some regional conflicts around the world, I think you also see those parts of the relationship in which we really do need to invest. It's not a relationship that we have the luxury of ignoring, because Russia is not only, as I said before, the world's largest producer of hydrocarbons today, it's the only nuclear power in the world comparable to the United States, it's a Permanent Member of the U.N. Security Council, it's a huge country which connects Europe to Asia and sits astride the broader Middle East. So, by any of those calculations, it's a relationship that requires our careful attention, to be plainspoken where we have differences, but, at the same time, to try to expand areas of common ground.

In Mr. Medvedev's presidency, I think a lot of the focus for Russia itself is going to be on addressing the opportunities it has before it. You know, you've had very rapid economic growth—7-percent annual growth over the course of the last 8 or 9 years—enormous economic potential. But, the question now, I think, for Russia is, So, what are you going to do with that moment of opportunity? And I think there are areas in our relationship where we can help reinforce the potential for Russia to take advantage of those opportunities in a way which integrates it into the global economy and into the global system and makes it a more responsible international player. That's going to take time, but I think it's worth working on, on our part.

Senator CASEY. How do you see—if you can comment on this—that relationship between those two individuals? Are we likely to see, in the near future, a declaration of independence by the new President, or do you think it's going to be a more intertwined or dependent relationship?

Ambassador BURNS. Mr. Chairman, it's—if there's one thing I've learned over the years about Russia, it's to be humble in making predictions. So, it's—Russia doesn't have a great deal of experience with dual-leadership kind of arrangements. Assuming that President Putin becomes the next Russian Prime Minister—from every-

thing I can see, the personal relationship between President Putin and President-elect Medvedev is a strong one. But, this is going to be a challenging period for Russia, and a lot rides on it, in terms of how Russia addresses some of those challenges that I described before, in its own self-interest. So, it's going to be fascinating to watch.

Senator CASEY. I'll jump ahead, and then I want to have Senator Lugar continue.

Ambassador Jacobs, I wanted to ask you about two passport matters, both of which you've heard a good bit about. One, in the instance where we had a breakdown, where people weren't getting their passports in a timely fashion, and the other involving a much smaller group—in this case, three Americans who just happened to be running for President. I wanted you to comment on both—(a) why you think there was such a breakdown in both instances, and (b) what's being done about it now—if you can update us on both.

Ambassador JACOBS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

With regard to your first question about the passport surge of last year, we had predicted a certain number of passports—we had commissioned a study that told us that there would be around 16 million people applying for passports—when, in fact, in the end, we wound up issuing about 18½ million. What we did not expect was the very rapid response to the new information about Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative deadlines. As a result of that, starting last December and then for about a 3-month period, we had around 5 million applications that came in. And as you can expect with that kind of demand, we found ourselves with long backlogs. Our normal processing time is around 4 weeks. We went all the way up to 12 weeks.

The Department, through a number of resources, went into action to address the situation. We used people in the Bureau of Consular Affairs. We also used other people in the Department who, thankfully, helped us out. We used our officers overseas to help us adjudicate renewal applications at our overseas posts, and set up task forces and use volunteers. We managed to get back to our normal processing times by Labor Day last fall, which we're very happy about.

I'm very happy to tell you that the situation today is very different. We, in fact, are implementing a long-term strategy to provide the staffing levels and infrastructure that we need to handle what we consider to be a permanent rise in passport demand. In fact, we will probably do anywhere between 19 and 21 million passports this year. We could do as many as 30 million next year, and as high as 36 million in 2010.

We have hired hundreds of new passport specialists to help us adjudicate applications. We are expanding some of our current facilities. We are building new printing facilities that will be able to handle up to 10 million passport books and cards a year. And I am clearly confident that we are going to be able to handle the demand that I just described to you.

If I'm confirmed, I commit to you that I will stay on top of this. We, in fact, have put together a so-called "battle plan" with trip wires; whereby, as soon as certain numbers are reached, we have a ready reserve force trained and ready to come in and help us out.

Again, we can use our overseas posts to help us with renewals of passport applications. And so, I believe we are going to avoid a repeat of what happened before, and I think that we will be able to provide the American public the service that they deserve.

On the issue of the passport breaches, the unauthorized access of the three remaining Presidential candidates, I can tell you that as soon as senior management was informed about these breaches, we launched into action. I went to the Under Secretary for Management, Pat Kennedy; we talked about it; we informed the candidates about the situation; we asked the inspector general to conduct a full investigation of what happened, and that investigation is ongoing. And we formed a working group, made up of senior people and other people from around the Department, to look at our current procedures and processes, to make sure that we have adequate safeguards in place.

We know that we have the American public's trust to guard the information that is given us in connection with passports, and we certainly want to adhere to that and to meet that expectation.

We will be putting new procedures in place. We will wait for the inspection or the investigation results to come out to know exactly, perhaps, the extent of the problem, but we are ready to move against people who have made these unauthorized accesses into files, and we will be taking necessary steps. Our ultimate goal is to provide every passport file with equal protections.

Senator CASEY. And when you say that—I'm paraphrasing—that "actions will be taken," or—can you identify any changes, any systemic changes that have already been implemented?

Ambassador JACOBS. Yes, sir. We have started doing random checks, audits of people who are working on passport files. We have a warning that goes on the screen as soon as you log into the system. We have reinforced that warning, made it very clear about the penalties involved with looking at files without a reason to do so, and we are looking now at our systems itself to see how we might be able to provide more tiered access to passport files.

Senator CASEY. Do you think there were—in terms of the number of files that were accessed—do you know the numbers?

Ambassador JACOBS. What we have in place, sir, is a flag system; and for people who are on the flag list, as soon as anyone accesses that file, there's an e-mail notification that goes to an office where this is monitored. And so, we know about all of those, and we have followed up on those. The inspector general is actually looking at a random list of passport files, and we'll have a better idea about the number of people who have looked at files after that study is completed.

Senator CASEY. Well, we'll see what—once that is completed. Do you have any sense of the timing or duration of that investigation?

Ambassador JACOBS. I expect the results will be coming out in the next few weeks.

Senator CASEY. I want to let Senator Lugar continue, and I'll jump back in.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions.

Senator CASEY. Mr. McMahan, I wanted to ask you a few questions and focus principally upon something that I had a strong interest in that I was greatly disappointed about. It was the applica-

tion of the Jewish National Fund of the United States for general consultative status with the—or, I should say, at the U.N. Economic and Social Council. And I know the vote was 8 to 7; and, for the life of me, I can't understand why that wouldn't have passed. And if you can shed some light on why it—why that wasn't able—why they weren't able to be given that consultative status, and (b) whether or not you think that could change in the near future if we had another vote.

Mr. MCMAHAN. Thank you for that question, Senator.

I wasn't there, so I can't speak to the intricacies of that particular vote, but I did see the concern expressed by your office on that issue. As you know, it's important to grant consultive status, and we certainly seek to find those organizations that are sympathetic to our democratic values to be granted consultive status. There are over 3,000 organizations that currently have that status, and it's important to nongovernmental organizations, because, not only can they attend meetings of the United Nations, its various bodies, but they can testify as a witness.

So, I think that—if confirmed, and once I'm working in New York, I will seek to grant NGO status to those organizations that are sympathetic to our democratic values, and I think we have to work hard to make sure that those organizations that are providing needed services, like humanitarian services, are not denied consultive status for political or, in this case, anti—possible anti-Israeli reasons.

Senator CASEY. And what's your game plan with regard to that? How do you use your influence? And, by extension, how do you see the influence of the United States Government to make sure that this kind of discrimination doesn't persist?

Mr. MCMAHAN. I think it's important to work with your allies where you find them, to make sure that organizations that are applying for this important consultive status are not denied for reasons that really have nothing to do with the core function of the organization. And that's something that I'd like to work with your office on and make a priority when and if I get to New York.Senator CASEY. Thank you.

And I wanted to go back to Ambassador Burns, on Iran, for a second. We've had a good deal of discussion in the last 6 months or more about the recent NIE that some people here in Washington, in both parties, interpreted as, "Everything's okay, don't worry." I didn't interpret it that way, against—I think, sometimes in conflict with my own party. But, what's your sense, if you can tell us—and I know you're transferring to a different area of responsibility—but, what's your sense right of the current situation as it pertains to the NIE saying that Iran may not have had in place the mechanics to develop a nuclear weapon, but there were, in fact, some elements of it? The uranium enrichment, for example. Where do you see that right now? What's your sense of where Iran is?

We've had recent information, where President Ahmadinejad announced his intention, at least, to add 6,000 new centrifuges to the already existing 3,000 at the one facility, in Natanz. But, what's your sense of that, in the context of this debate about what—what was the meaning and what was the value or the content of the NIE conclusions?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think, as you pointed out, the NIE really addressed only one of the, sort of, three essential ingredients in the pursuit of a weapons program, and that is the issue of weaponization itself. But, what it did not address are two areas which are at least as important, and that has to do with the production of the fuel that you need for a weapons program and the development of advanced missile systems or means or delivery. In both of those areas, it's clear that the Iranians are working as hard as they can to move as fast as they can.

Now, it is also true, historically, that oftentimes the Iranian leadership will exaggerate—seems to exaggerate the pace at which it's moving in some of those areas. But, I think the trend line is clearly a very troubling one, not only, as I said before, Mr. Chairman, for the United States, but for the international community, because the reality remains that Iran has not met its obligations to the International Atomic Energy Agency, to the U.N. Security Council. And so, it seems to me that the totality of Iran's nuclear efforts remains a source of very serious concern for us, notwithstanding the NIE, or at least some people's interpretation of it.

Senator CASEY. Senator Lugar. Nothing more?

Senator LUGAR. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CASEY. Let me just—

Well, with that, I wanted to, first of all, commend and thank our nominees for, not only your presence here today and your—the questions that you answered, but, in a broader sense, your willingness to serve the United States Government and the American people.

And I know that, for committee members who weren't here, the record will be open for 2 days to submit additional questions for the record, and I'd ask each nominee to respond in a prompt manner to those questions.

But, if there's no further business to come before the committee, we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:10 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHUCK HAGEL, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA

Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening today's nomination hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations committee. One of the nominees, Ambassador William J. Burns, is the President's choice to be the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs at the Department of State—one of the most important positions in our country's diplomatic service. The Under Secretary for Political Affairs is the most senior Foreign Service post in the U.S. Government and carries with it immense responsibility, requiring an experienced and steady hand.

Ambassador Burns is one of America's most able diplomats and I am proud to strongly support his nomination to this position.

Today, the world faces one of the most dangerous and transformational times in our history. The world faces defining challenges . . . great instability in the Middle East, genocide in Africa, tensions with Russia and China, a resurgence of turmoil in the Balkans, growing unrest and transnational threats in Latin America, a global food crisis, and mounting anti-Americanism throughout the world.

Bill Burns has dedicated his career to public service, and he has done so with excellence and honor, earning widespread respect both here and around the world. I have had the opportunity of working with Bill for many years. He brings a strong

record of diplomatic experience to this important position, having served as the U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Ambassador to Jordan, and . . . as acting Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs . . . the position for which he is being considered today.

In the challenging times that we face, there are also historic opportunities for the United States across the world . . . opportunities that will extend well beyond 2008. A principle task for the administration must be to make every effort to set the stage for the next administration to address the pressing challenges of the 21st century. I believe that Ambassador Burns will meet this responsibility. I am proud to support the nomination of Ambassador William Burns to be Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

I want to thank Bill's family—his wife, Lisa, and his two daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah—whose support, as we all know, is essential to succeeding in a demanding job such as this.

The outgoing Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Nick Burns, deserves the committee's recognition and appreciation for his lifetime of diplomatic service. Nick served this country well as Under Secretary over the last 3 years. I wish him much continued success in his future endeavors.

The committee looks forward to hearing the testimony of Ambassador Burns, as well as that of the other nominees, Janice Jacobs to be Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs and Vance McMahan to be the U.S. Representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. I believe that both these nominees are qualified and deserve speedy consideration by the committee. I wish all three of these professionals continued success and look forward to working with them at this critical time in our history.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM J. BURNS, NOMINEE TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to become Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for their confidence in me, and in our diplomatic service, in which I am proud to have served for the last 26 years. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust, and to work closely with all of you on this committee, as I have throughout my career.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by expressing deep appreciation to my family—my wife, Lisa, and daughter, Sarah, who are still in Moscow, and my daughter, Lizzy, now in the midst of her exams at Duke University. As in so many Foreign Service families around the world, their love and sacrifice are a very large part of why I am here today. I can never repay them adequately.

This is the fourth time, Mr. Chairman, that I have appeared before this committee for confirmation. I approach this new challenge with considerable humility; with great respect for Nick Burns, Marc Grossman, Tom Pickering, and all those who have come before me; with an abiding commitment to public service; with faith in the power of clear-eyed diplomacy in the pursuit of American interests and human freedoms; and with few illusions about the complicated world around us.

It is a world with no shortage of troubles, but also plenty of opportunities for creative and determined American leadership. It is a world which faces the spreading dangers of weapons of mass destruction; new and more malignant forms of terrorism; unresolved regional and sectarian conflicts; failed and failing states; global economic dislocation; and transnational health, energy, illegal narcotics, and environmental concerns. It is a world in which American vision and leadership are essential in crafting relations with emergent and resurgent Great Powers, and deepening their stake in global institutions and a stable international system.

It is a world in which other people and other societies will always have their own realities, not always hospitable to ours. That doesn't mean we have to accept those perspectives or agree with them or indulge them, but it does mean that understanding them is the starting point for sensible policy. It is a world in which a little modesty in the pursuit of American interests is often a good thing, and in which there's still no substitute for setting careful priorities, and connecting means to ends.

But it is also a world in which the power of our example and our generosity of spirit can open the door to profound advances, as President Bush has shown in his historic initiative against HIV–AIDS in Africa. It is a world in which our leadership should serve as a catalyst for making common cause with others. Nowhere is that

more true today than in the broader Middle East, where it is hugely important to build on the Annapolis Conference and realize the promise of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and where we must strengthen regional and international support for a better future for Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is a world, as Secretary Rice has said, in which America has no permanent enemies, and in which tough-minded engagement of our adversaries, such as North Korea and Iran, is a mark of strength and confidence, not weakness. And it is a world, as Secretary Gates has argued, in which the many instruments of American "soft power" ought to be expanded alongside the tools of hard power.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward, if confirmed, to assisting Secretary Rice and Deputy Secretary Negroponte in coordinating our diplomacy across the major regions of the globe, and towards the alliances and international organizations which are so important to U.S. national security. I will draw, as best I can, on my experience in Russia and the Middle East, two regions of the world which are rarely dull but always central to American interests. I will work hard with my friends and colleagues in other agencies to promote an effective policy process. And I will also wholeheartedly support Secretary Rice's efforts, building on the work of Colin Powell, to transform and strengthen America's diplomatic capabilities for the new century before us. Taking care of our people—of the members of the Foreign and Civil Services and the Foreign Service Nationals who serve our country with such dedication and courage in so many hard places around the world—is not only the right thing to do, but also a powerful contribution to America's best interests.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for your consideration. I know the period ahead is an important one, with a political transition looming in our country, in a world which doesn't stop for our political processes. I'll do all I can, if confirmed, to work with all of you to help meet the formidable challenges before us.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANICE L. JACOBS, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman and members of the Foreign Relations Committee, it is a distinct honor to appear before you today. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to President Bush for nominating me to be Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have placed in me in selecting me for this position. I would also like to introduce and give special thanks to my husband, Ken Friedman, who is here with me today.

As a career consular officer for 28 years, I have had the privilege of serving the United States in places as varied as Mexico, France, and Nigeria, with people I have come to know as the world's finest consular corps.

Consular work is fundamentally about service—to our mission, to our citizens, and to the security of our Nation. If confirmed, I will consider it my great privilege to lead the Bureau of Consular Affairs in meeting our current and future challenges and provide the highest quality services to our citizens.

In the course of my career, I have gained a perspective on the challenges our country faces. As Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, I worked on the full range of consular issues and have seen how the Bureau of Consular Affairs has prepared for and responded to those issues.

As Deputy Chief of Mission in Santo Domingo and as Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, I know the outstanding work that all consular personnel overseas—officers, locally engaged employees, eligible family members—do to protect American citizens and America's borders.

I was there in the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, when we instituted new practices and implemented new legislation to improve visa security. I was there when we implemented procedures to address the post-9/11 decline in visa applications—measures that led to record-high student and exchange visitor visa issuances last year. I was there when the Departments of State and Homeland Security launched the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative to implement Congressional legislation requiring Americans to present passports when crossing our borders. I was there as we drafted regulations to increase protections for children and implement the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoptions.

KEY CONSULAR CHALLENGES

The mission of the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) is to protect the lives and interests of American citizens abroad and to strengthen the security of U.S. borders through the vigilant adjudication of visas and passports. CA is keenly aware of its

direct and tangible role in the overarching mission of the Department of State to "create a more secure, democratic, and prosperous world for the benefit of the American people and the international community."

CA faces compelling challenges across the range of our activities and continues to rely on a tradition of innovation and a dedication to excellence to meet these challenges.

Providing American Citizens With Secure, Reliable Passports

CA is charged with adjudicating applications for one of the most valuable travel documents in the world: the U.S. passport. We are responsible for issuing passports in a manner that ensures that the application process is accessible to all Americans, and that only those entitled to the privileges and benefits of U.S. citizenship receive one.

Integrity of the process and the product is an essential ingredient of this responsibility. Americans who apply for passports need to know that the information they provide in a passport application will be appropriately safeguarded. They need to know that the document is secure, and that they will receive their passports in a timely manner. The American public entrusts the Bureau of Consular Affairs with millions of personal records. As a service organization, CA is determined to ensure that trust is well-placed.

Over the past several months we have learned of cases in which passport records of current presidential candidates were accessed for other than official business. While the Department has no indication that the incidents were motivated by other than imprudent curiosity, no one is more aware than I of the impact that such actions have on the public trust placed in us.

We took immediate action from the moment these incidents were reported. As soon as I was notified, in my role as Acting Assistant Secretary, of the incidents of improper access on March 20, 2008, I conferred with the Under Secretary for Management. We then informed the Presidential candidates and their staffs of the incidents and our response. We asked the Office of the Inspector General to begin an investigation of the incidents; that investigation is ongoing. I also sent a notice to all consular employees and other agency partners to remind them of their legal obligation to safeguard the privacy of passport applications and passport holders.

The Department of State's passport database tracking system includes an invisible flag on individual passport records of high-profile individuals. When such records are accessed, an alert is automatically sent to two headquarters managers. Based on the alert, a manager contacts the individual who accessed the record for an explanation, and informs the supervisor and other senior managers for appropriate action.

Three individuals have been terminated, to date, for improperly accessing passport application records. While our safeguards for detecting improper access to passport records worked as intended, the experience demonstrated that there were areas where we could improve.

On March 24, we formed a working group with representatives of all key bureaus to conduct a comprehensive review of internal management and controls procedures for passport processing and develop initiatives to strengthen the security of the passport process. Our goal is a more secure system that will provide equal and effective safeguards to all passport applicants' records, and in which all Americans can have confidence that their data will be appropriately safeguarded.

If confirmed, I am determined that we will reach that goal, and continue to be responsible stewards of the information with which we are entrusted.

Meeting Passport Demand

Preserving the integrity of the passport process is essential given that we are adjudicating more passport applications than ever before. In fiscal year 2007, the Department issued 18.4 million passports—a 52 percent increase over fiscal year 2006 and an 80 percent increase over fiscal year 2005. Thus far in fiscal year 2008, there is a 7 percent increase in passport demand over the same time period in fiscal year 2007.

Last year's record-setting growth in demand for passports resulted in unusually long delays in passport application processing. In response, and with the committee's support, CA expanded hours at all agencies; stood up domestic task forces; deployed consular officers, Presidential Management Fellows, retirees, and other personnel from throughout the Department to domestic passport agencies; piloted electronic adjudication of renewal cases at overseas posts; and hired over 400 additional personnel. This concerted effort succeeded, and the Department returned to an average of 4 to 6 weeks' turnaround for passport applications by September 30.

CA has made tremendous progress since last spring and summer. Our efforts to staff, expand, and equip the domestic passport agencies and centers are paying off in much improved service to our customers this year. Today, I am pleased to report that there is no backlog of passport applications. Current processing times are well within our established customer service standards of 4 weeks for routine applications and 2 weeks for expedited applications.

Implementation of WHTI has created a permanent increase in passport demand, and the Department believes it will continue to grow. Approximately 88 million Americans—about 28 percent of all citizens—currently have passports. CA's initial workload projections for fiscal year 2008 indicated demand for U.S. passports could reach as high as 26–29 million in 2008, 30 million in fiscal year 2009, 36 million in fiscal year 2010. Although the Department continues to prepare for that possibility, current workload indicates that fiscal year 2008 demand may be more in the range of 20–21 million passports. The Department attributes this decline to Congressional action mandating implementation of the final phase of the land and sea rule of WHTI no earlier than June 1, 2009. This legislation passed subsequent to the most recent demand study. The Department fully expects demand to increase as the June 1, 2009 implementation date approaches.

The Department is implementing a long-term strategy to provide the staffing levels and infrastructure necessary to meet the increased passport demand. CA has hired hundreds of additional passport adjudicators and support staff and continues to recruit aggressively. CA has established a reserve corps of passport adjudicators to supplement its full-time Passport Services staff, providing the ability to react quickly to demand surges. We have also developed the capability to adjudicate passport applications remotely at select consulates overseas, leveraging the expertise of our consular officers abroad.

To increase production capacity, in March 2007 the Department opened a mega-processing center in Hot Springs, AR (APC). The APC differs from our other passport centers in that it focuses solely on printing and mailing passports and has the capacity to produce 10 million travel documents per year. The centralization of passport printing and mailing frees up space and personnel at our existing passport agencies to focus on the critical areas of customer service, fraud detection and prevention, and adjudication, thus processing more passport applications. Using APC as a model, the Department will open a second printing and mailing facility in Tucson in May. This facility, like the one in Arkansas, will have the capacity to produce over 10 million travel documents per year.

In addition to its 18 passport facilities, the Department will open three new passport agencies in Detroit, Dallas, and Minneapolis to serve border communities by providing personal, direct passport services to customers with immediate travel needs. These agencies will have the capability to issue passport books and cards on site to qualifying applicants. The Department is also expanding existing agencies in Seattle, Chicago, Houston, Miami, and New Orleans, and doubling the size and processing capacity of the National Passport Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Production of U.S. passports is secure. The U.S e-Passport is assembled by the Government Printing Office (GPO) at its secure facilities in the United States with components and an inlay manufactured in Asia, as well as European manufactured electronic components. GPO receives blank, locked chips connected to a commercially available antenna via secure delivery from an overseas supplier. The use of foreign-source chips does not pose significant security issues since the chips themselves are commercially available, and are used for other government and commercial purposes such as trusted traveler and first responder cards issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as well as credit and debit cards.

In response to the expressed desire for a more portable and less expensive document than the traditional passport book on the part of American citizens who live in border communities, the Department will begin issuing a wallet-sized passport card in June, with full production beginning in July. The passport card will facilitate entry and expedite document processing at United States land and sea ports-of-entry when arriving from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean region, and Bermuda. The card may not be used to travel by air. It will otherwise carry the rights and privileges of the U.S. passport book and will be adjudicated to the exact same standards. The passport card is designed for the specific needs of border resident communities and is not a globally interoperable travel document as is the traditional passport book.

Taken together, the enhancements the Department proposes in the production and distribution of U.S. passports will represent the most significant advancement in passport delivery in U.S. history. These combined efforts will ensure the delivery

to the American public of one of the most secure and valuable documents on the planet.

Visa Issues

In discharging our visa responsibilities, consular officers sit literally on the front lines of the global war on terror, contributing to national security. They strengthen our borders by detecting and deterring the entry of those who seek to break our laws. They strengthen our society by helping reunite American families through legal immigration.

The events of September 11, 2001 redefined our approach to visa work. In the aftermath of that terrible day, our challenge was to move swiftly and decisively to implement several significant changes to visa processing practices—some mandated by law, others by regulation or other agency direction—more or less simultaneously. We have worked hard to increase visa security measures, completely changing the business model for processing visas and vastly improving our communication with other agencies.

Our latest list of security enhancements to the visa process runs to more than 10 pages. Many of these changes reflect innovative uses of technology to detect and prevent fraud in visa applications. We are also working closely with our colleagues in the Department's Diplomatic Security Service to ensure vigorous criminal prosecution of visa and passport fraud. Our close coordination and exchange of information with the Department of Homeland Security is also a vital part of our shared border-security mission.

Security is and always will be our top priority in visa operations. At the same time, however, we have never forgotten that welcoming legitimate international visitors is an equally important element of national security. We firmly believe that the goals of security and openness are not contradictory, and we are determined to meet both. Our approach is guided by the January 2006 Joint Vision of Secretaries Rice and Chertoff for Secure Borders and Open Doors in the Information Age.

The drop in visa demand experienced immediately after 9/11 has been reversed, and our metrics are up across the board. For example, in fiscal year 2007 overall nonimmigrant visa demand climbed 10 percent to 8.5 million. We issued 650,000 student and scholar visas, surpassing pre-9/11 figures for the first time. This is due to the changes we have implemented, changed global economic conditions, but also to the relentless outreach we have conducted with industry, academic groups, and foreign audiences around the world to deliver the message that America's welcome mat is out for legitimate foreign travelers.

Our challenge now is to continue to improve service and security while meeting demand that is rising worldwide, and particularly in key countries such as India, Brazil, and China. We have developed a 2-year plan that integrates technology with innovative process changes.

We have implemented a number of enhancements as part of this plan. All nonimmigrant visa applicants use an electronic visa application form. We have implemented electronic interagency clearance of security advisory opinions. All visa-issuing posts collect 10 fingerprints, the biometric standard selected by the U.S. Government to ensure consistent screening of foreign nationals entering the United States. We established a worldwide goal of 30 days for an NIV appointment (exclusive of respective programs already in place to expedite student and business applications), and are meeting this goal at over 80 percent of our posts.

The next phase will be the rollout of a completely online visa application process—which will consolidate existing forms and permit applicants to submit data directly before visiting a consular section. We are currently piloting this process at our posts in Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey, Mexico, and hope to pilot it in a non-Mexico post this summer. We hope that this process will be available for posts worldwide to use later this year.

The online application system can be used in tandem with an offsite data collection (ODC) process, where data entry, photo capture, and fingerprint collection can be done at an offsite facility, thereby removing much of the administrative tasks burdening most consular sections. Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey are using the ODC process, which we plan to expand to other Mexican posts in preparation for the increase in renewal applications for border crossing cards.

This year we will also begin to develop an online form for immigrant visa applications, as well as a secure electronic way to manage immigrant visa medical forms.

By fiscal year 2009, we expect to have in place a system that results in significantly more data reaching consular officers prior to an applicant's personal appearance for interview, allowing consular officers to identify high-risk applicants early, and permit more rapid processing of readily approvable cases.

Protecting American Citizens Overseas

Of course, our primary responsibility is to serve and protect the approximately 4 million Americans who reside overseas and 30 million who travel abroad each year. We continue to improve the quality and the access to reliable information for travelers through our Consular Information Program and our Web site, travel.state.gov—which received 343 million page views last year. Toll-free call centers are available to answer questions about the full range of consular services. Our Internet-based registration system has over one million registrations, and has proven invaluable as a means to communicate directly with Americans abroad during crises.

Yet despite new technologies, consular work continues to be about touching individual lives as we provide services around the cycle of life. Last year, for example, we registered 55,000 babies as American citizens, visited 7,377 jailed American citizens, assisted families of 7,092 Americans who died overseas, and helped thousands of others with information, notarials, welfare and whereabouts, and other services.

When called upon to assist Americans abroad during crises—such as the South Asian tsunami in 2004, Hurricane Wilma in 2005, or Lebanon in 2006—our crisis management team launches into action, managing task forces staffed by consular personnel and volunteers from other bureaus, and providing affected posts with human and technological support. We developed Web-based crisis software that allows us to track emergency cases involving American citizens and to communicate with concerned family members—we used it to track 120 Americans evacuated from Chad and 200 Americans who requested embassy assistance in Cameroon this year, for example. We conduct regular crisis management exercises, and plan for anticipated increases in demand for services—we will deploy additional personnel to assist our posts in China to be able to swiftly and effectively assist American citizens during the upcoming Beijing Olympics.

Consular sections help American citizens overseas to exercise their fundamental right to vote. We work closely with the Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program to provide absentee voting information to diplomatic, official, and private American citizens abroad. We have reached out to a large number of groups, scheduled a record number of voting workshops at posts abroad, arranged with courier companies to transport absentee ballots, coordinated with the Department's diplomatic pouch management to speed transmission of ballot requests and voted ballots, and publicized information widely to ensure that American citizens will be able to participate in this year's elections.

Children's Issues

As it is in every area, our workload in children's issues—intercountry adoptions and international parental child abduction is growing as well. Our Office of Children's Issues was founded in 1994 with four people. We now have over 40 officers handling adoption, abduction, and abduction prevention cases.

In our work on intercountry adoptions, we are guided by a simple yet vital principle: that the best interests of children be respected in every intercountry adoption.

Americans adopted over 19,000 children from overseas in 2007. The Department of State will continue to assist American parents and strongly support intercountry adoption as an option for children in need of permanent family placement, and continue to encourage transparency and ethical practice as safeguards against fraud and abuse in intercountry adoptions.

This is why the Department has strongly supported U.S. membership in the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. I am proud to say that on April 1, the Convention entered into force for the United States. This was a major milestone. The Department must continue its outreach to key stakeholders on the impact of the Convention, and to continue to develop the procedures and capacity to fulfill our responsibilities as Central Authority for the Convention. If confirmed, I look forward to solidifying U.S. implementation of this important treaty.

The Hague Convention, and the safeguards it promotes, is the best protection against fraud and abuse in intercountry adoptions. If confirmed, I will continue to use our best efforts to encourage the establishment of meaningful safeguards in countries where we see problems, offering assistance and support as they work to establish transparent and ethical adoption programs. I will continue robust efforts to encourage non-Hague countries to accede to the Convention, and to adopt Hague-compliant procedures to the greatest extent possible, in the case of those that have not yet decided to join the Convention.

International parental child abduction is one of the most agonizing situations a parent or child can face. We will never stop pushing on these issues, because the pushing—even if it takes years—yields results. We have helped 161 children return to their parents in the first 6 months of fiscal year 2008. After years of dedicated

efforts to resolve a series of sad and difficult cases, we are heartened that Saudi Arabia has adopted a policy that when a Saudi marries a foreigner he must sign a statement guaranteeing that the foreign spouse and any children will be free to depart the Kingdom without condition. If confirmed, I will continue this vital work.

We are focused on assimilating the incoming case work that used to be done by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). As of April 1, OCS/CI is now handling all international parental child abduction cases involving the United States—some 1,260 cases, involving 1,600 children.

In countries that are party to the Hague Abduction Convention, we will continue to work with Central Authorities to encourage returns. In countries not party to the Hague Abduction Convention, we will continue to look for creative, lawful ways to resolve these cases.

I know that adoption and abduction cases are emotional issues that touch children and parents at the most personal level. If confirmed, I will work with this committee to do all we can to assist children and families.

Training and Leadership

The Bureau's procedures and processes have changed dramatically. We have similarly improved how we prepare consular staff. CA provides robust training in fraud detection and prevention skills. Our Consular Training Division at the Foreign Service Institute has added training in how to assist victims of crime, countering international parental child abduction, interviewing techniques, and procedures for intercountry adoptions under the Hague Convention.

CA is dedicated not only to preparing outstanding consular officers, but outstanding leaders in the Department and U.S. Government service. With input from consular staff at 87 posts, we developed 10 Consular Leadership Tenets, a set of shared principles of what we in CA believe leadership looks, acts, and feels like. We have integrated leadership training into every course offered in the Consular Training Division at the Foreign Service Institute. A Consular Leadership Development Committee continues to explore ways and develop tools to help consular staff at all levels to model leadership in their work environment.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to promote training and leadership development in CA, to ensure that America benefits from the best-prepared consular professionals.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, the Bureau of Consular Affairs continues to face compelling challenges across the range of our activities. We are fortunate to have talented staff and creative ideas for meeting them. We have developed detailed strategies and have moved aggressively to implement them.

If confirmed, I will look forward to working with the Secretary to ensure consular support for America's foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I will continue to keep you informed of our resource needs, and work with you to ensure that the world's finest consular corps will continue to meet its obligations to our citizens and to our Nation.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF T. VANCE MCMAHAN, NOMINEE TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR AND AN ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. I am deeply grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for their confidence in me.

I hope that my legal background in the field of banking and finance, as well as my extensive experience in government and work on a number of public policy issues, from education to health care to global competitiveness, will contribute to my effectiveness in this position. I strongly believe in the United States role as a force for good in the world and that, working with the global community, we can help free people from hunger and disease, poverty and illiteracy, tyranny and violence—allowing them to realize their full potential as human beings.

If confirmed, I will do my best to represent the values of this great country at the U.N. and build upon efforts to promote reform and increased effectiveness and

accountability across the U.N. system. Our success is critical to people around the world whose day-to-day livelihoods depend on an effective United Nations.

The United States has led an effort to bring new ideas and fresh approaches in a number of areas including the economic policy debate at the U.N. Our approach, in line with the Monterrey Consensus on financing for development, emphasizes the importance of sustainable economic growth in development policy, linking new aid from developed nations to real reform in developing ones. Our guiding principle is based on building partnerships. It is a balanced approach, which promotes the central role of national governments in their own development, and the importance of international investment, trade, and credit markets in expanding economic opportunities for the world's poor. If confirmed, I will continue to advance our view that foreign assistance, in the context of good governance and sound domestic policy, can play a catalytic role, but it cannot substitute for open international trade and ability to attract private capital. Achieving sustainable economic growth will also help achieve the fundamental principles of the U.N.—peace, human rights, social progress, and a better quality of life.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is at the center of these activities, and through its resolutions, functional commissions, and regional commissions, is an important venue to promote key U.S. interests. The United States, as an ECOSOC member, has worked closely with other member states to integrate our shared views into U.N. policies on the role of economic growth and national development strategies that can bring real change to the lives of many. Through the work of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, we are also pursuing the global goals in the Millennium Declaration of reducing poverty and hunger, improving health and education, and combating major diseases. Achieving these goals will require greater focus on and innovative approaches to sustainable development in fragile and failing states, where many of the so-called "bottom billion" live, those who have been left behind as the rest of the developing world has moved ahead. The extreme poverty and instability in these states affects the entire global community. If confirmed, this will be one of the most important items on my agenda. Greater prosperity for all builds stronger institutions, better governments, peaceful societies, and a safer world in which the United States can thrive.

In addition to its important work on economic growth and development, ECOSOC also plays a critical part in the promotion of human rights and social justice. Unfortunately, the Geneva-based Human Rights Council, which in 2006 replaced the former Commission on Human Rights, has been a grave disappointment in that regard. To date, that body and many of its members remain unwilling to meet the council's mandate of addressing gross and systematic violations of human rights. Until the council improves, we will not legitimize it with our formal participation. If confirmed, I would continue to press for the council to approach its work with the seriousness that the United States and the international community expect; and to eliminate the selective bias that we have observed in its work so far. I would also continue to work with our partners to push for action by the General Assembly's Third Committee to hold accountable violators of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In addition, I would also work to build on existing initiatives of the United States in the General Assembly and other fora to fight human trafficking and improve the status of women and increase their political participation and economic influence around the world.

I would also like to emphasize our strong commitment to the promotion of democracy. The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), created by Secretary-General Annan in 2005, plays an important role in strengthening democratic institutions at the level of civil society. The fund is already supporting 122 projects in 110 countries and, if confirmed, I would look forward to continuing our work as members of the advisory board to further the goals of the fund.

Finally, I would like to underscore that I believe our work at the U.N. will only succeed in so far as the U.N. as an institution succeeds. The United States is spearheading the U.N. Transparency and Accountability Initiative (UNTAI) to improve the organization's efficiency across the entire U.N. system. The U.N.'s daily impact on the well-being of so many around the world makes it vital that the entire ITN system join the UNTAI effort to safeguard the U.N.'s resources and its credibility.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify today and for considering my nomination. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with members and committee staff to advance U.S. efforts at the U.N. to promote international peace and security, sustainable economic development and respect for human dignity. I would be happy to respond to your questions.

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. Based on your long experience in government, how important is it that our collection of intelligence and unclassified information is truly global and that we don't continue to allocate what the Intelligence Community has called disproportionate resources to current crises, rather than to strategic challenges and emerging threats around the world?

Answer. The Intelligence Community always has to strike the right balance between current and longer term intelligence requirements. It needs to anticipate developments 10 or more years into the future and still have crucial intelligence that informs our approach to today's crises and negotiations. Secretaries of State have long looked to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to help meet both those needs. In response, INR has continuously refined its analytic focus. In late 2001, for example, INR determined its daily intelligence summary duplicated other IC products and discontinued it in favor of devoting more time and resources to providing the Secretary with longer range analysis. INR has and will continue to refine and rebalance its analytic efforts in line with our Secretaries' requirements and intelligence reform.

Question. I am gravely concerned that we do not have strategic collection plans that address all the ways that the United States Government gets information about the world, not just from the intelligence community but from diplomatic reporting and open sources, and that, in turn, we have failed to allocate budgetary resources in a strategic fashion. This kind of strategic planning and resourcing should presumably be the job of the interagency process, but in many cases it appears broken, ineffective, or simply nonexistent. Do you agree, first, that the U.S. Government's need for information about the world is met through a combination of intelligence and nonclassified information gathering, and, second, that interagency strategies are vital for collecting this information?

Answer. Yes, I agree on both points. At State, both on the policy and intelligence side, we have always argued that good information is good information, regardless of its source. For example, few in the intelligence community would deny the high value diplomatic reporting provides, despite its relatively low level of classification. In recent years, the Internet has magnified the value of open source reporting. For example, State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research has a Humanitarian Information Unit that relies entirely on unclassified open sources, including overhead photography, to support humanitarian and disaster relief. We are likely to turn increasingly toward open sources as more and more information becomes available online, and traditional intelligence collection systems are retargeted to meet our highest priority challenges like international terrorism and proliferation. Fully exploiting open source material clearly demands interagency cooperation and approaches. At State, we welcome the DNI's creation of the Open Source Center and increased funding for open source collection and exploitation. On an equally important level, INR has increased its investment in language training, sometimes with ODNI support, to improve its ability to exploit the very rich environment of the Internet. We also continue to cooperate with the DNI to develop strategies and priorities to collect information.

Question. How would you see your role—and the role of the State Department more generally—in implementing and coordinating initiatives such as public diplomacy, democracy promotion, and foreign assistance when both State and the Defense Department, as well as other agencies, are involved? This is something we see frequently on the African continent so I am particularly interested to hear your thoughts regarding that region of the world.

Answer. The Secretary of State has specific and distinct authorities on foreign assistance and in the conduct of foreign policy. Under the Foreign Assistance Act and the Arms Export Control Act, the Secretary, under the direction of the President, is responsible for the continuous supervision and general direction of economic assistance, military assistance, and military education and training programs. Under current authorities the Secretary of State has approval authority over 87 percent of the entire Foreign Operations request (fiscal year 2009). If confirmed, as Under Secretary for Political Affairs I would coordinate closely with the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance and partner with counterparts at DOD and other U.S. Government agencies to balance the U.S. presence and efforts internationally and to ensure a comprehensive, integrated, and deconflicted implementation of foreign policy and foreign assistance, including in Africa.

The establishment of a dual-hatted Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance and USAID Administrator has led to continued improvement in the interagency coordination of activities such as public diplomacy, democracy promotion, foreign assistance, and budget planning. For fiscal year 2008, for example, with the establishment of common objectives, a common program lexicon, and common budget and program planning processes, State (including PEPFAR) and USAID were able to improve coordination, with steps taken toward greater MCC and DOD coordination. For fiscal year 2009, MCC and DOD were formally added as participants in State and USAID's budget and program planning process, in addition to their coordination in the field.

The evidence of such coordination is illustrated by a number of examples: In Ghana, for instance, USAID is focusing its programming on enhancing the capacity of local government, which is responsible for implementing MCC compact activities in economic growth. In Honduras, USAID programming focuses on trade and investment capacity building and private sector competitiveness, in order to complement MCC compact investments in infrastructure and agricultural diversification.

In addition, a number of joint Department of State and Department of Defense initiatives are being successfully implemented. DOD's section 1206 authority has been used, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to provide vital train and equip assistance to foreign countries to strengthen their capabilities in counterterrorism and in engaging in stability operations with U.S. Armed Forces. Section 1207 authority has been relied upon to provide DOD resources in support of State Department reconstruction, security, and stabilization programs.

A number of additional activities are ongoing for this year that we hope will further improve coordination. A strong interagency country strategy development process is being planned for specific pilot countries. The 3-to-5-year strategic plan will be developed by the field, under the leadership of ambassadors, and is explicitly targeted to include full interagency, other donor, and where appropriate, host government participation. As with last year, the annual operational plan process will provide additional opportunities for the interagency in the field to develop comprehensive program plans, working together to ensure coordination.

Question. As you know, there has been a lot of discussion recently regarding the concerns about how underfunded and underresourced the State Department is. How much of an increase in both human and financial resources would you recommend, and what are the budgetary implications? What do you think is needed to partner with the Defense Department in order to anticipate crises and properly address complex emergencies?

Answer. We are doing all that we can to meet the challenges of staffing more than 265 missions worldwide and effectively carry out the Department's critical foreign policy mission. Despite our best efforts, however, the Department's staffing needs exceed our current resources. Not only has our mission grown, but the number of language-designated positions in "critical needs" languages such as Arabic and Chinese, some of which require 2 years of training to reach a basic professional level of proficiency, has increased 170 percent since 2001. In addition, the number of State Department positions overseas that are designated "unaccompanied" or "limited accompanied" for reasons of hardship or danger has quadrupled since 2001, from less than 200 in 2001 to more than 850 today.

Workforce planning studies done by the Department, as well as recent reports from GAO, the Foreign Affairs Council, CSIS, and other groups, have acknowledged that the Department's funded personnel intake has not kept pace with our expanding responsibilities. We have requested additional positions for each of the past 3 years, but Congress has not approved any new positions outside of consular and security positions since 2004. As a result, the Department has been unable to overcome midlevel deficits due to hiring shortages in the 1990s and has been forced to leave some positions vacant to ensure our highest priority positions are filled with qualified personnel.

The Department's fiscal year 2009 budget request includes 1,543 new positions (1,095 from State Operations Appropriations and 448 MRV-fee funded positions) at a cost of $325,398,000. The Department's request for 520 new hire positions funded by Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) appropriations includes 300 positions to expand language training for Foreign Service generalists and specialists and 20 positions to improve public diplomacy efforts within the framework of the National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication.

The other 200 new positions funded by D&CP appropriations are required to allow the Department to increase collaboration with DOD and other national security agencies to more effectively plan for and respond to national security challenges. We have requested 75 new positions to allow for increased participation of Foreign Serv-

ice personnel in military training and joint exercises, 50 new Foreign Policy Advisor (POLAD) positions to provide invaluable support to commanders who operate in an increasingly complex world where U.S. military and diplomatic objectives intersect, and 75 new positions to facilitate the interagency cooperation and exchanges called for under the National Security Professionals Initiative (E.O. 13434).

In addition to the 520 new D&CP positions, the fiscal year 2009 budget includes 200 positions for worldwide security protection; 10 positions for embassy construction, security, and maintenance; 19 positions for educational and cultural exchanges; and 448 fee-funded positions under the Border Security Program. We have also requested 351 positions to support the Civilian Stabilization Initiative, which will permit the Department to partner effectively with the military to stabilize countries in crisis. The fiscal year 2009 budget also includes $92.1 million to hire 300 Foreign Service officers for the United States Agency for International Development—above attrition—in fiscal year 2009, a 30 percent increase in AID's Foreign Service workforce.

In addition to funding these new positions, the State Department operations request for fiscal year 2009 includes $395 million for public diplomacy to allow us to utilize new and emerging technologies to communicate America's views, values, and policies. New initiatives to be undertaken with this funding include the new Web site for foreign audiences America.gov and the inception of the digital outreach team that will engage audiences on the Internet in Arabic, Farsi, and Urdu. Our request for an investment of $414 million in information technology in fiscal year 2009 will support anytime, anywhere connectivity for our diplomats around the globe and facilitate greater collaboration among the more than 40 civilian agencies with overseas operations as well as DOD.

Question. I'd like to ask you about Iran and what you think the critical next steps are regarding this extremely difficult relationship. How should the United States go about addressing Iran's role in Iraq, its support for Hezbollah, and nuclear issues? If confirmed, what course do you intend to chart during the remainder of this administration?

Answer. We are deeply concerned by Iran's actions, including its destabilizing influence in the region, its sponsorship of terrorism, and its pursuit of technology that would give Iran a nuclear weapons capability.

IRAN-IRAQ

As pledged by the President, our forces, in cooperation with our Iraqi and Coalition partners, are destroying Iranian-supported lethal networks, recovering large weapons caches, and disrupting cross-border arms trade. In the past few years, we have learned a great deal about these networks and their Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (Qods Force) sponsors, particularly from individuals captured and detained by our forces. This knowledge has allowed us to improve our methods for tracking and disrupting their operations.

President Bush noted on April 10, that the Iranian regime has a choice to make: It can choose to live in peace with its neighbors, enjoying strong economic, religious, and cultural ties, or it can continue to arm, fund, and train illegal militant groups, which are terrorizing the Iraqi people and turning them against Iran. If Iran continues down the current path, Iran's leaders should know that we will take active measures to protect our interests, and our troops, and our Iraqi partners.

HIZBALLAH

Iranian influence is of great concern in Lebanon where Iran, Syria, and Hizballah are undermining the legitimate institutions of the government and seeking to create a state within a state in Lebanon. We continue to see evidence that Hizballah, with support from Syria and Iran's Qods Force, is rearming in Lebanon in violation of UNSCR 1701. Hizballah's own statements claiming it has rearmed since the 2006 summer war also imply serious breaches of the arms embargo. Hizballah also continues to support other terrorist groups, including and Hamas in the Palestinian territories and provides aid to militant groups in Iraq.

We will continue to take all necessary measures to prevent Hizballah from taking hostile action in Lebanon and abroad, as well as prevent the organization from assisting groups seeking to destabilize or derail the Middle East peace process. We are working closely with partners in the region to halt weapons flows and other Iranian support to prevent Hizballah from building its capabilities.

NUCLEAR ISSUE

The Iranian regime's continued defiance of its UNSC and IAEA obligations warrants a strong international response. We are utilizing multilateral diplomacy to those ends. We remain committed to a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear problem while taking no option off the table. The P5+1 has endorsed a dual-track policy toward Iran since June 2006 in which we have both pursued sanctions at the United Nations Security Council and offered Iran a generous package of incentives were Iran to take the steps necessary to restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear program.

The demands upon Iran include the suspension of uranium enrichment-related and other proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities, full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Iran's implementation of the Additional Protocol to its IAEA Safeguards Agreement, which would provide greater transparency into Iran's nuclear program. We are very pleased that in March 2008, the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) acted for a third time to impose legally binding chapter VII sanctions on Iran for its failure to comply with the council's demands (UNSCR 1803). The council's actions, and the high level of support for this third sanctions resolution, reflect the international community's continuing and profound concerns regarding Iran's nuclear program.

At the time UNSCR 1803 passed, Foreign Ministers agreed to revisit our inducements for cooperation to Iran. P5+1 Political Directors met in Shanghai April 16 and Foreign Ministers on May 2 in London where they worked to update the incentives package, originally offered in June 2006, that will be conveyed to the Government of Iran. This updated package of incentives, which we expect to be finalized soon, is an important step in the P5+1 approach to addressing Iran's nuclear program.

Moving forward, we will focus our efforts and attention on the robust implementation of the provisions of UNSCRs 1737, 1747, and 1803 to clarify to Iran's leaders the consequences of its continued noncompliance, while also keeping open the door to direct negotiations. On next steps, the resolution includes a request for a report from the IAEA Director General within 90 days (on or about June 3) on whether Iran has complied with its obligations. If the report shows that Iran has not complied, the council has expressed its intention to adopt further measures to persuade Iran to comply.

Already there are several important areas where we see our multilateral, diplomatic pressure strategy is having an impact. In implementing the U.N. Security Council resolutions, many countries have expanded scrutiny of cargo shipments, hampering Tehran's ability to acquire materials to advance their development of nuclear and missile programs. On the financial front, the cost of doing business for the Iranian regime has increased. Iran's credit risk rating has gone up, and many banks have stopped issuing letters of credit to companies seeking to do business with Iran. Major international banks—including Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank, and Commerzbank—have scaled back or completely severed their Iran-related business. This has resulted in the Iranian regime having increasing difficulty utilizing the international financial system for their proliferation or terrorist financing activities.

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. On April 16, the P5+1 (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, China, Russia, and Germany) met in Shanghai to discuss the next diplomatic steps on Iran's nuclear program.

(a) What were the concrete achievements of the Shanghai meeting? Some reports say that there is consideration of offering a fresh set of incentives to Iran—what is being contemplated?

(b) What are the prospects for a meaningful international consensus to increase diplomatic and economic pressure on Iran?

(c) Given your experiences in Moscow, how far do you assess the Russians are willing to go in pressuring Iran and under what circumstances?

Answer. The international consensus that Iran should not be permitted to acquire nuclear weapons is, in our view, strong and sustained. The P5+1 has endorsed a dual-track policy toward Iran since June 2006 in which we have pursued both sanctions at the United Nations Security Council and offered a generous package of incentives to Iran in exchange for taking steps necessary to restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear program.

Foremost of these steps is the suspension of uranium enrichment-related, reprocessing, and other proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities, full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Iran's implementation of the Additional Protocol to its IAEA Safeguards Agreement, which would provide greater transparency into Iran's nuclear program.

The United Nations Security Council has adopted three resolutions imposing chapter VII sanctions on Iran. There was not a single negative vote cast for these resolutions and two were adopted unanimously (Indonesia abstained on UNSCR 1803); this demonstrates the will and resolve of the international community to take steps necessary, including imposing sanctions, to prompt Iran to choose the path of negotiations rather than continued confrontation.

To buttress our dual track strategy, P5+1 Foreign Ministers issued a statement on March 3, 2008, alongside the adoption of U.N. Security Council resolution 1803 committing to update the original incentive package offered to the Government of Iran in June 2006. The P5+1 Political Directors met on April 16 in Shanghai and Foreign Ministers in London on May 2 to finalize the updated incentives package, an important step in our way forward on the basis of the P5+1's dual track approach.

Each of our P5+1 partners, including Russia, has committed to the dual track strategy. Through their work within the P5+1 and votes at the UNSC, the Russians have shown that they are serious in pursuing our shared strategic objective of preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability. We will continue to work with our Russian partners to increase the pressure on Iran bilaterally and within all appropriate multilateral fora.

Question. The third Iraq ministerial neighbors' conference was held in Kuwait on April 21 and 22.

(a) What were the concrete achievements of the Kuwait conference?

(b) Please provide the committee with a copy of the statement that emerged from the conference.

(c) Working groups have been set up in three areas—border security, energy, and refugees. What has been accomplished by these working groups to date?

(d) Is there any consideration to including Iraqi political issues (for example, political reconciliation, ethnic and sectarian tensions, the disposition of Iraqi federalism) within the ambit of future neighbors' conferences?

(e) Are there plans to establish a secretariat for the neighbors' conference? When will the next meeting be held?

Answer. (a) The support of Iraq's neighbors remains key to achieving the goal of a sovereign, democratic, and prosperous Iraq that is at peace with itself and with its neighbors. The third Expanded Neighbors Ministerial held in Kuwait on April 22 provided participants the opportunity to express that support and for Prime Minister Maliki to speak directly to Iraq's neighbors about the progress that the Government of Iraq has made and about what more Iraq needs its neighbors to do. The group also approved the Terms of Reference of the Ad Hoc Support Mechanism, a joint Iraqi-U.N. body intended to help keep the Neighbors Process on track by handling administrative and organizational tasks. The Organization of the Islamic Conference announced the opening of its office in Baghdad, and all participants, including Iran and Syria, signed on to the final communique, which included a pledge to adhere to the principle of noninterference in Iraq's internal affairs.

(b) A copy of the final communique issued at the conclusion of the April 22 Ministerial is attached.

(c) The Neighbors working groups on border security, energy, and refugees have served as useful fora for Iraq and its neighbors to discuss issues of mutual concern. The Border Security Working Group, cochaired by Iraq and Syria, met August 8–9, 2007 and April 13, 2008 in Damascus. The Energy Working Group, cochaired by Iraq and Turkey, met June 28–29, 2007 and March 2, 2008 in Istanbul, Turkey. The Refugee Working Group, cochaired by Iraq and Jordan, met on July 26, 2007 and March 18, 2008, in Amman, Jordan. Each working group prepared a list of recommendations to be followed up on at later meetings. The Neighbors Support Mechanism is intended to improve follow-up on the efforts of the working groups by assisting with substantive, technical, and organizational issues.

(d) The Expanded Neighbors process has focused on (1) supporting the Iraqi Government and (2) issues that are of common concern to all participants and most appropriately addressed in a multilateral setting—refugees, border security, energy, and other similar issues. Internal Iraqi political issues are inevitably raised, but participants generally are careful to adhere to the principle of noninterference in Iraq's internal affairs. In the final communique at Kuwait, the participants committed both to supporting the efforts of the Iraqi Government in broadening the po-

litical process and reinforcing political dialog and national reconciliation, and to adhere to the principle of noninterference.

In lieu of a Secretariat, the participants in the Expanded Neighbors process have created an ad hoc Support Mechanism. The Support Mechanism is located in the Iraqi MFA in Baghdad and actively assisted by the United Nations on substantive, technical, and organizational issues. The Support Mechanism is intended to liaise with member states on preparations for upcoming meetings, prepare draft agendas, maintain records of decisions reached, and carry out other administrative tasks necessary to ensure that the process continues to be successful. Participants expressed their desire to hold the fourth Expanded Neighbors Ministerial in Baghdad. A date has not yet been set.

FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE EXPANDED MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OF IRAQ, EGYPT, AND BAHRAIN AND THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE G–8

KUWAIT, 22ND OF APRIL 2008

Upon the invitation of the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq, the Foreign Ministers of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, UAE, Oman, and the Permanent Members of the U.N. Security Council and the G–8 held a meeting in Kuwait on the 22nd of April, 2008. The United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union also took part in the meeting. The meeting was designed to contribute concretely to the Iraqi Government's efforts to restore permanent peace, stability, and prosperity through invigoration of the existing national reconciliation dialog, in combating terrorism, strengthening the rule of law, and widening participation in the political process. The meeting aimed to provide ongoing strong and effective support to both the Government and people of Iraq. The meeting also served the purpose of the participant countries to reiterate their commitment to Iraq's territorial integrity, unity, full sovereignty and independence, and noninterference in its internal affairs. The meeting affirmed its continuous implementation of the obligation that it has committed to undertake in this regard.

The participants agreed to:

1. Reaffirm the respect of national unity, independence, full sovereignty, territorial integrity, Arab and Islamic Identity of Iraq; commit to the preservation of Iraq's internationally recognized borders, and pledge to adhere to a comprehensive and consistent commitment to the principle of noninterference in Iraq's internal affairs; stressing the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political system and political future and control their natural and financial resources;

2. Affirm the full support for Iraq and its people and the efforts of the constitutionally elected Iraqi Government and Council of Representatives; to achieve the goals of the Iraqi people in a speedy and effective manner for a free, prosperous, stable, united, democratic and federal Iraq that ensures the fundamental and equal rights of the Iraqi people to peacefully participate in the ongoing political process;

3. Reconfirm the commitment of the International Community and Iraq's neighbors to promote peace, stability, and security in Iraq which shall reflect positively on the security and stability of the region and the interests of its people and the international community as a whole;

4. Welcome the establishment of the Ad-Hoc Support Mechanism formed by the Iraqi Government within the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs as adopted in the Expanded Iraq Neighbours Ministerial Conference held in Istanbul on November 3, 2007; also approve the Terms of Reference of the Ad Hoc Support Mechanism, and call upon all concerned countries and organizations to cooperate with its work;

5. The conference reviewed and adopted the recommendations of the three working groups (the Energy Working Group, the Refugee Working Group, and the Security Cooperation and Coordination Working Group) as attached to this final communique; affirmed the importance of their implementation by all concerned states; and looked forward to the three committees convening their next sessions—on security in Damascus, energy in Istanbul, and displaced persons in Amman—as soon as possible;

6. Support the efforts of the Iraqi Government in broadening the political process, strengthening the elected institutions, reinforcing political dialog and national reconciliation, assisting vulnerable groups including the internally and externally displaced persons, and promoting the protection of human right and judicial and legal reform;

7. Encourage all Iraqis to engage in comprehensive political dialog and national reconciliation for the sake of Iraq's stability, unity, and its sustainable development;

8. Stress the importance to achieve Iraqi national reconciliation and accord, praising the role of the Iraqi Government in this regard, and calling on the League of Arab States to continue its efforts in coordination and cooperation with the Iraqi Government and concerned parties;

9. Applaud the continuous effort by the Iraqi Government to confront those who foment violence throughout Iraq; commend the role of the Iraqi armed and security forces in confronting and deterring the recent threats posed by armed groups; and welcome the Government's commitment to disarm and dismantle all militias and extragovernmental armed groups, enforcing the rule of law, and ensuring the state's monopoly on armed forces;

10. Stress the principle of the Iraqi national identity and invite all components of the Iraqi people to work for the enhancement of the National Unity, regardless of their political trends and ethnic and sectarian affiliations; and seek to employ the historical multicultural heritage as a means of unification not division;

11. Call upon international and regional concerned organizations (UNESCO, ALECSO, ISESCO, and IRCICA) to contribute to the preservation and revitalization of the historical heritage of Iraq, that has been destroyed or damaged due to the war; and welcome active support from the neighbours and international community for their effort, and to help the Iraqi people to retrieve their stolen heritage;

12. Acknowledge the determined endeavors of the Syrian, Jordanian, and Egyptian Governments in generously hosting Iraqis; recognize the obligations of Iraq and the international community in supporting host countries to address the resulting burdens on their services, infrastructure, and resources and to create conditions conducive to a voluntary, safe, and dignified return;

13. Acknowledge the importance of the International Compact with Iraq for the political reconciliation and reconstruction of this country, and its commitment to assist the Government of Iraq through political and economic reform, capacity building and providing conditions for sustainable development; in this context, recognize the role and potential of neighbouring countries in the construction of Iraq, welcome the decision of the Paris Club, and invite all the creditors to Iraq to follow its example, in a way that contributes in reducing Iraqi debts; welcome the willingness of the Government of Sweden to host the next session of the International Compact with Iraq; and welcome the contribution of Iraq's neighbours and regional states in the development of economic progress in Iraq;

14. Affirm the efforts of the United Nations and commend UNAMI's important role in providing support, consultation, assistance, and coordination with the Iraqi Government according to the Security Council Resolution 1770 of (2007), and other relevant Security Council resolutions; welcome the active assistance of UNAMI to the establishment of the Ad Hoc support mechanism and to its activities to support and develop regional dialog on Iraq;

15. Encourage and urge all states, in particular the neighbours of Iraq, to open or reopen their diplomatic missions, and enhance those existing by raising the level of representation, and expedite the sending of their ambassadors to Iraq, which will contribute in the improvement and development of bilateral relations; welcome the opening of the Office of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Baghdad as an encouraging development that will enable the Organization to follow up its initiatives more actively, including its Mecca Declaration initiative; welcome states who decided to reopen their embassies in Baghdad; and urge the Government of Iraq to expedite its appointment of ambassadors to neighbouring countries and others;

16. Condemn the aggression and war crimes of the former regime of Iraq against peoples of Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran,and the State of Kuwait; condemn the killing of Kuwaiti war prisoners and nationals of other countries at the hands of the former regime in Iraq, and the former Iraqi regime's coverage of these crimes for over 10 years, which is considered a violation of international humanitarian law; and welcome the steps being taken by Iraq to take the perpetrators of these crimes to courts, and also welcome the appointment of Ambassador Gennady Tarasov as U.N. high-level coordinator and commend the efforts of his predecessor, the late Ambassador Yuli Voronstov, and his achievements during his work in this humanitarian issue; invite all concerned parties to continue their cooperation with the International Red Cross Committee to uncover the fate of the rest of the missing Kuwaiti citizens and others;

17. Condemn all acts of terrorism in all its forms in Iraq, call for the immediate cessation of all such acts, support the Iraqi Government's increasing efforts in combating terrorism including all efforts to prevent Iraqi territory from being used as a base for terrorism against neighbouring countries and vice versa; and takes note

of the bilateral arrangements concluded between Iraq and neighbouring countries regarding the fight against terrorism, in this regard, support Iraqi Government efforts to strengthen the capabilities of its armed and security forces to assume full security responsibility in the country;

18. Reaffirm the obligations of all states, in accordance with international law, relevant international agreements, U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1546 (2004) and 1618 (2005), and other relevant Security Council resolutions, to combat terrorist activities and prevent the use by terrorists of their territory for supplying, organizing, and launching terrorist operations, and help Iraq to expel the terrorist organizations out of its territories;

19. Support the joint efforts of Iraq and its neighbouring countries to prevent the transit of terrorists and illegal arms to and from Iraq; reemphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation between Iraq and its neighbouring countries to control their common borders and prevent all kinds of illicit trafficking, including financial and logistical support for terrorists and terrorist organizations; and refuse instigation of violence and terror;

20. Reconfirm the decisions of the Neighbouring Countries Interior Ministerial Meetings and welcome the outcome of the last meeting which took place in Kuwait on October 23, 2007, and call for the cooperation with its secretariat based in Iraq; and

21. Welcome the convening of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference which took place in the city of Irbil in Iraq on 11 March, 2008.

The participants expressed their appreciation to the State of Kuwait for hosting the conference, and expressed their desire and hope to hold the Fourth Expanded Ministerial Meeting in Baghdad.

RESPONSES OF JANICE L. JACOBS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. Taiwan meets or exceeds nearly every criteria established by the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). Specifically, it:

- Offers visa-free travel privileges to U.S. citizens;
- Has issued machine-readable passports (MRPs) since 1995;
- Has completed a program to incorporate biometric identifiers into passports in 2007, and plans to issue E-passport starting in the second half of 2008;
- Reports the lost and stolen passports to the U.S. Government on a weekly basis; and
- Had an average 3 percent refusal rate for nonimmigrant visa applications to the United States in past years—lower than several countries now being considered for Visa Waiver Program participation.

I also understand that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) regarding the VWP and related enhanced security measures with 8 of 13 "roadmap countries" that were selected with the nomination of the Department of State (DOS). The MOU is the first step before those countries are included into the VWP, and DHS will not consider any new aspirant country without the nomination of the DOS.

Taiwan is not a roadmap country, and DHS has no MOU with Taiwan. Nonetheless, I understand that Taiwan has volunteered to cooperate with the United States Government to implement the measures contained in the above-mentioned MOUs, such as air passenger data sharing, air marshals, and airport security upgrades, to enhance overall travel security.

If confirmed, would you endorse a review by DHS of Taiwan's VWP eligibility as soon as reasonably possible?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with DHS on evaluating Taiwan for VWP candidacy. DHS has expressed a willingness to work with all who meet the technical requirements for the Visa Waiver Program once they have established a mechanism to evaluate all additional potential roadmap countries, of which Taiwan is one. DHS and State currently lack the resources and procedures to consider any nonroadmap countries at this time. In addition, any potential security barriers to Taiwan's participation in the VWP would be identified during a DHS-led comprehensive evaluation to determine the impact of the country's designation on United States security, law enforcement, and immigration security interests.

Question. If Taiwan is willing to sign a document with DHS to cooperate on enhanced security measures (as described in the memoranda signed by the roadmap countries), would you encourage DHS to conclude an MOU with Taiwan, leading eventually to Taiwan's inclusion in the VWP when eligible?

Answer. On a general level, we do note that Taiwan has taken a number of steps to improve travel document and border security and we welcome further improvements in these areas. These steps have been taken in line with international trends and best practices as part of a general program to improve passport and immigration practices and without reference to the U.S. Visa Waiver Program. Some of the factors you mention such as offering visa waiver tourist travel for up to 90 days admission to U.S. citizens and issuance of machine-readable passports are met by a large numbers of countries, most of which are not under consideration for Visa Waiver Program candidacy. Taiwan does not yet issue e-passports, though they are required for VWP candidacy. Our information indicates they do not share information on the theft or loss of blank passports with the United States at this time. The VWP law requires sharing of data not only on blank passports, but also on personalized passports. Taiwan's visa refusal rate was above 3 percent in the last fiscal year.

State and DHS are currently working with nations who have engaged the U.S. Government for the past several years in discussing these issues. We continue to work on confidence building measures with those countries. There is no plan at this time to expand the roadmap process but it may be possible to discuss similar confidence building measures with countries beyond the roadmap as improvements in international travel security are in our collective interest. On a technical and legal level, the conditions do not presently exist for nominating additional countries for VWP participation based on a waiver of the 3 percent visa refusal rate. To use this waiver the Secretary of Homeland Security must certify to Congress that the preconditions set in law have been met. Although dialog and negotiation continue with those countries already engaged in the roadmap process, I am unaware of plans to deal with additional countries on the same footing until sometime after DHS is in a position to exercise the waiver of the 3 percent visa refusal rate for the countries currently in the pipeline. The prospect of dialog, however, remains open.

Question. What are your top three priorities for this position?

Answer. The mission of the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) is to protect the lives and interests of American citizens abroad and to strengthen the security of U.S. borders through the vigilant adjudication of visas and passports. My top priorities relate directly to this mission.

Our number one priority is to ensure that the Bureau of Consular Affairs continues to provide outstanding services to protect the lives and interests of American citizens overseas. We will use our Web site, www.travel.state.gov, and revised Consular Information Program to provide timely, accurate information to American citizens. We conduct crisis management exercises and plan for anticipated increases in demand for services, for example by deploying additional personnel later this year to assist our posts in China during the upcoming Beijing Olympics. Now that we have implemented the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoptions, we will work with the American adoption community to adjust to the changes, and work with the international community to encourage more countries to join the Convention to expand the Convention's protections for children and parents worldwide.

I will work to ensure the Department provides secure, reliable passport services to American citizens. The Department took immediate action when we learned that some passport records had been improperly accessed, and are reviewing management controls in order to strengthen procedures and to ensure a more secure system that will provide equal and effective safeguards to all passport applicants' records. Although passport demand is currently four percent higher than last year's record-setting pace of 18.4 million passport issuances, there is no passport backlog and processing times are less than our 4-week standard. We are hiring hundreds of employees, opening new facilities, expanding existing passport agencies, and preparing to issue a new passport card in order to meet the American public's demand for reliable travel documents.

My third key priority is to fulfill the "Secure Borders, Open Doors" Joint Vision of Secretaries Rice and Chertoff. Since September 11, 2001, the Bureau of Consular Affairs has implemented changes in procedures, technology, and information-sharing to enhance the security of our Nation's borders while keeping America's doors open to the legitimate travel we encourage and value. The changes have transformed the visa process, and helped reverse a decline in visa applications that began after 9/11. We issued an all-time record of 651,000 student and scholar visas last year, for example, and visa demand is growing by double digits in key countries such as China, India, Brazil, and Mexico. Our challenge is to meet that demand as we make further enhancements to the security and efficiency of visa processing.

Question. What management skills and experiences qualify you for this position?

Answer. As a career consular officer for 28 years, I have had the privilege of serving the United States in places as varied as Mexico, France, and Nigeria, and gained a broad perspective on the consular challenges our country faces. As a consular manager, a DCM, an ambassador and a senior executive in the Department I have managed thousands of people, millions of dollars in resources, and a broad spectrum of policies for my entire career. I have been involved in strategic and budget planning. I have made the difficult personnel decisions that are the hallmark of a DCM's responsibilities. I fought the budget and human resource battles during the Department's leanest years.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs comprises nearly 10,000 employees—Foreign and Civil Service, locally engaged staff, contractors and others—working in 219 posts overseas, in Washington, and at 18 passport agencies and two visa processing centers around the United States. The Bureau managed a $2 billion budget last year.

As Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, I helped lead this bureau of diverse, talented employees. I worked on the full range of consular issues and have seen how the Bureau of Consular Affairs has prepared for and responded to those issues.

As Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services from 2002 to 2005, I was part of the team that negotiated the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of State and the new Department of Homeland Security that clarified the agencies' respective roles and responsibilities in visa policy. I was the change manager in the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, when we instituted new practices and implemented new legislation to improve visa security, and when we implemented procedures to address the post-9/11 decline in visa applications. I reached out to stakeholders in the academic, scientific, industry, and government communities to explain our actions and obtain support for our initiatives.

As Deputy Chief of Mission in Santo Domingo and as Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, I managed all aspects of our missions, ensuring that the consular dimension was represented in mission work on the global war on terror, countering human trafficking, and other foreign policy objectives. I also know the outstanding work that all consular personnel in what I have come to regard as the world's finest consular corps do to protect American citizens and America's borders.

Question. With regard to the unauthorized accession of the passport application files of Senators Clinton, McCain, and Obama, please answer the following questions:

(a) When did you first become aware of this matter? What steps did you take when you were informed of this matter?

Answer. We took immediate action from the moment these incidents were reported. I was notified, in my role as Acting Assistant Secretary, of the incidents of improper access on March 20, 2008. I immediately conferred with the Under Secretary for Management. We informed the presidential candidates and their staffs of the incidents and our response. We asked the Office of the Inspector General to begin an investigation of the incidents; that investigation is ongoing. I also sent a notice to all consular employees reminding them of their legal obligation to safeguard the privacy of passport applications and passport holders.

The Department of State's passport database tracking system includes an invisible flag on individual passport records of high-profile individuals. As the system worked when this incident occurred, an alert was automatically sent to two headquarters managers. Based on the alert, one of those managers contacted the individual who accessed the record via e-mail for an explanation, and copied the supervisor for appropriate action as well as other managers for informational purposes.

Three individuals have been terminated to date for improperly accessing passport application records. While our safeguards for detecting improper access to passport records worked as intended, the experience demonstrated that there were areas where we could improve.

On March 24, we formed a working group with representatives of all key bureaus to conduct a comprehensive review of internal management and controls procedures for passport processing and to develop initiatives to strengthen the security of the passport process. Our goal is a more secure system that will provide equal and effective safeguards to all passport applicants' records, and in which all Americans can have confidence that their data will be appropriately safeguarded.

Question. (b) Given that unauthorized access of these files first occurred last summer and winter, why do you believe employees in passport services waited until mid-March to report this matter to you or other senior level managers?

Answer. Due to the quick resolution of the cases through the immediate termination of two contract employees and reprimand of the contract third employee (who

was subsequently terminated), and the well-founded belief that these cases were motivated by imprudent curiosity, information on these cases was not passed to high level management. Since these events, we have developed and implemented written procedures for reporting incidents of unauthorized access. The new procedures include notifying the appropriate high level management members on every e-mail sent regarding a suspected incident of unauthorized access.

Question. (c) Do you think it is likely there were additional improper or unauthorized accessions of passport application files?

Answer. The Department of State's Inspector General is currently investigating the extent to which passport records may have been subject to unauthorized access. We are awaiting the OIG's final determination.

Question. (d) What systemic changes do you intend to implement to prevent a recurrence of such unauthorized accessions of passport files, and what is your timetable for implementing them?

Answer. On March 24, we formed a working group with representatives of all key Department bureaus to conduct a comprehensive review of internal management and controls procedures for passport processing, develop initiatives to strengthen the security of the passport process, design a comprehensive management plan to mitigate any unauthorized access of passport records/applicant personal data, and develop well-defined reporting procedures should an authorized access occur. Our fundamental goal is a more secure system that will provide equal and effective safeguards to all passport applicants' records, and in which all Americans can have confidence that their data will be appropriately safeguarded.

The Department has implemented several short-term measures including adding more than 1,000 names of high-profile individuals into the passport records monitoring system, initiating random audits of the passport records database, and implementing revised standard operating procedures for reporting incidents of unauthorized access.

Over the next 90 days, the Department's Vulnerabilities Working Group will focus on the following initiatives:

- Standard operating procedures and criteria on updating, auditing, and maintaining the Monitor List.
- Simple technology enhancements to the Monitor List program and the Passport Information Electronic Records System (PIERS).
- Study of best practices at other agencies and businesses.
- Vulnerability assessments on all databases and tools.
- Track/create historical file of incidents of unauthorized access.
- Finalize random audit program.
- Standardize disciplinary procedures for unauthorized access.
- Review of organizational structure, duties, and responsibilities for monitoring of unauthorized access.

Question. How many contractors or contract employees were employed as of October 1, 2007? How does that compare to 5 years ago (approximate figures are sufficient to answer this question)? Do you believe the Bureau of Consular Affairs has become too reliant on contractors or contract employees to perform its key functions?

Answer. As of October 1, 2007, the Bureau of Consular Affairs employed 4,083 contractors. Of that number, 1,605 were dedicated to passport services, 868 to IT development and support, 526 to visa services, 210 at our Kentucky Consular Center performing a range of services, 836 passport call center employees at the National Passport Information Center, and 38 assisted with American Citizen Services and administrative functions. The total number is approximately double what it was 5 years ago.

I do not believe the Bureau of Consular Affairs has become too reliant on contractors or contract employees to perform its key functions. All key policy and management positions are filled by U.S. Government employees, all "core government functions," such as adjudicating passport and visa applications, are performed by permanent United States Government employees. Contract employees tend to perform administrative and clerical tasks that, while invaluable to accomplishing our mission, are under the direction and oversight of Government employees. Hiring contractors allows a certain amount of flexibility to respond quickly to changing needs, whether a surge or a decline in demand for services.

Question. The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption entered into force on April 1. Of the U.S. agencies that have applied for accreditation, how many await a decision by the Council on Accreditation? By what means is the Department overseeing the accreditation process? How transparent is this process intended to be?

Answer. As of April 30, 325 adoption service providers have applied to the Council on Accreditation for Hague Convention accreditation or approval. According to the records of the Council on Accreditation, 65 applicants are in process at this time. Applications are now submitted and completed on a rolling basis.

Title II of the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 gives the Department-designated accrediting entities (AEs) the responsibility for accreditation or approval and oversight of adoption service providers working on Hague Convention cases (IAA, § 202(b)). The Department is required to monitor the performance by each AE and its compliance with the Convention, the IAA and other relevant laws and regulations (IAA, § 204(a)).

As required by the IAA, the Department drafted and published regulations setting the standards and procedures to be used by the accrediting entities for the accreditation of agencies and the approval of persons to provide adoption services in the United States in Convention cases (IAA, § 203(a)(1)). The Bureau of Consular Affairs' Office of Children's Issues, which performs the day to day responsibilities of the U.S. Central Authority for the Convention, is in daily contact with the designated accrediting entities, the Council on Accreditation and the Colorado Department of Human Services. We provide clarification of standards and procedures. We also collect and convey to the AEs information on applicants received through our Hague Complaint registry, from our posts abroad and from other sources. We request and receive regular updates on the accreditation process. We participate in telephone conferences and Webinars with both AEs, and make regular visits to COA in New York.

The process should be as transparent as possible. We have urged both AEs to focus on transparency and to communicate specific issues to applicant agencies. With regard to issues related to specific applications, we ask agencies to contact their AE directly. We are aware that this initial accreditation phase has been a difficult process for some; COA received more than 300 applications, almost double the number anticipated. The workload has been difficult. We believe that the accreditation process will improve as the AEs become more familiar with the process and applications and renewals are staggered over time.

Hague accreditation should be seen as the United States Government "stamp of approval" for U.S. adoption service providers providing adoption services in a Convention case. In light of this, we have asked the AEs to take the time necessary to review each applicant to ensure that it is in substantial compliance with applicable standards. It is important to ensure that adoption service providers that have been found to be not in compliance with mandatory standards are not accredited until they have established credibility and a track record of compliance. The Department is committed to the integrity of the process established by the IAA.

Question. Under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which created the Department of Homeland Security, responsibility for regulatory authority involving the Immigration and Nationality Act rests with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), but State Department consular officers in embassies and consulates around the world implement those policies, although DHS also has offices overseas for the purpose of immigrant visa work. It has been over 5 years since the creation of DHS, and both State and DHS have been given many new security mandates. You have seen it from the perspective of an ambassador and a senior officer in the Bureau of Consular Affairs. How is the relationship working between your bureau and DHS? What measures need to be taken—by you or your counterparts at DHS—to strengthen the relationship?

Answer. With the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), State and DHS now have shared responsibilities with regard to visas and border security. I was part of the team that negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding that established the respective roles and responsibilities of the two departments in visa policy. Over the past 5 years, we have developed a cooperative relationship with DHS on many fronts—the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, implementing the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoptions, and refugees, to name a few.

In January 2006, Secretaries Rice and Chertoff launched an initiative to strengthen border security while facilitating international travel for legitimate visitors. As part of the Rice-Chertoff "Secure Borders, Open Doors" Joint Vision, State and DHS work closely to:

- Renew America's welcome to foreign travelers with improved technology and efficiency. This includes further improving visa processing and creating "model ports of entry" that foster a more welcoming environment for foreign visitors.
- Develop secure travel documents for the 21st century, including our electronic passports and a secure, inexpensive alternative—the passport card—to meet the needs of border communities.

- Improve interagency and international coordination and information sharing to enable smarter screening of international travelers.

State works closely with DHS on the deployment of the Visa Security Program, the goal of which is to push out the boundaries of the United States and to ensure that only qualified applicants receive visas. Posts in more than 10 countries currently have Visa Security Units, and we plan to open other units later this year. The DHS/ICE Special Agents serving in the Visa Security Units have established positive working relationships with consular officers, for example by providing DHS training for consular officers in interviewing techniques, fraudulent document awareness, and terrorist travel tradecraft.

The creation of DHS was the largest restructuring of the executive branch since the Department of Defense was established in 1947–1949. While there are still some growing pains, we are committed to working with our partners in DHS to ensure that we together deliver to the American people the border security program they deserve.

Question. After the attacks of 9/11, we understandably took a number of steps to tighten security, including in the issuance of visas. There has been concern expressed by a number of voices—universities, businesses, and the tourist industry—that the changes went too far. There are competing pressures on consular officers—to help secure the border, but to do so in a manner that does not disrupt legitimate commerce, education and tourism. The administration's own rhetoric—"secure borders, open doors"—reflects this dichotomy. How does the Department balance these competing pressures? How do you train and guide these officers who make hundreds of visa decisions every day?

Answer. "Secure borders, open doors" is based on the principle that protecting our borders and welcoming legitimate travelers are not contradictory and can often be complementary and we can achieve both. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, our challenge was to implement significant changes to visa practices more or less simultaneously. We worked hard to increase visa security measures, completely change the business model for processing visas, and vastly improve our communication with other agencies.

As we implemented changes to the visa process in the early post-9/11 years, there was a decline in visa application numbers and the number of visitors to the United States. There were many reasons for the decline, including some—such as the SARS crisis and changes in the world economy—that were beyond our control. But it's also true that there were delays in the processing of some visa applications.

That is an outdated picture that is far from the current reality. We have invested in systems, staffing, training, and coordination with our U.S. Government partners to ensure that America's welcome to foreign visitors begins with a secure, transparent, and accessible visa process. We have instituted appointment systems, modern queuing systems, Web sites and consular information lines. We reach out to students and businesses to explain the visa process and we allocate extra appointments for time-sensitive visas. In most countries, we have reduced wait times for visa appointments. We use technology and training to work smarter, to move qualified applicants faster and identify cases of concern earlier.

The results are impressive and visa interviews have never been more secure. In fiscal year 2007 we issued over 6.4 million nonimmigrant visas. That is the highest figure since 9/11. We issued 651,000 student and exchange visitor visas last year, up 10.2 percent compared to the same period last year. That is an all-time high, and surpasses the figures from before 9/11. Since 9/11, we have seen visa demand grow in every region of the world. In China, for example, the number of nonimmigrant visa applications went from 320,000 in fiscal year 2003, to 544,000 in fiscal year 2007, an increase of 70 percent; in India, during that same period, the numbers went from 400,000 to 725,000, an increase of more than 80 percent. Department of Commerce figures released last December indicate international arrivals were up about 10 percent in 2007.

We have invested heavily in ensuring that our interviewing officers have the training and tools to make excellent decisions. Diplomats are well suited to visa adjudication. Making decisions about visa eligibility under immigration law obviously requires knowledge of the laws and procedures, but just as importantly, the adjudicator must apply those laws to each applicant, keeping in mind the applicant's qualifications, the country's political and economic conditions and cultural background. The interviewing officer must be able to communicate clearly and effectively in the applicant's language, both to assess eligibility and to communicate the decision.

Entry level Foreign Service officers, all of whom are required to have at least one consular tour, are chosen through one of the most competitive selection processes

in either the U.S. Government or private sector. They enter the Foreign Service from a wide variety of backgrounds and bring with them an entire spectrum of skills and abilities. All consular officers must pass a rigorous 31-day basic consular training course before arriving at post. This training covers the legal and procedural aspects of consular work, reinforced with over 35 mock interviews where each officer must interview an applicant for a visa, make a decision based on immigration law, and communicate that decision clearly to the applicant. As part of this training, our new officers also receive a 4-day course on consular interviewing techniques where they are taught the best way to build rapport, gather information, and make a decision. The course includes briefings and hands-on analysis of documents to help officers distinguish between genuine supporting documentation and those that have been altered or counterfeited. Classified sessions at the CIA cover terrorist travel trends and terrorist indicators.

We also provide numerous technological and management safeguards throughout the visa process. Every applicant undergoes security checks before a visa can be issued. Our system automatically runs a name-based check in a database with more than 20 million entries. These entries include State Department information, FBI files, immigration violations, and intelligence from other agencies. We also collect 10-print fingerprints from almost all applicants, which are checked against our database to detect imposters, criminals, and terrorist, as well as the DHS fingerprint database, and are verified by DHS at the port of entry. Certain categories of applicants also are screened in a facial recognition program, which checks their photo against our consular database. Applicants may undergo additional security screening if they are from certain countries, have technical expertise of concern to the United States or if our database indicates a match. In addition, supervisors are required to review a randomly selected group of the issuances and refusals of each officer, which always include any issuances over a permanent ineligibility category, to ensure decisions were made within the law.

The Department recognizes that potential terrorists may not necessarily be detectable through documents. Some may attempt to travel, or apply for visas, using genuine passports without any terrorist indicators. However, such an applicant is vulnerable to betraying signs of deception or revealing a back story that is inconsistent during a face-to-face interview with a consular officer, resulting in a determination of ineligibility or paving the way for a more detailed follow-up interview that often unmasks mala fide visa seekers.

The Department uses a variety of additional training courses beyond the basic consular course to keep consular officers current and to enhance their ability to conduct effective interviews and detect, intercept, and disrupt terrorist travel. We know that our officers are on the front lines of diplomacy as well as national security, and we feel both are equally important.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2008

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

Beecroft, Robert Stephen, to be Ambassador to Jordan
Cunningham, James, to be Ambassador to Israel
Hoagland, Richard, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan
LeBaron, Joseph Evan, to be Ambassador to Qatar

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:40 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry, Lugar, Coleman, and Voinovich.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much for coming to order.

This hearing on the four important nominations for ambassadorships is now open, and I apologize for starting a few minutes late. Thank you for being here.

I should apologize also for the hiatus of 2 days. We had an emergency in terms of scheduling, and I really appreciate everybody's understanding. I presume you understood. [Laughter.]

I am delighted to be here with my ranking colleague, Senator Coleman, and we both welcome you, and Senator Voinovich also.

It is really excellent, the best moments of sitting on this committee when we get to have confirmation hearings is when we get a group of professionals in front of us who have distinguished careers. And each and every one of you brings that to the table.

This is just a process by which we can examine your thoughts about the countries and regions that you are being charged with the responsibilities for, and we will certainly try to expedite these nominations as rapidly as we can. I am confident that will be pretty rapid in the next days.

So, having taken the edge off all of your testimony, I gather a number of you have family here. Let me just make a few opening comments, and then we would love to have you introduce your family. And then we look forward to your statements.

First of all, we have James Cunningham, the nominee to be ambassador to Israel, whose distinguished career includes postings in

Italy, the United States mission to NATO, the U.N., and most recently, as consul general in Hong Kong.

Robert Stephen Beecroft, the nominee to be ambassador to Jordan, served in the State Department as executive assistant to Secretaries Rice and Powell. Before that, he was posted to Syria and Saudi Arabia and brings extensive experience in the region.

Ambassador Joseph Evan LeBaron, nominee to be ambassador to Qatar, comes to us after serving as ambassador of Mauritania and has had several other postings in the region, including Istanbul, Amman, Ankara, and Doha.

Ambassador Richard Hoagland, the nominee to be ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan, has previously served as ambassador to Tajikistan. And before that, Ambassador Hoagland served in Russia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan twice, and in Afghanistan.

These are all significant positions that you have been nominated for. Our relationships with each of these countries—Israel, Jordan, Qatar, and Kazakhstan—offer enormous opportunities and very real challenges. I just met a moment ago with Wali Khan from Pakistan, who led a successful effort to win seats in the FATA area in Pakistan and beat back the religious parties, which was a surprise to a lot of people. So it is a very interesting development.

And yesterday, I met with the foreign minister from Jordan, where we have a terrific relationship and a lot of ongoing issues, obviously.

Over the past six decades, there is no one on this committee who needs to be reminded of the special nature of our relationship with Israel, based on any number of different values—shared history, culture, political, and strategic interests. And those connections extend well beyond our governments, as we know.

In my numerous trips there in the last 24 years, I have had the pleasure of gaining an even deeper respect and affection for that relationship, and I think it is known throughout the world that the United States is never going to waver in that commitment.

But Israel faces grave threats. Hezbollah is stronger. Hamas is stronger in many ways and has complicated the issues of the peace process. And so, there are tens of thousands of people in Israel, southern Israel, living under constant threat of rocket attack. And I might say I think were it us or any other country under similar circumstances, they might not have exercised as much restraint as the leadership in Israel has.

Needless to say, it is vitally important at this moment to continue forward in the peace process and to work toward that agreement. We all understand the goal—two States living side-by-side in peace and security. Getting there is the hard part. We came so close at Taba a few years ago. The framework, I think most people who study it understand, it is the getting from A to that framework that is critical.

I might add that in the visits I have made there, it is my judgment that the administration has too long been sitting on the sidelines in that effort. That began to change for the better with the Annapolis conference.

But I can remember meeting with President Abbas in Ramallah 3 years ago, when he was first elected, and listening to him express his knowledge that he knew what we needed to do—what he need-

ed to do, which was disarm Hamas. But then he asked me the pregnant question, "You tell me how I am supposed to do that," and pointed to the lack of radios, cars, police, basic Politics 101, when measured against Hamas and their ability to deliver in the street.

So I think that there is much time to make up for here, and last week we met with President Abbas when he was here. And I think it is important for the administration and Congress to work together to forward that.

Next door, the United States has a very strong and growing partnership with Jordan, undoubtedly one of our most important allies in the Middle East. And Jordan's contributions in the fight against terrorism in Iraq and the Middle East peace process have really been quite extraordinary.

King Abdullah was an early and visionary voice in warning of the dangers of three civil wars in Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian territories. He has been indefatigable in his support of the post Annapolis negotiations, consistently encouraging the President and the Israelis and the Palestinians with a sense of urgency, and we are grateful for that and have enormous respect for those efforts.

And Jordan's efforts to bolster the Abbas government are key to countering the influence of Hamas in laying any groundwork for a lasting peace. So continuing that relationship is one of our principal goals.

The war in Iraq, I might add, has exacted a very heavy toll on Jordan, and all of us are concerned about some 400,000, 500,000 Iraqis living in Jordan. The foreign minister and the ambassador this week underscored their request for $500 million in additional supplemental funds, which includes assistance for displaced Iraqis in Jordan, and I look forward to hearing from Mr. Beecroft sort of where we are heading on that.

The United States also counts on Qatar as an important partner in counterterrorism efforts and host to major United States military facilities. So we look forward to hearing how we are coordinating our security cooperation, and what could be done to strengthen regional organizations like the Gulf Cooperation Council.

At the same time, there have been some concerns the Qatari citizens may have provided support to al-Qaeda. Fatah officials affiliated with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas publicly asserted that the Qataris have provided financial assistance to Hamas.

In 2003, the Qataris approved a new constitution giving women the right to vote and run for office through elections for the advisory council, but they have still not been held.

Despite those and other reforms, the State Department found that "serious problems" remained in Qatar's human rights record, and Qatar is 1 of only 16 Tier 3 human trafficking countries, meaning that it has neither implemented minimal trafficking standards nor made significant efforts to do so. And I hope you can discuss today sort of what we can expect with respect to those issues.

And finally, Kazakhstan is a key partner—Sacha Baron Cohen notwithstanding—a key partner on issues including combating extremism, proliferation, and human trafficking. And it is also obvi-

ously a very important petroleum producer. Very persistent concerns linger over the human rights issues, including the government's treatment of prisoners, arbitrary arrests, limitations on freedoms of speech, assembly, and association.

It is always tricky in a country in that part of the world when there are those kinds of interests—those kinds of issues balanced against a set of interests that are compelling in their strategic importance to us. And working through those things is the art of diplomacy, and we look forward to hearing thoughts about how that will work, particularly given the fact that Kazakhstan is slated to take over the chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010.

So, Ambassador Hoagland, we look forward to hearing from you about the promised improvements in those areas, and we can have a good conversation today.

So let me turn it over to Senator Coleman. When he is finished, I hope each of you will make an opening statement. I know you are all well schooled by the State Department. We listen to a 5-minute or so opening. Your full testimony will be placed in the record as if stated in full, and we look forward to a good conversation.

STATEMENT OF HON. NORM COLEMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I have a more in-depth opening statement. I would like to have that put in the record.

Senator KERRY. Without objection, that is in the record.

Senator COLEMAN. I appreciate that.

Your opening statement touched on so many of the salient points. We do have before us a group of professionals with distinguished careers. It makes our job much easier. This would be a good opportunity to visit with them and kind of lay out some of the concerns, issues of great concern, and get their perspective.

I would note to Ambassador Hoagland, who came before this committee as a nominee to ambassador of Romania and I was not able to support moving that forward, it had nothing to do with the distinguished career and service of the ambassador, and I really look forward to moving this nomination forward.

I do appreciate all of the gentlemen here. I really appreciate the quality of your service, and you are willing to take on some tough challenges. All of these nominees are nominees to countries which are important to this country. They have been friends. They have been allies. They are of strategic importance in an area of the world in which there is great danger today.

Earlier today, I participated in a Holocaust memorial service. It is the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht, and our relationship with Israel transcends current-day issues. It goes way beyond that.

These are, I think, the most challenging times. The threat of Iran getting a nuclear weapon, how do we handle that? Rockets being launched on an almost daily basis into Israel from Gaza. How do we move forward in other areas without resolving that? So there are areas of deep concern.

King Abdullah in Jordan has been an incredible leader, a unifying force in, again, an area that is of the greatest importance to

us. And Jordan now is facing, as the chairman has noted, challenges—Iraqi refugees. Jordan in the past has dealt with Palestinian refugees, now Iraqi refugees, and what have we learned? And we have an interest in the stability and the economic security of Jordan. And so, I would be—look forward to visiting with the ambassador about that.

And in terms of Qatar, a military partner, a leader in counterterrorism. Also, by the way, the home of Al Jazeera, and questions to be raised there in terms of what is their role and what is Qatar's role? And there have been, I have noticed, some developments vis-a-vis Al Jazeera and Saudi Arabia, which is kind of a lessening of some of the conflict there. And are there things that we can learn from that or things that can be done to work with our ally?

And then, finally, in terms of Kazakhstan, this is a key partner in Nunn-Lugar cooperation in threat reduction. They are a key partner in reducing the threat of proliferation of nuclear weapons. I think that is the single-biggest threat, the threat of somebody getting a bomb and a nuclear bomb and using it. It transcends any of the dangers that we have faced in the past. There isn't margin of error for wrong choices.

And so, we have before us distinguished professionals who are nominees to be ambassadors to important friends and allies in an area where the margin of error for the wrong choice and the wrong policy and the wrong judgment is very, very thin. And the consequences of wrong choices are pretty overwhelming.

So there is a great responsibility. I simply end where I started in thanking these gentlemen for their commitment to service, for their distinguished careers, and I look forward to moving these nominations forward, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Senator Coleman.

Why don't we begin? We will just sort of run down one side to the other. I think it is just easy. So do you want to begin?

STATEMENT OF ROBERT STEPHEN BEECROFT, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Mr. BEECROFT. Sure, happy to, sir.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as ambassador to Jordan. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work as closely as possible with this committee to carry out my responsibilities.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by expressing appreciation for my family. My wife, Anne, my children, Blythe, Warren, Sterling, and Grace, are here with me today. It is my family's support and sacrifice that has, more than anything else, helped me to carry out my responsibilities as a Foreign Service officer.

Mr. Chairman, we have no closer friend or ally in the Arab world than Jordan. In the Middle East and around the world, Jordan work closely and constructively with us to promote peace and security and to fight terrorism. At home, it is engaged with the sometimes difficult and complicated task of reform, a process that we actively support and encourage.

There is no more telling example of Jordan's positive efforts in the region than its close cooperation with us to help realize a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As one of only two Arab states to sign a peace accord with Israel, Jordan is committed to the roadmap and is tangibly supporting the process, including by providing such things as police training for Palestinian security forces.

With Iraq, Jordan is actively involved on the humanitarian front, taking in hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees. It has increasingly taken steps to ensure the dignity and well being of those refugees, opening its schools and hospitals to them, working with the international community to provide assistance, and facilitating our own refugee admissions program.

Jordan is also working with us and the Iraqi Government to increase security. It has, for example, hosted over 54,000 Iraqi police officers for training.

Outside its immediate region, Jordan was at the forefront of publicly supporting our efforts in Afghanistan, where it has deployed a field hospital and a demining unit. Jordan has also become a leading troop contributor to U.N. peacekeeping operations worldwide, having sent military and police personnel to places such as Haiti, Cote D'Ivoire, and Darfur.

Jordan has also begun pursuing reform at home. For example, in 2006, the government rolled out a 10-year roadmap for economic and political development. It then took a step forward by allowing Jordanian monitors to observe its 2007 parliamentary elections.

Through our assistance programs, we are supporting Jordan's reform agenda. We are, however, also engaged with its government and its people to encourage broader democratic development. Our efforts include work to expand citizen participation in the country's political and economic systems, strengthen independent media, the judicial system, and the rights of women and laborers, and increase religious tolerance.

If confirmed, I will work diligently with the Jordanian Government and people to pursue our democratic reform, development, and security goals and to strengthen the bilateral relationship. I will also work to ensure that all of our assistance effectively and efficiently advances those goals.

I appreciate and value this committee's oversight of our mission in Jordan. If confirmed, I look forward to welcoming the committee's members and staff to Amman. Your presence and interest are a vital element in ensuring that we remain productively and successfully engaged for the Government and the people of Jordan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Beecroft follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT STEPHEN BEECROFT

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as ambassador to Jordan. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work as closely as possible with this committee to carry out my responsibilities.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by expressing appreciation for my family. My wife, Anne, and my daughters, Blythe and Grace, are here with me today. My two sons are unable to be here because of school obligations. It

is my family's support and sacrifice that has, more than anything, helped me carry out my responsibilities as a Foreign Service officer.

Mr. Chairman, we have no closer friend or ally in the Arab world than Jordan. In the Middle East and around the world, Jordan works closely and constructively with us to promote peace and security and to fight terrorism. At home, it is engaged with the sometimes difficult and complicated task of reform, a process that we actively support and encourage.

There is no more telling example of Jordan's positive efforts in the region than its close cooperation with us to help realize a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As one of only two Arab states to sign a peace accord with Israel, Jordan is committed to the roadmap and is tangibly supporting the process, including by providing police training for Palestinian security forces.

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Outside its immediate region, Jordan was at the forefront in publicly supporting our efforts in Afghanistan, where it has deployed a field hospital and a demining unit. Jordan has also become a leading troop contributor to U.N. peacekeeping operations worldwide, having sent military and police personnel to Haiti, Cote d'Ivoire, and Darfur, among other places.

Jordan has also begun pursuing reform at home. For example, in 2006, the government rolled out a 10-year roadmap for economic and political development. It then took a step forward by allowing Jordanian monitors to observe its 2007 parliamentary elections. Through our assistance programs, we are supporting Jordan's reform agenda. We are, however, also engaged with its government and its people to encourage broader democratic development. Our efforts include work to expand citizen participation in the country's political and economic systems; strengthen independent media, the judicial system, and the rights of women and laborers; and increase religious tolerance.

If confirmed, I will work diligently with the Jordanian Government and people to pursue our democratic reform, development, and security goals and to strengthen the bilateral relationship. I will also work to ensure that all of our assistance effectively and efficiently advances those goals.

I appreciate and value this committee's oversight of our mission in Jordan. If confirmed, I look forward to welcoming the committee's members and staff to Amman. Your presence and interest are a vital element in ensuring that we remain productively and successfully engaged with the Government and people of Jordan.

Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Mr. Beecroft.

We have been joined by the ranking member of the full committee. Senator Lugar, do you have any opening comment you want to make?

Thank you very much.

We will turn then to your testimony, Mr. Cunningham. I begin by noting you had the good sense to be born in Allentown, PA. My wife is thrilled. [Laughter.]

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES B. CUNNINGHAM, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. Thank you for that, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee.

It is an honor to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to become the United States next ambassador to Israel. I thank the President and Secretary Rice for the trust they have placed in me, and I look forward, if confirmed by the Senate, to working very closely with this committee and with the Congress.

Unfortunately, my wife, Leslie, and our two daughters, Emma and Abigail, could not be here today. But I do want to thank them, and particularly my wife, for their support.

Mr. Chairman, I am truly honored, as I may have the opportunity to serve our Nation in Israel at this particular time. We have always had a special relationship with Israel, stretching back to its founding 60 years ago. Over those six decades, we have forged a bond based on historic, personal, and cultural ties, on mutual interest and shared values, and on a record of together confronting difficult issues.

We have a vibrant and growing economic relationship, which I look forward to building on. Israel has been a close partner in combating terrorism and extremist violence, especially over the past 7 years. And the United States has always been a stalwart advocate of Israel's security, a result of the exceptional support Israel enjoys in this country. That will, I am confident, continue to be the case. Our interests in Israel are strategic and enduring.

This past August, the United States and Israel signed a memorandum of understanding that will underpin our security relationship through 2018. The arrangement calls for $30 billion to be provided over 10 years, subject to congressional approval of the yearly appropriation. This will allow Israel to maintain its qualitative military edge and to strengthen its ability to defend against terrorism.

A strong partnership with a secure Israel is at the core of our goals in the Middle East. The President has now undertaken a new initiative to promote progress along the roadmap and the realization of his vision of a two-State solution. At Annapolis, President Bush and Secretary Rice brought together Prime Minister Olmert, Palestinian President Abbas, Foreign Minister Livni, Prime Minister Fayyad, and leaders from nearly 50 other nations.

The decision by Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas to launch negotiations on core permanent status issues with the aim of agreement by the end of this year is a significant achievement. The parties are meeting regularly, and there is underway now a structured process.

While this process will not be easy, there is now a way ahead to reach an agreement that will break the history of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and pave the way for two states to live side-by-side in peace and security.

The President traveled to Israel and the Palestinian territories in January. Secretary Rice will be there again this week for the latest in what have become nearly monthly trips to the region. Just last week, both King Abdullah and President Abbas were in Washington. We continue our efforts through the quartet and through the mandates of General Dayton, General Jones, and General Fraser to solve problems and monitor the parties' adherence to roadmap commitments.

If I am confirmed, my highest priority will be to contribute to the strongest possible relationship with Israel and to help make the goal of peace and stability among the peoples of Israel and their neighbors a reality.

Mr. Chairman, for more than 30 years, I have tried to advance America's interests, to enhance America's security, and to promote

our bilateral and multilateral relationships. I have spent much of that time working with regions in conflict, societies in transition, and people trying to move beyond their histories in search of a better future.

In 5 years as ambassador to the U.N. in New York, I learned a great deal about the dynamics and pain of this troubled region so vital to U.S. interests. I think no one underestimates the difficulty of reaching the goals we have set for ourselves.

I am both a realist and an optimist, and I am thrilled that the President and Secretary Rice have offered me the prospect of being part of this historic endeavor. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to support their efforts.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Cunningham follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES. B. CUNNINGHAM, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to become the United States next ambassador to Israel. I thank the President and Secretary Rice for the trust they have placed in me. I look forward, if confirmed by the Senate, to working closely with the Congress to advance our interests in the region. I will welcome frequent opportunities to consult with you, and I encourage you to visit often.

I would like to begin by noting that unfortunately, my wife, Leslie, and our two daughters, Emma and Abigail, could not be here today. I want to thank them, and particularly my wife, for their support, and for the important contributions they themselves have made to the pursuit of America's interests over the course of my career.

Mr. Chairman, I am truly honored that I may have the opportunity to serve our Nation in Israel at this particular time in history. We have always had close and special relationship with Israel, stretching back to Israel's founding 60 years ago. Over those six decades, as our friendship with Israel has grown stronger, we have forged a bond based on historic, personal, and cultural ties, on mutual interests and shared values, and on a record of together confronting difficult issues of consequence to both our nations. Over the course of our relationship, and especially over the last 7 years, Israel has been a close partner in combating terrorism. And the United States has always been a stalwart advocate of Israel's security, a result of the exceptional support Israel enjoys in this country—among the American public, from the 11 American administrations that have held office since Israel's founding, and from Congress. That will, I am confident, continue to be the case. Our interests in Israel are strategic, and enduring.

This past August, the United States and Israel signed a memorandum of understanding that will underpin our security relationship through 2018. The arrangement calls for $30 billion to be provided over 10 years, subject to Congressional approval of yearly appropriations. This will allow Israel to maintain its qualitative military edge and to strengthen its ability to defend itself against terrorism. This is essential for Israel to maintain its vibrant, successful, and entrepreneurial society.

A strong partnership with a secure Israel is at the core of our goals in the Middle East. The President has now undertaken a new initiative to promote progress along the roadmap and the realization of the President's vision of a two-state solution. At Annapolis this past November, President Bush brought together Prime Minister Olmert, Palestinian President Abbas, Foreign Minister Livni, Prime Minister Fayyad, and leaders from nearly 50 other nations. The decision by Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas to launch negotiations on core, permanent status issues, with the aim of reaching an agreement by the end of this year, is a significant achievement. The parties are meeting regularly and a structured process is now underway. While this process will not be easy, there is now a way ahead to reach an agreement that will break the history of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and pave the way for two states to live side-by-side in peace and security.

The priority the administration attaches to this effort is clear. The President traveled to Israel and the Palestinian territories in January and recently announced his intention to return in May. Secretary Rice will be there again this week for the lat-

est in what have become nearly monthly trips to the region. Just last week both King Abdullah and President Abbas were in Washington. We continue our efforts through the quartet and through the mandates of General Dayton, General Jones, and General Fraser to solve problems and monitor the parties' adherence to roadmap commitments. If I am confirmed, I assure you that my highest priority will be to contribute to the strongest possible relationship with Israel, and to help make the goal of peace and security between the people of Israel and their neighbors a reality.

I would also like to mention our economic relationship with Israel. 2007 was a monumental year for Israel's economy, which maintained its robust expansion of the past 4 years in achieving annual growth rates over 5 percent. Unemployment was at its lowest level in a decade and the government deficit has not been lower since the mid-1980s. 2007 was also a critical year in United States-Israel economic relations. Trade between our countries increased by 12 percent and United States tourism in Israel reached the highest level ever. I look forward to building further upon these very positive trends in our economic relationship with Israel.

Mr. Chairman, on a personal basis, for more than 30 years I have tried to advance America's interests, to enhance America's security, and to promote our bilateral and multilateral relationships. I spent significant portions of that time working with regions in conflict, societies in transition, and people trying to go beyond their histories in search of a better future. In 5 years as ambassador to the U.N. in New York, I learned a great deal about the dynamics and pain of this troubled region, so vital to U.S. interests. I do not think anyone underestimates the difficulty of reaching the goals we have set. I am both a realist, and an optimist, thrilled that the President and Secretary Rice have offered me the prospect of being part of this historic endeavor. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to support their efforts.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, sir.

Ambassador Hoagland.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD E. HOAGLAND, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today.

I am deeply honored that President Bush and Secretary Rice have entrusted me with their confidence and nominated me for the post of ambassador of the United States to Kazakhstan.

If confirmed by the Senate, I will work diligently and faithfully on behalf of the American people to pursue United States foreign policy goals and to deepen the strategic partnership between the United States and Kazakhstan. I look forward to working in close consultation with the Congress in pursuit of those goals.

Before I go further, with your permission, may I recognize three people who have traveled to——

Senator KERRY. Please, we invite you to do so. We were wondering who they belong to back there. [Laughter.]

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to recognize two dear friends, Mr. Igor Lanskoy and Vladimir Sadov, one who has traveled many thousand miles to be here today.

I would also like to recognize Elizabeth Jones, former ambassador to Kazakhstan, former Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia. And I especially want to thank her for her trust and support when she pushed me forward for my first ambassadorship. A very great lady, and I am grateful to her.

Kazakhstan is an important partner for the United States. It is geographically strategic, ethnically diverse, resource rich, ninth-largest country in the world, roughly the size of Western Europe. Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and bordered by Rus-

sia, China, and the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan's size, location, and resources make it key to regional stability.

Kazakhstan's hydrocarbon reserves should rank it in the top 10 oil producers in the world by 2015. Kazakhstan established its credentials for leadership immediately after its independence. It was the first country to renounce its nuclear weapons voluntarily after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Today, Kazakhstan is contributing to coalition efforts in Iraq, where it has deployed eight rotations of engineering troops since 2003. In addition, Kazakhstan is implementing almost $3 million in reconstruction for Afghanistan in 2008.

Kazakhstan is a strong and reliable partner on nonproliferation. Through the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, Kazakhstan has cooperated extensively with the United States for over a decade to ensure that weapons of mass destruction-related materials and technical knowledge will not fall into terrorist hands.

If confirmed, I would continue to promote the United States-Kazakhstan strategic partnership's three primary goals. First, we seek to advance democratic and market economic reforms. Second, our common security interests include bolstering Central Asian sovereignty and independence, fighting terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and stemming narcotics trafficking. Third, we have a strategic interest in fostering the development of Central Asia's very significant energy resources. United States companies have recognized Kazakhstan's potential and are cooperating with Kazakhstan to develop its tremendous oil and gas resources.

Mr. Chairman, we supported Kazakhstan to act as chairman in office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for 2010. If I am confirmed, I will work with Kazakhstan to fulfill its commitments to that organization, to reform its election and media laws, to liberalize its political party registration requirements by the end of 2008.

In addition, Kazakhstan pledged to preserve the current mandate of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent a large part of my career serving in countries of the former Soviet Union. The historic, cultural, and economic ties between Russia and Kazakhstan are strong, and no one disputes the value of those ties. However, we are gratified that Kazakhstan values its national independence and sovereignty and chooses its own multiple partners based on its own national interests. Kazakhstan is in no one's special sphere of influence.

If confirmed, I will draw on my many years of experience in the region to ensure that the already-strong United States-Kazakhstan partnership continues to grow and prosper. Kazakhstan is an important country with a promising future.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Hoagland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD E. HOAGLAND, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I am deeply honored that President Bush and Secretary Rice have entrusted me with their confidence and nominated me for the post of am-

bassador of the United States to Kazakhstan. If confirmed by the Senate, I will work diligently and faithfully on behalf of the American people to pursue United States foreign policy goals and to deepen the strategic partnership between the United States and Kazakhstan. I look forward to working with the Congress in pursuit of those goals.

Mr. Chairman, Central Asia is a region of significant importance to United States national interests. Recognizing the uniqueness of each of the five Central Asian nations and their sovereignty and independence, United States policy supports the development of fully sovereign, stable, democratic nations, integrated into the world economy and cooperating with one another, the United States, and our partners to advance regional security and stability. We do not view Kazakhstan or any other Central Asian nation as any external state's special sphere of influence; rather we seek to maintain mature bilateral relations with each country based on our foreign policy goals and each country's specific characteristics and dynamics.

Kazakhstan is an important international partner. It is geographically strategic, ethnically diverse, and resource rich. It is the ninth largest country in the world, roughly the size of Western Europe. The population is 15.6 million, 59.2 percent Kazakh, 25.6 percent Russian, with the remainder divided among many ethnic minorities. The largely secular population is 65 percent Muslim, 30 percent Russian Orthodox, with the remainder divided among many smaller faiths. Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and bordered by Russia, China, and the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan's size, location and resources make it strategically important and key to regional stability. Kazakhstan's hydrocarbon reserves should, by 2015, rank it as one of the top 10 world oil producers.

Kazakhstan established its credentials for leadership early. It was the first country to renounce its nuclear weapons voluntarily after the break-up of the Soviet Union. Today, Kazakhstan is contributing to coalition efforts in Iraq. Kazakhstan has deployed eight rotations of engineering troops to Iraq, working on water purification and explosive ordnance disposal. To date, they have destroyed 4.5 million pieces of ordnance. Since 2001, Kazakhstan has provided cost-free over flights to over 6,000 U.S. military aircraft supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. In addition, Kazakhstan announced almost $3 million in assistance for Afghanistan for 2008, which includes funds for food and seed and to build a hospital, road, and school. Kazakhstan has established a peacekeeping battalion and is working to ensure that unit is trained and equipped to be compatible with NATO forces. Following an intense debate within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Kazakhstan was selected to be Chairman in Office of the organization in 2010, the first former-Soviet republic to achieve that goal.

Kazakhstan is a key partner on nonproliferation. Through the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, Kazakhstan has cooperated extensively with the United States for over a decade on a host of projects to eliminate its Soviet-legacy weapons of mass destruction infrastructure, secure materials of proliferation concern, and redirect former weapons of mass destruction scientists to peaceful purposes. United States-Kazakhstan cooperation has ensured that weapons of mass destruction-related materials and technical knowledge will not fall into terrorist hands. Our bilateral Cooperative Threat Reduction agreement was extended for an additional 7 years on December 13, 2007, allowing programs and projects to continue uninterrupted.

Recognizing Kazakhstan's important role in Central Asia, in September 2006, President Bush and Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev reaffirmed the strategic partnership between our two countries, declaring our commitment to a shared vision of stability, prosperity, and democratic reform in Central Asia and the broader region.

If confirmed, I would continue to promote the United States-Kazakhstan strategic partnership's three primary strategic interests. First, we seek to advance democratic and market economic reforms. Economic reform attracts and sustains foreign investment while democratic reforms will improve opportunities for Kazakhstanis to participate openly in civic life. Together these are the only reliable ways to establish long-term stability. Second, our common security interests include bolstering Central Asian sovereignty and independence; fighting terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and stemming narcotics trafficking. Third, we have a strategic interest in fostering the development of Central Asia's very significant energy resources. The region's resources can substantially advance international energy security, provided they have a reliable path to global markets via multiple pipelines that avoid geographic chokepoints or transportation monopolies. Energy can also form the basis of long-term economic growth and prosperity. All three sets of interests—democratic development, security cooperation, economic reform and energy—are interrelated and must advance together.

Economically, Kazakhstan has laid a solid foundation for its market economy and future prosperity. Financial reform has created a banking system comparable to those in Central Europe. Pension reform has created a fully funded pension system with $9.89 billion in assets. Kazakhstan's oil-driven economy has averaged 9.6 percent real growth over the past 3 years. Growth toward the end of 2007, however, slowed due to a tightening of credit largely related to global liquidity problems and the overvalued local real estate market. Growth in 2008 is predicted to be between 5 and 7 percent. Nonetheless, thanks to strong economic policies and oil wealth, Kazakhstan has dramatically reduced the percentage of its population living below the level of subsistence from 28.4 percent in 2001 to 13.8 percent in 2007.

United States companies have recognized Kazakhstan's potential and are cooperating with Kazakhstan to develop its tremendous oil and gas resources. They hold major stakes in Kazakhstan's two largest oil and gas projects, Tengiz and Kashagan. Our companies do face some difficulties, including problems with the tax authorities and stiff environmental fines. Kazakhstan also passed legislation last year allowing it to terminate oil and gas contracts in the name of the country's national economic security interests, though President Nazarbayev stressed that the legislation would not be used retroactively against contracts already in place when the legislation went into effect. Despite these concerns, it is clear that our companies and the Government of Kazakhstan are committed to a long-term partnership in Kazakhstan's energy sector.

Exchange programs are at the core of the United States-Kazakhstan strategic partnership. Academic, cultural, and professional exchanges are one of the most effective tools to promote the free exchange of information and ideas and to increase mutual understanding between citizens of the United States and Kazakhstan. Kazakhstani students study in the United States under the auspices of the Future Leaders Exchange, Hubert Humphrey Fellowship, Muskie Graduate Fellowship, and Fulbright Fellowship programs. Since 2005, Kazakhstan's Presidential Scholarship Program, "Bolashak," has sent annually 3,000 plus students to universities in the United States and many other countries around the world.

Democratic political institutions, civil society and the independent media remain underdeveloped in Kazakhstan; the presidency dominates the political system; and the parliament elected in 2007 has representation from only one political party—the President's. We regularly encourage the government to move forward by taking concrete steps toward reform, and we have assistance programs that promote democratic reform and the development of civil society and independent media.

We supported Kazakhstan's candidacy to act as chairman in office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, but recognizing its political reform trajectory, we asked Kazakhstan to delay its chairmanship from 2009 to 2010 so that it would have time to undertake several democratic reforms. If I am confirmed, I will work with Kazakhstan to prepare for its 2010 chairmanship and to fully meet the commitments it made to Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe participating states when it accepted the chairmanship. Kazakhstan committed to work closely with the organization to reform its election and media laws, and liberalize its political party registration requirements by the end of 2008. It committed to reform the media law in line with recommendations from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Freedom of Media Representative, which include, among others, to reduce criminal liability for defamation in the media and to liberalize registration procedures for media outlets.

Kazakhstan has begun engaging the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and civil society on the election and media laws, and we are continuing to monitor and encourage its progress. I will work with government and civil society partners alike to ensure that these reforms are implemented. In addition, Kazakhstan pledged to support and preserve the current mandate of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, including the integrity of its election monitoring efforts. Our broader vision is for a strong, independent, and democratic Kazakhstan that is a leader and anchor of stability in the region. We believe Kazakhstan's service as chairman in office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe will help serve that broader vision.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent a large part of my career serving in countries of the former Soviet Union. The historic ties between Russia and Kazakhstan are strong—Kazakhstan has the largest ethnic Russian population of the Central Asian republics. These historic, cultural, and economic ties with Russia are important to Kazakhstan. However, we are aware that Russia is often at odds with United States efforts to promote democracy and the sovereignty of the Central Asian republics. Kazakhstan values its national independence and chooses its own partners. Kazakhstan is in no one's sphere of influence. If confirmed, I will draw on my many

years of experience in the region to work with the Government of Kazakhstan and to reach out to the people of Kazakhstan to ensure that the already strong United States-Kazakhstan partnership continues to grow and strengthen. Kazakhstan is an important country with a promising future.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Ambassador LeBaron.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH EVAN LEBARON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF QATAR

Ambassador LEBARON. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is a great privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as United States ambassador to the state of Qatar. I am grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence they have placed in me.

Unfortunately, my wife, Ellie, and my daughter, Petra, could not be here today. They are in Indiana right now, where my daughter is finishing her final exams at Indiana University in Bloomington. [Laughter.]

Senator KERRY. Is she registered?

Ambassador LEBARON. Hope so. I have been involved in the Middle East for over 35 years. That includes serving as ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania during that country's historic transition to free and fair elections. Confirmation by the Senate as United States ambassador to Qatar would be a special honor for me because I began my diplomatic career there. It was my first assignment.

Qatar is a strategically located country right in the middle of the Gulf. We have many interests there. There are nearly 10,000 private United States citizens living in Qatar, and 200 more arrive every month. They are business representatives, their families, military contractors, university faculty, and medical professionals.

There is a large United States military presence in Qatar, a presence deeply valued by both countries. This presence is enormously important. It plays a pivotal regional role in our efforts to stabilize Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa.

Qatar's natural gas reserves, they are the third largest in the world after Russia and Iran. United States energy companies already have invested over $40 billion in Qatar's oil and gas sectors.

Qatar is the world's largest exporter of liquid natural gas, LNG. And Qatar will become one of the largest suppliers of LNG next year to the United States, when a large LNG terminal in southwest Texas is completed.

There are huge business opportunities in Qatar. Over the next 5 years, Qatar plans to spend billions of dollars on domestic infrastructure projects. If confirmed as ambassador, I will work closely with our Foreign Commercial Service to advise United States companies on business opportunities in Qatar and to advocate for United States companies.

Qatar is the home of Al Jazeera, the influential satellite news service that broadcasts around the clock to the Middle East, North Africa, and elsewhere. Qatar can play a major role in helping us tell America's story to the millions of Arabs and Muslims who watch Al Jazeera.

Qatar has been a friend to the United States. In 2006, Qatar provided over $70 million to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The aid included a $17 million grant to Xavier University, the only historical black Catholic university in the United States.

Back at home in Qatar, Qatar is engaged in several important reforms, and we are helping. It is overhauling its primary and secondary educational system along a U.S. model. At the university level, Qatar has imported not just the United States model, but the United States universities themselves. There are now several well-known United States universities with branch campuses in Qatar. They include Georgetown, Carnegie-Mellon, Texas A&M, Virginia Commonwealth, Northwestern, and Cornell's medical school. And we think more will come.

There is also some good news on Qatar's political development. Qatar has held successful elections three times for seats on the country's central municipal council, an important institution. And there are plans to hold elections for a national parliament, with the United States assisting through the Middle East partnership initiative.

Amid all of this growth and development and good news, there are challenges, however. For example, there are hundreds of thousands of foreign workers in Qatar who too often live in poor conditions. They have few avenues of redress in employment disputes. If confirmed, I will continue the sharp focus of the United States on the plight of these workers.

Another example, Qatar has a highly activist foreign policy that often involves issues of direct concern to the United States Government, issues such as Iran, Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanon, and Sudan. This regional activism sometimes requires intense diplomatic effort by the United States to ensure that Qatari and United States interests and approaches are compatible.

That said, Israeli foreign minister Livni just paid an important official visit to Qatar just a few days ago. It was her first visit to an Arab state beyond Egypt and Jordan. Also, Israel has a trade office in Doha. The United States has been urging Arab States to take actions exactly such as these to improve Israeli-Arab ties and to further the peace process.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, if confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with you, with the Congress to strengthen the partnership and to deepen the trust between Qatar and the United States.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador LeBaron follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH EVAN LEBARON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE STATE OF QATAR

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the state of Qatar. I am honored by the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with this committee, and with other Members of Congress, to strengthen the partnership between the United States and the state of Qatar and to advance the strategic objectives of the United States in the Gulf and in the broader Arab and Islamic worlds.

I began my diplomatic career in Qatar. I am thrilled that, if confirmed, I will be returning there as ambassador. I have been involved in Middle Eastern affairs for

over 35 years, including serving as United States ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in 2003–2006, during Mauritania's historic transition to free and fair elections. To serve now as the United States ambassador to the state of Qatar would be a special honor. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to forge personal and governmental ties with the Qatari people and with the Qatari Government in order to deepen the trust between our two countries and to expand the security and prosperity of our two countries.

The country to which my wife and I would return looks very different from the place we left over 25 years ago. What was once a quiet corner of the Middle East is now a thriving and cosmopolitan society. It is one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

It is also a place where the United States has many interests. Over 9,000 private United States citizens now live in Qatar, and our embassy estimates that 200 more arrive each month. They include business representatives and their families, military contractors, university faculty, and medical professionals.

This large influx of Americans has created a sharp increase in the demand for American Citizen Services last year—it was up nearly 30 percent last year. The demand for visa services rose 70 percent between 2006 and 2007, and it is continuing to increase at a similar pace this year. Everywhere I look in the relationship between Qatar and the United States, there is growth. From the burgeoning trade relationship, the new direct air service between Qatar and the United States, to the increase in American tourists to Qatar and the growing enrollments at United States universities.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will work to ensure this growth continues, that the United States mission continues to meet the needs of our citizens in Qatar and to encourage Qataris and Qatar's many foreign residents to travel, study, and invest in America.

There is, as well, a large United States military presence in Qatar, one that plays a critical role in our efforts to bring stability to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa, and to confront al-Qaeda and its associated networks in the region. The United states-Qatari military relationship is extremely strong, deeply valued by both. Qatar's Al Udayd Air Base hosts the United States Air Force's 379th Air Expeditionary Wing as well as the Combined Air Operations Center. Over a billion dollars in construction projects is either planned or already underway at Al Udayd. More than 70 percent of that money comes from the Qatari Government.

The U.S. mission plays an important role in advancing U.S. regional policy goals through the Gulf Security Dialog, and its interconnecting pillars on regional security, Iraq, defense cooperation, counterterrorism, counterproliferation, and critical energy infrastructure protection.

Qatar hosts important United States military facilities, the CENTCOM Forward Headquarters, al-Udayd air base, and CENTCOM's Combined Air Operations Center. These bases are critical for United States military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The U.S. Mission plays a vital role in coordinating this relationship. The mission also participates in the planning for further development of U.S. installations through the Military Cooperative Committee. It is in daily contact with Qatar's armed forces. It consults frequently with senior U.S. military and civilian officials, as well as with visiting Members of Congress.

United States strategic interests in Qatar include Qatar's critical and growing role in United States energy security. United States energy companies have invested over $40 billion in Qatar's oil and gas sectors. Qatar's natural gas reserves are the third largest in the world, after Russia and Iran. Qatar is already the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas. When the Golden Pass LNG terminal in southwest Texas is completed in 2009, Qatar will become one of the largest suppliers of imported LNG to our country, if not the largest.

The income Qatar derives from oil and gas exports is very large, especially given the small size of Qatar's native population, just 200,000 in a total population of about 1 million. Over the next 5 years, the Qatari Government plans to spend billions of dollars on domestic infrastructure projects. Even with all that spending, the Qatari Government projects annual national budget surpluses in the tens of billions of dollars starting in 2010, as production from its gas fields increases.

Clearly, Qatar presents immense opportunities for American businesses and investors. If confirmed as ambassador, working closely with Commerce Department and State Department offices, I will advocate aggressively for United States bidders on major Qatari Government tenders. I will work closely with the embassy's Commercial Service office to advise United States companies on developing business opportunities in Qatar and I will lead trade missions to the United States. I will support the U.S. defense industry, as appropriate, in the context of advancing our Nation's security objectives. Qatar's wealth also creates many opportunities for direct

inward investment to the United States. If confirmed as ambassador, I will have a special responsibility to ensure that the United States is an attractive destination for Qatari investment, both private and official.

In addition to its importance in military, energy, and commercial affairs, Qatar can play a pivotal role in helping the United States tell its story to the Arab and Muslim world. Qatar is the home of the Al Jazeera satellite television network, which broadcasts around-the-clock in Arabic and English. If confirmed as ambassador, I intend to work closely not only with the Qatari media, but also with Al Jazeera to strengthen understanding of the United States and our policies among the millions of Arabs in Al Jazeera's audience.

Transnational terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remain at the forefront of United States concerns in the Middle East. Qatar's strategic location and its plans to become a major transit point for people and cargo in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa will further increase the need for the United States to strengthen United States-Qatar collaboration on counterterrorism and counterproliferation efforts, including law enforcement and judicial cooperation, information sharing, and training.

In the area of democratization and education, Qatar is using its wealth wisely by investing in important reforms. Qatar is completely overhauling its primary and secondary schools along a United States model of competitive charter schools. At the university level, Qatar has imported not just the American model, but the United States universities themselves. There are six well-known United States universities with branch campuses in Qatar: Georgetown, Carnegie-Mellon, Texas A&M, Virginia Commonwealth, Weill-Cornell Medical School, and Northwestern. Even more will come.

Qatar has been a friend of the United States. In 2006, Qatar provided $100 million to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The aid included a $17.5 million grant to Xavier University, the only historically black Catholic university in the United States.

In terms of Qatar's political development, there is also good news to report. Qatar has held successful elections three times for seats on the country's Central Municipal Council. There are plans to hold elections for a national parliament. The United States is assisting this important development. Through technical training under the Middle East Partnership Initiative, Qatar will be able to strengthen this elected legislative body. Transparency International favorably ranks Qatar in terms of perceived corruption, listing it as 32nd in a global ranking of 179 countries. That's the best ranking in the entire Arab Middle East and North Africa. The United States is 20th.

Amid all this growth and development and good news, there are challenges, of course. Freedom House continued to list Qatar as Not Free in its 2007 report, in terms of political rights and civil liberties. The latest State Department Human Rights Report also highlighted those issues, adding that legal and cultural discrimination against women limited their full participation in society. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of foreign workers in Qatar too often live in poor conditions, and have few avenues of redress in employment disputes, the report noted. If confirmed, I will continue the deep engagement by the United States with the Government of Qatar on developing and implementing solutions to these problems.

Qatar has a highly activist foreign policy, often on issues of direct concern to the United States Government, including Iran, Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanon, and Sudan. This often requires intense diplomatic efforts by the United States Government to ensure that Qatari and United States interests and approaches are compatible. That said, Qatar is unique among its neighbors in that Qatar maintains a public relationship with Israel; Israel maintains a trade office there, and Israeli FM Livni recently participated publicly in a conference in Doha. We welcome this important engagement. The United States has been urging Gulf states to take actions exactly such as these to improve Isareli-Arab ties and to further the peace process.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an exciting time to be in Qatar. It is an important time. Qatar is opening up. It is on the move. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Congress to strengthen the partnership, and to deepen the trust between Qatar and the United States of America.

Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much.

Again, let me just to repeat that there is a tremendous amount of experience at the table in all of you, and we appreciate that.

I think perhaps, Ambassador Hoagland, interestingly, you have perhaps the most time in place in a sense. Others have been in other places and other parts of the world, but I think your background in that region is particularly helpful and important in understanding what is happening there.

Let me begin, if I can, with you, Ambassador LeBaron, since you just wrapped up and just sequentially flows that way. But what is your view of the current level of support? We have heard consistently about some of the elite circles within Qatar supporting al-Qaeda and some money going to Hamas, et cetera. Can you share with us your perception of that and how that might or might not complicate the relationship?

Ambassador LEBARON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

We have seen those reports. We are concerned about those reports. The Qatari Government has denied providing that financial support to Hamas. It is certainly a subject of great concern to us.

There is overt political relationship between Qatar, the Government of Qatar and Hamas, clearly. But the full extent of that relationship, all of the dimensions of it are not fully clear to us.

If I am confirmed, I certainly will take this up with the Government of Qatar and present the point that with great wealth comes great responsibility. And is it responsible the positions, the policies that they have adopted in relation to Hamas? I would like to explore that. I would like to hear how they explain it, what their rationale is, and to express the very deep concern that the United States has and to carry on that dialog.

Senator KERRY. Is it your judgment that we have sufficient initiatives in place now to protect against currency export/import?

Ambassador LEBARON. They are being put in place. Certainly there is a high level of United States Government engagement with Qatar on this very subject, and there has been a response, a positive response by the Government of Qatar. So I am encouraged by this. I think that it can be better. I think it will be better, but it——

Senator KERRY. I hope you would take, when you get on the ground there, a hard initial look at that and convey our concern, the Congress and the committee's concern with respect to that issue. Because, clearly, there is a lot of money flowing in the region to Hamas, Hezbollah, to al-Qaeda, et cetera. And in a sense, perhaps our most effective tool is the finance structure in terms of really having an impact.

Ambassador LEBARON. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. That would be great.

Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Beecroft, you kind of—you are coming, Mr. Beecroft, from the role of executive assistant to the Secretary, and obviously, she has enormous confidence and trust in you. And Mr. Cunningham, from Hong Kong and from a series of places that other than the U.N. are not sort of directly Israel-centric or Mideast-centric.

So, share with us, is this an effort in both of your parts, is there a portfolio that you are carrying specific to the talks in the next months, and if so, do you have some specific expectations with respect to your roles in those talks? Why don't you begin, Mr. Cunningham?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think the attributes that I bring to this enterprise are not just my experience in New York, but the way I was—the way I used my time in New York to learn about the dynamics of the region. And when you are negotiating under difficult circumstances with strongly contrasting parties, you have a chance to see where their core interests lie and to understand better how they view their problems and their challenges.

And I was continually impressed, for instance, during my time there with the sensitivities that Israel, quite correctly, places on its security interests and its need to defend itself.

Senator KERRY. Did you travel there? Did you get a chance to meet any of the current leaders?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. I did not meet the current leaders. I have met some of the previous leaders.

Senator KERRY. In New York or——

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. In New York, not in the region. I met the foreign minister, for instance, who came to—came to meet with us. We had mounted a major effort to get Israel introduced into the Western group in the U.N., which seems like a simple thing but actually required engagement at the presidential level to get it done.

What I hope to do over the next 6 months, if confirmed, is to help the Secretary and the President understand as clearly as possible what is happening within Israel and their concerns as we go through this process. The Secretary keeps talking about the difficult decisions that will have to be made, and they are difficult, and we will need to have the best understanding possible of what the calculus is that goes into making those decisions.

And as I have said in my statement, I have worked in my career in a number of areas where things have been very difficult and reconciling different interests has been difficult, and I hope I can help in that regard.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Beecroft.

Mr. BEECROFT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me start by saying I spent 3 years in the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau at the State Department, working closely with Ambassador Cunningham when he was up in New York on the full range of Middle Eastern issues, particularly Iraq. This was trying to keep sanctions in place and make them effective.

I have also served in Damascus and in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for a number of years. And in addition to that, my responsibilities with Deputy Secretary Armitage and with Secretary Powell and Secretary Rice have been, first and foremost, to keep an eye on the Middle East, coordinate with the bureaus and the interagency, and travel to the countries with those individuals to meet with the foreign leaders and meet with them back here in Washington.

So I believe I do have some experience in the region, and I look forward to applying it and carrying out what the administration and this committee would like to see done there across the range of issues.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Cunningham, currently Prime Minister Olmert is expressing the hope that what they might be able to achieve is sort of a broad outline of principles with respect to the

Palestinian Authority. We met this past week with President Abbas, who was here, who, on the contrary, hopes that there is going to be quite a detailed and specific statement with respect to what is achieved.

Where are we in sort of bringing that together, in your judgment, and how do you see that, if you do, coming together? How do we bring such a diverging view of what the expectations are to a mutual understanding?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. I think what we do is push forward or help the parties push forward as far and as quickly as they can to sort out the issues between them and to highlight the decisions that need to be made. I understand what you are saying about President Olmert. I think that we need to remember that we are not just dealing with a document. We are dealing with a process that has different facets.

And I don't think anybody can predict that this—at this stage how far down the path that we have opened up at Annapolis we will be able to go. We have the bilateral negotiation component of that, but we also have the building capacity component for the Palestinian Authority, the security component.

We have the push underway to identify progress under the roadmap and to monitor what is being achieved in implementing the roadmap on both sides. And we have, very importantly, a regional context that we are trying to build to broaden support for a successful solution, however far we can get in the region among Israel's Arab neighbors and countries in the Gulf.

So there is much more involved here than what comes out in terms of a document or an agreement, although that is obviously very important. These other efforts should flow into supporting a maximal outcome on terms of an agreement that we can get in this period.

Senator KERRY. Well, obviously, we wish you well with that. It is tricky, especially given the timeframe. I think the politics may be difficult.

Just a last question before my time is up. Ambassador Hoagland—well, let me just say, I want to welcome, the Kazakh ambassador Idrissov is here. I am delighted to welcome him to this hearing.

Mr. Hoagland, can you just very quickly sort of share with the committee where Kazakhstan is right now with respect to the keeping of its commitments made in 2007 in terms of assuming the leadership of the security and cooperation?

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. I am talking about the democratization, human rights commitments.

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Right. With very intense negotiations, with a lot of help from European partners, with some forward thinking by the leadership of Kazakhstan, there was agreement reached that Kazakhstan would have four commitments, four primary commitments in moving forward toward its chairman in office for OSCE for 2010.

Those included electoral law reform, media law reform, liberalizing political party registration, continuing to refine the system of local governance, and another one that is very important also, a

commitment to preserve OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and its current mandate and oppose any attempt to weaken it.

Work is moving forward in all of these. For example, on reforming the media law, working groups have just been established to put together public input from journalists, from civil society, from the government for the reforms that will be needed and that should be implemented before the end of 2008. The process is underway.

Certainly, if confirmed, I would very much look forward to working closely with the government and with civil society to move this process toward a successful completion.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much for that.

And before I recognize Senator Coleman, pro forma question that we need to ask everybody. Does anybody here—and I would like just an affirmation for the record—have any issue which might present a conflict of interest in the performance of your responsibilities as an ambassador to the place you have been named?

Ambassador LeBaron.

Ambassador LEBARON. I have no such conflict, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Hoagland.

Ambassador HOAGLAND. I have no conflict of interest, sir.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Cunningham.

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. None.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Beecroft.

Mr. BEECROFT. No, sir.

Senator KERRY. And is there any issue from which any of you would see that you would have to recuse yourself with respect to any deliberations in any of those countries? Ambassador LeBaron.

Ambassador LEBARON. No, sir.

Senator KERRY. Hoagland.

Ambassador HOAGLAND. I have been told by the Office of Legal Ethics that I need to divest myself of Microsoft stock because Microsoft is active in Kazakhstan.

Senator KERRY. Anywhere you go, you have to divest——

[Laughter.]

Senator KERRY. I am sorry, go ahead.

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. No, I don't have any conflict of interest.

Mr. BEECROFT. No, sir.

Senator KERRY. Well, thank you all very much. I appreciate it.

Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Cunningham, I appreciate the opportunity I had to meet with you before this hearing. I did indicate at that time some concern about the relatively light background in Israeli or Arab affairs. And certainly your understanding of the diplomatic process at a time that we are engaged in very sensitive negotiations, I think, is important, and we really can't afford not to have an ambassador to Israel. And so, you are going to be there, assuming you are confirmed, at a very important time.

Let me throw out a question, and it probably can be touched upon by Mr. Cunningham and actually Mr. LeBaron and Mr. Beecroft. It is about Hamas.

On the one hand, there is a concern about the Qatar relationship with Hamas. Hamas right now presents one of the greatest kind of challenges and obstacles. We have met with President Abbas earlier this week, and the battle is between extremism and moderation, and Hamas represents the extremism.

And if I could just get kind of a sense from all three—and obviously, the Jordanians have such a critical role. They have a stake in the forces of moderation prevailing over extremism. So if I could, Ambassador Beecroft, in terms of the Jordanians, do they have any role, can they be helpful in supporting forces of moderation in the Palestinian areas and lessening the influence of Hamas?

Mr. BEECROFT. Thank you, Senator Coleman.

Yes, I believe they are actively playing a role that is helpful and that is encouraging moderation, tolerance, and lessening the influence of Hamas. Among other things, Jordan has just completed training of approximately 400 Palestinian security forces, Presidential Guard, in Jordan. They have returned to the West Bank.

They are currently training 600 more, which will be deployed up in the north—the hope is near between Nablus and Jenin—in order to take responsibility there that the Israelis will allow them to take. This has been carefully coordinated with Israel and, of course, with the Palestinians.

In addition to that, they are providing things like electricity to build stability on the West Bank and encourage President Abbas's government. They are no friend of Hamas. They have repeatedly made that clear. I think it is a benefit to Israel to have a country that is stable, secure, and moderate on its eastern border and one that takes border security very, very seriously to prevent infiltration of extremists, terrorists, and/or shipment of arms and that type of thing.

So, yes, I think they are playing an active role. They do coordinate closely with the Israelis and with the legitimate Palestinian Government that we recognize.

Senator COLEMAN. Ambassador LeBaron, I would come to you and come to Ambassador Cunningham last on this question. Doesn't the folks in Qatar see the negative influence of Hamas in the region? I am concerned about their relationship with Iran. What can we do, what can we expect of them, and is there anything that we can do to influence them at this very kind of delicate time in the peace process?

Ambassador LEBARON. Qatar has followed for some time now an activist foreign policy in which they have relationships with both the moderates and the extremists across the Arab world to include North Africa. This seems to be a deeply engrained principle in their current foreign policy.

By that, I mean clearly they have an overt relationship with Hamas at a time that the United States Government properly is trying to isolate Hamas. At the same time, Qatar has opened relationship, a continuing relationship with Israel and has welcomed visits by the foreign minister, as we have just seen.

As I understand it, sitting here in Washington preparing, if confirmed, to go to Qatar, this is part of a general principle in their approach toward the region in its entirety to include an open relationship with Iran. So is there more that we can do? Yes.

In recent weeks, there have been a series of higher and higher visits by top United States officials to the Gulf to include Qatar. At every one of those visits, this concern by the United States is expressed. I think this introduces pressure to take another look by the Qataris at their principle of an open set of relationships across the region with extremists that actually work against development in the region, that work against progress to include the peace between Arab and Israelis.

You know, the Qataris participated in Annapolis, too. They have implicitly recognized the right of Israel to exist through a recognition of the two-State principle, which they have adopted. So I think that there is a chance, there is an opportunity to press this point with the Qataris to get them to reassess and to change and to join us in a more effective approach to the region, one that promotes not extremism, but moderation. One that promotes development and not sort of a return to conflict and violence.

Senator COLEMAN. Ambassador Cunningham, when President Abbas was here last week and visiting with Members of the Senate, he was very critical of President Carter's visit and discussion with Hamas, very critical. And made the point that it really—I think his comment was something to the effect of President Carter is speaking to Hamas, and Hamas thinks the current President is going to call next, that somehow this is a step of some kind of recognition, and he made it clear it undermined his efforts.

So I presume we are not going to be talking to Hamas. What can we do to kind of stop them from tossing rockets into Israel on a regular basis? Is there something we can do that we are not doing?

And not, by the way, just vis-a-vis our relationship with Israel, but since you are going to be in the region, are there any of the other Arab neighbors that we can lean on to play a more constructive role in lessening the level of violence so as to allow a peace process to move forward?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. First, let me say I don't think there is much danger of this President picking up the phone and calling anybody in Hamas. So that is—we have a very clear view on that.

I don't want to get into the merits of President Carter's visit. But let me say from a strategy and policy point of view, it seems to me what all of us who want to have peace—peace in the region have a common goal and obligation. You put it quite correctly. We have a conflict here between extremism on one side and moderation and political responsibility on the other.

We need to find a way to place a premium in the region and a commitment to moderation and political responsibility and strengthen the effort to isolate and ultimately wear down, however we can do that, the extremists. That is the process—that is part of the process that is underway now after Annapolis. It will take time and effort to do that.

We can certainly play a part. We have a very active dialog with the Israelis about how they might enhance their security from various threats all the way from Iran to local threats from Hezbollah and from Hamas. We can help them through that.

We can help keep the issue before the political leadership of the states in the region that are not now playing such a prominent role. There is a good dialog going on between Egypt, Israel, and

Jordan. But there are other countries in the region that can and should be playing a role in bringing more and more pressure to bear on Hamas to make it more and more unrewarding and unpalatable to engage in the kind of politics and behavior that they are engaging in.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you. I think we could be here all day pursuing this issue. My time is up, and I yield.

Senator KERRY. Thanks a lot, Senator Coleman.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just respond to Ambassador LeBaron that we were delighted to have Petra as an intern in this committee during the summer. She has experience on the committee that perhaps has been a guide for you as you have prepared for the hearing today? [Laughter.]

Ambassador LEBARON. I ride on her coattails, Senator.

Senator LUGAR. I look forward to being on the campus in Bloomington this weekend as a commencement speaker for the law school and perhaps will have an opportunity to see her there.

Ambassador LEBARON. Thank you, sir.

Senator LUGAR. I just want to ask Ambassador Hoagland some questions, first of all, about Turkmenistan. You were most helpful during our visit in January. During the change of the presidency in Ashgabat, you have been instrumental in representing American interests and inviting Americans to visit the country. I appreciate the time you took with me and helping me better understand Turkmenistan. I appreciate your assistance in meeting the President of the country, and leaders in the energy business that is of tremendous significance.

But first you were serving there as a charge because we have not had an ambassador in Turkmenistan for quite some time. And for the moment, we are unlikely to have a nominee. A nominee was withdrawn for that position, and now you are moving on to Kazakhstan.

This troubles me and many others because this is a critical moment in the development of the relations between the new President and his neighbors, as well as with the United States. I am hopeful that this will be a promising course. Would you just state for the record again the importance of having an ambassador to Turkmenistan at this time?

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Thank you, Senator. I would be glad to state that. But first, let me thank you personally for the effort you made to visit Kazakhstan—Turkmenistan in January. That was a really important visit. The country is changing dramatically with its new leadership, and the more that we can engage at high levels, the stronger our relationship will be.

I think your visit was especially important because of a cultural factor. You remember the President said that you are a living legend. He listened very, very closely to you, and we saw movement on a number of our issues after your visit. So I thank you for that.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Of course, I feel it is important that we should have a confirmed and an accredited ambassador. We haven't

had one since July 2006, and during this crucial period of change, it is something that we have to have.

Senator LUGAR. Let me ask, with regard to Kazakhstan, you have mentioned the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. Currently, negotiations are underway with the government on expanding our efforts there. Astana has been highly cooperative and made many significant decisions. At the time of my visit in that country, in January, there was dispute over a laboratory for dangerous pathogens.

It was a legitimate dispute in which one section of the government felt that agriculture and health work should not be conducted in the same building. Some argued that the buildings should be simply demarcated. Others pointed out that in the case of a particular pathogen, parts of the building are designed to hold and annihilate livestock, quite apart from human beings. The United States disagreed and pointed out that the plan was working well in other countries. I don't know how that has been resolved.

But I would just say that there are a number of issues of this variety in terms of weapons of mass destruction, including leftovers from the former Soviet Union. And so, I just ask you to exercise due diligence on these issues as they come forward from our DTRA program in the Pentagon.

Andy Webber has been a particular emissary, well acquainted with Kazakhstan and with you. But this is a critical moment and I would ask for your strong support in this area.

The second question I have is that in January, a very large conference of six international oil companies was in gridlock with the Kazakh Government. Essentially, whatever the justification, the Kazaks felt that even though these six may have invested estimates of $50 billion onwards up to $100 billion in attempting to extract energy from one of the most significant areas in the Caspian Sea situation, they had not been successful thus far. Therefore, income to the Kazakh Government had not come about.

So the Kazakhs wanted to become a stockholder or an equity holder in the investment. As a result, profit distributions would go to the government first before they went to the stockholders of these six international companies. Essentially, an agreement along those lines appears to have been reached in the last week or two.

Can you give us any insight on that negotiation? Likewise, has there been any decision on where the oil exports will go? Our hope is that a great deal of that energy supply would move across the Caspian Sea, even join the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. Can you give any insight as to how that is proceeding?

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Thank you, Senator. I would be glad to do that.

I think if I tried to answer every one of those questions, we might be here until late in the evening. So let me try to hit the top of each one, sir.

The negotiations with the consortium. I think when you have a number, in this case six plus one, of 800-pound gorillas fighting for the same bed, the game is going to get pretty rough sometimes. That doesn't mean that they can't work out the problems. One of the problems in that particular negotiation was that the lead for

the consortium was not meeting its responsibilities. And so, Kazakhstan had legitimate concerns over that.

I know a number of the companies that are—leaders of the companies that are involved in this, and they are working towards a satisfactory conclusion. Kazakhstan, like many other countries, is concerned about the future of its national wealth in the ground. Some people talk about resource nationalism sometimes. There has been a new law passed for subsoil resources in Kazakhstan.

But one thing that is terribly important, I think, is the commitment that President Nazarbayev has given to the companies already active, including the U.S. companies, that that will not be applied retroactively. If confirmed, of course, as ambassador, it would be my responsibility, one of my highest responsibilities to protect the interests and property of the United States citizens and to advocate in any way appropriate for their business interests.

You also asked—let me answer this very briefly—about getting the oil out because oil is—right now Kazakhstan is producing 1.48 million barrels per day, and that is going to rise very quickly in the coming years. Almost all oil has to go out through Russia right now. They are not going to be able to get it out.

Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan have recently signed an intergovernment agreement, if I am not mistaken, and that will help in barging in the first instance oil across to the BTC, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, possibly also through Supsa to Batumi. That work is underway. I would look forward to also being deeply engaged in that, if confirmed.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much. And I hope, as appropriate, you can report back to this committee from time to time how it goes. This is of critical importance in several areas, including our energy committee as well as our foreign relations effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Lugar, I want you to know that as you were being praised by Ambassador Hoagland, both Senator Coleman and I shared the incredibly heavy thought of how much better it is to be a living legend than the alternative. [Laughter.]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH Thank you.

Mr. Hoagland, I am really pleased that you understand the responsibility that Kazakhstan has in terms of being the minister in charge of the OSCE, and you are familiar with how important it is that we continue to support ODIHR and those tolerance and nondiscrimination offices on the core budget.

And any information that you could get back to me on what the status is in replacing Christian Strohal, who is now head of ODIHR, I would appreciate it, because it is really important that Kazakhstan and everyone understand how important that person is to the future in terms of the responsibilities of ODIHR.

If you have any recent information on that, I would like to have it because we are really trying to figure out who is the best person. To my knowledge, right now, our Government is not pushing anybody for that role. But I really think it is important that we do have a role in making sure that we get the right person there.

Ambassador HOAGLAND. Senator, I agree with you. The OSCE plays an important role throughout the entire region. It has played an important role throughout the entire region. Many of its most important functions are under attack. For the specific question you asked, I am sorry, I don't have that precise information. But I would be glad to take the question, sir, and get the information to you.

Senator VOINOVICH I would really appreciate that.

And Mr. LeBaron.

Ambassador LEBARON. Yes, sir.

Senator VOINOVICH On Qatar and the Gulf Cooperation Council, it is good news that Israel is starting to have a relationship with Qatar, and I suspect that you will be meeting, periodically, with your counterparts on the council. It seems to me that the better the relationship that can be developed between that council and Israel, the better off everyone is going to be.

I think their involvement in pushing the two-State solution, their concern about a mutual enemy right now of Iran I think is really important that that be as developed as much as it possibly can.

Ambassador LEBARON. Yes, sir.

Senator VOINOVICH Mr. Cunningham, what role are you going to play? Let me just be candid with you.

We have got 7 months—maybe—left of this administration working on a "two-state" solution. I would like to know what has the Secretary of State has told you about what role, if any, you are going to play in the two-state solution or the immediate problem of trying to reconcile the differences of the border dispute with Gaza, or working things out somehow with the Hamas problem, which is fundamental to moving forward with even the contours of a two-state solution.

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. Senator, I spoke to the Secretary yesterday morning, as a matter of fact. And she made very clear to me that she believes several things. The parties on both sides of the dispute in Israel and the Palestinian Authority do want to make progress and do want to get ahead and do want to establish the maximum amount of agreement that they can over the next 7, 8 months, however much time there is.

She also said that they understand, as she believes, that time is not on their side, that there is a process and an energy and an urgency now to making progress, although, as I said in my statement, nobody underestimates the difficulties of dealing with these very complex and long-enduring issues.

What she wants me to do, if I am confirmed, is she wants me to help her have the best understanding of the dynamics in the region from Israel's point of view, of Israel's concerns about its security, to have me build the strongest possible security and political relationship that we can have with Israel. Because at the end of the day, it is confidence in that relationship that helps Israeli leaders take the kinds of decisions or even examine the kinds of decisions that they are going to be looking at over the next couple of months.

I think she would also want and expect me to be conveying as clearly I can and as I can help to do to all sectors of Israeli society what our views are about the situation in the Middle East and

what it is that we are trying to do to help the parties in the Middle East who want to have peace, a peaceful and a stable relationship.

Senator VOINOVICH Well, I have to be candid, Mr. Chairman. I have some real problems with that. I just finished a book by Aaron Miller called "A Much Too Promised Land." I don't know if you have read it or not. If you look at where we have been successful in some of our initiatives there, it takes a unique set of circumstances.

I just wonder, you are going to come in there without really any background. It takes a while to figure out who the players are and get at it. And it seems to me that if we are going to make the kind of progress we would like to make there, it is almost going to take a full-time effort on the part of the Secretary of State. We have got Mr. Welch involved and we have Abrams at NSC. We have Secretary Rice, and Mr. Chairman, you have got three generals over there.

From an organizational point of view, it doesn't look like it could be that successful. And I am really concerned that with this short amount of time, whether or not you will be able to fulfill the role that the Secretary wants you to play there. Would you like to comment on that?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. Well, I never said it was going to be easy. I don't think anybody expects that any aspect of this is going to be easy. But the individuals that you have mentioned are really focused on all aspects of the process from now through the next several months. And as I said earlier, there are four major different paths that we are trying to bring together.

You commented on the organizational aspect of this. Elliott Abrams, David Welch have been working on these issues intensively for quite some time, as has the Secretary herself been, and Ambassador Negroponte, who I just saw today. They are focused and determined on bringing the maximum effort that we can muster to make as much progress as possible over the next couple months, both in the region and directly to the extent that we can be helpful in the bilateral negotiations.

I understand your assessment that this is going to be quite difficult. But it is a time and a place where there is an opportunity, and I think we owe it to our friends and to ourself to try to make the most of it.

Senator VOINOVICH Well, I would really like to get more information about the role you are going to play. Because from an organizational perspective, it takes a while to get the nuances of what is going on and meeting the people, and you are dealing with some tough individuals. How to handle them and what to do is going to be very, very important to our success there. Frankly, I would rather not know that you are the one that is going to be out in front, that somebody else is doing it and maybe you are a backup or have some other role to play.

So I am very interested in finding out just exactly what that portfoliois ? What do they expect to do? I would also like to know who is on the team, how are they going to get this, who is in charge, and how they are going to work this out?

But right now, it looks to me like we have got too many people over there doing too many things, and I am concerned about the

coordination of that effort, if we expect to get anything done in a very short time between now and the next administration. For those of you in the State Department here, I want you to know that I would like to have that information, and I am sure maybe the chairman would be also interested in the same thing.

Senator KERRY. Well, I was going to say we are going to leave the record open for 3 days. We do want to try, depending on obviously the sentiment of the committee, Senator, to move the nominations, absent some fundamental opposition to them. But you certainly deserve an answer to that question, and we will leave the record open for 3 days. And I am confident that they will comply and get that to you.

Senator VOINOVICH Thank you very much. And please don't get me wrong here, you have got a great background. I am just worried about the time we have left and the challenge that is there.

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. I appreciate that, and I assure you, I am, too. And my colleagues are as well. And I hope we can give you an answer that will alleviate some of your concerns.

Senator VOINOVICH Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Cunningham, just a last question, if I can? I think we have sort of reached a point where a lot of the questions—I mean, we could go on asking about the policies ad infinitum, and I would love to. But I think that in terms of the committee's purpose here that that will not serve a lot.

And I think if we get to some tough places, as is usual, since you haven't been there yet and you are not yet confirmed and you are not in place, we are going to learn that you need to get there to find out so you could answer the question. So that is the circular nature of these proceedings.

But if I can ask you, Mr. Cunningham, what is your view with respect to the chatter about Israel's back channel efforts right now that are taking place with respect to Syria? And if you would comment on whether or not this administration—my hope would be the administration is not going to get in the way of those or object to them or somehow indicate displeasure with respect to them.

And I wonder what your take is? If you can—if you have had some communication directly about that, or can you share with us your view of this?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. Thank you, Senator.

There are obviously signals going back and forth, as you all have seen in the press and in the regional press about messages being transmitted about interest in some kind of talk, reopening the Syria discussion. I think our view is we don't think that is a particularly promising angle to pursue under present circumstances. But I don't think that we have—let me rephrase that, if peace is possible, if progress on peace is possible, that would be—that would be something to be welcomed.

But as a practical matter and given the amount of difficulty that Syria is causing on some very important issues throughout the region, I don't think that we think that it is particularly promising right now.

Senator KERRY. But the administration's interest has been quite to the contrary, not to talk is an actual part of our policy. And if Israel is undertaking something that runs counter to that, my

question is are we going to register displeasure? Are we going to try to stand in the way of it, or are we going to give full opportunity for them to pursue what they think is in their interest?

Ambassador CUNNINGHAM. I am not privy to the considerations at that level, either in Israel, obviously, or privy to what they may have told us at the highest level, and that would be a conversation to be held at very high level.

I think that the prospect of opening a discussion with Syria would have another difficulty attached to it, which is that Israel now has its attention focused on, as the Senator said, on its process with the Palestinians in the region. Opening up another front for negotiation, as it were, might prove difficult, both for the current negotiations and for an establishment trying to deal with some very difficult problems already on the table.

We have—you are quite right. We have taken the position that it is not very useful right now for us to be talking to Syria. They know the issues that they need to address that are of concern to us, particularly in Lebanon, their relationship with Iran, their relationship with Hezbollah, and other things that they know are of great concern to us.

If the time comes to have a discussion, I think it is clear what the issues will be, but we don't think that right now it is promising.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Mr. Beecroft, am I correct that this good-looking young family back here belongs to you or——

Mr. BEECROFT. I know it seems improbable. But, yes, they do, sir.

Senator KERRY. No, on the contrary. Well, we want to thank them for being here. They have been attentive.

And let me say to all of your families that we really do appreciate what they put up with in the course of all of this. There are long hours, a lot of absences in some cases, and sometimes some hardship. So we really respect that and appreciate it, and we thank all of you for coming today and being part of this process.

So the record will stay open for these 3 days. I don't anticipate a lot of questions, but whatever will be submitted we will get to you right away. And thank you, and we wish you well and look forward to personal updates maybe somewhere along the road.

We stand adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:00 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF HON. JOSEPH EVAN LEBARON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. In the 2007 State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, Qatar is ranked as a "Tier 3" country, "not fully comply[ing] with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and not making significant efforts to do so." What has been the impact on efforts to eliminate trafficking of placing Qatar in the Tier 3 category? Has this designation prompted the Government of Qatar to make any significant or notable efforts to comply with standards to eliminate human trafficking? If confirmed, what actions will you take to address the problem of human trafficking and to urge the Government of Qatar to make progress on this issue?

Answer. We remain very concerned about Qatar's record with trafficking in persons issues. While the Government of Qatar has made some progress over the last year in referring some trafficking victims to its shelter and successfully implementing legislation prohibiting the use of under age camel jockeys, many issues remain. The Government of Qatar has drafted comprehensive antitrafficking legislation in the past year, but it has yet to be approved and enacted. Of special concern to us are foreign laborers, who are subject to Qatar's rigid sponsorship laws, which effectively leave them at the mercy of their employers. The Government of Qatar has made some progress on a new law to change some of the more onerous sponsorship regulations, yet this also remains in the drafting stage.

If confirmed, I will continue to make trafficking in persons a priority for the mission, and will actively engage the Government of Qatar at the highest levels to encourage more tangible progress in preventing labor exploitation and other forms of human trafficking.

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

Answer. Identifying the most important actions is easy. They involved the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, when I was the ambassador there, 2003–2006.

On August 3, 2005, a coup brought to power a group of military officers headed by Col. Ely Ould Muhammad Vall. As so many other coup leaders do, Col. Vall promised to hold elections for a new president at some undetermined time.

I knew that it was very important to get the coup leaders to take immediate, concrete steps towards fulfilling that promise. It was one thing to talk about elections; it was quite another to take tangible steps toward them.

Three days after the coup, therefore, I pressed Col. Vall to invite the United Nations to send technical advisors to help Mauritania plan for and execute free and fair elections, and to set an early, specific date for them. I kept up the pressure on him throughout August, and, about 3 weeks later, in late August, he finally agreed to issue the invitation.

That invitation was critically important, for two reasons. First, the U.N. does not send such experts unless specifically invited. So effective planning for elections could not begin until the invitation was issued.

Mauritania had never held free and fair elections for a president; presidential succession had always been by coup. It just had to have the U.N. there, as a first step toward such elections. Second, the invitation helped lock the coup leaders on a clear path leading toward free and fair elections. I knew that, once issuing the formal invitation, it would be hard for them to back away.

In March 2007, Mauritania successfully held an internationally-observed free and fair election for President, its first since its independence over 45 years earlier.

Throughout that period, these are the democracy promotion lessons I learned, in terms of coups:

- Quick policy decisions and associated diplomatic action are vital. So often coup leaders will say they intend to return the country to democratic rule, or to establish democratic rule. The U.S. Government must test the coup leaders' stated intention by pressing them to take immediate steps to achieve that intention.
- Public diplomacy must be an integral part of the U.S. Government response.
- Education and training must be packaged with financial assistance, with education and training taking precedence. Despite the best intentions, coup leaders will almost certainly lack the knowledge and experience necessary to plan, organize, and conduct complex democratic exercises.
- The responsibility within the U.S. Government for determining appropriate responses and implementing them should be pushed as far forward, toward the U.S. Embassy and country team, as possible. The best knowledge of a country's geopolitical terrain will reside in the field, with embassies and international organizations.
- The ties of the international community to the country must be leveraged. Well-established international aid organizations may be ideally positioned to take the lead in assisting sensitive political and electoral processes.
- Coordinated action by the international community is essential.

In addition to all the actions I took during that first year after the coup to get Mauritania on the track to democratic elections, I also seized the opportunity to help set the conditions for a democratically elected government to take up the highly sensitive and long-festering issue of Mauritania's legacy of slavery. That is another long story, but its essence is this: In 2006, I mounted a campaign in the Afro-Mauritanian community, including those exiled in northern Senegal, to give the fledgling democratic process in Mauritania a chance. This was a singular opportunity, I told them, to get a new, democratically elected Mauritanian Government

to take up the issues that had estranged Afro-Mauritanians from the Arab Moor community for many, many decades. In the end, significant parts of the Afro-Mauritanian community did get involved, and the new government has responded, taking several important steps to improve communal relations, including the return of Afro-Mauritanian exiles to Mauritania.

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

Answer. By regional standards, the status of women in Qatar has improved, in part due to the influence of active women in positions of status, such as Sheikha Moza Al-Misned, the wife of the Emir and head of the education-focused Qatar Foundation. Three separate municipal elections over the last several years—with full participation by Qatari women—show that democratization is also proceeding, although the mission has developed an active training and technical assistance program to spur further progress.

The related issues of labor exploitation and trafficking in persons, discussed above, are probably the most pressing concerns we currently have regarding human rights in Qatar. If confirmed, I will continue the mission's efforts to encourage progress on these fronts, specifically the passage and implementation of effective antitrafficking legislation.

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 Qatar in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. There is a significant constituency in Qatari society and in the government that hopes for further progress. Energetic recent press coverage of human rights issues indicates that Qatar is ready to consider this topic more seriously. Regarding trafficking in persons, it is my hope that Qatar's Tier 3 ranking will not alienate our supporters in the government and private sector, but will instead serve as a spur to action, and I will exert every effort to encourage them to view it as such.

Question. In your new position, what steps would you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post/bureau activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. The mission has an active program to advance human rights objectives. Recently, for example, the embassy held a successful press conference following the release of the annual human rights report that received significant coverage from local press. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the mission's strong focus on human rights. Specifically, I plan to use the country team forum to ensure that our human rights objectives are integrated into the activities of all relevant offices and agencies. The experience I have gained throughout my career, and especially as Ambassador to Mauritania during that country's transition to democracy, has taught me that coordinating with our international partners and continuing our active engagement with nongovernmental actors—including exchange programs, training, and assistance—will be critical to successful human rights promotion.

If confirmed, I will make this a priority for all mission staff, and will encourage all supervisors to include achievements in the field of human rights promotion in reviews of their employees' performance, stressing the importance of these activities to advancing overarching United States objectives in Qatar and the region.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly, if confirmed, with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Qatar who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I look very much forward to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in both countries. The mission actively engages nongovernmental organizations working in the human rights field, and I will be happy to lead that effort.

RESPONSES OF ROBERT STEPHEN BEECROFT TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. In September 2007, the United States and Jordan signed a memorandum of understanding on nuclear power stating that the "two countries will work

together to develop requirements for appropriate power reactors, fuel service arrangements, civilian training, nuclear safety, energy technology, and other related areas." What is the current status of these efforts and what assistance has the United States provided to date?

Answer. We believe Jordan is a reliable partner for peaceful nuclear energy cooperation. We are confident that Jordan's interest in nuclear technology is solely for the purpose of peaceful, alternative energy production. Jordan currently imports 100 percent of its energy needs, and its vulnerability to world oil prices has strained its economy recently. We would like to help this valuable ally with its energy security.

As you note, the United States and Jordan signed a memorandum of understanding in September 2007, in which Jordan affirmed its commitment to nonproliferation and to rely on existing international markets for nuclear fuel services as an alternative to the pursuit of enrichment and reprocessing. We recently completed negotiations with Jordan on a Section 123 Agreement to allow United States companies to export reactors and fuel to Jordan in the context of the highest safety, security, and nonproliferation standards. The proposed agreement is currently under review in Washington and Amman. If the President approves it and authorizes its execution, the Section 123 Agreement with Jordan would be subject to a congressional review period of 90 days of continuous session before entering into force.

The Department of Energy, through Argonne National Laboratory and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, conducted a feasibility study for Jordan on the introduction of nuclear energy taking into account the IAEA milestones. The study analyzed Jordan's energy and nuclear energy goals, reviewed its infrastructure development, including safeguards and nonproliferation conventions, human resources, and regulatory framework and provided suggestions for a path forward. The methodology developed for the Jordan study could prove useful in conducting feasibility studies in other countries seeking nuclear power. Jordan also attended a National Nuclear Security Administration run seminar "Aspects of Planning and Implementing Effective Infrastructure for a Nuclear Energy Program" for countries in North Africa. We are reviewing other infrastructure-related projects for possible implementation.

Question. The Bush administration has made a concerted effort to encourage Arab neighbors of Iraq to support the Maliki government. How would you characterize the relationship between Jordan and the Maliki government? What has Jordan done to promote Sunni-Shia reconciliation in Iraq and to support the Maliki government?

Answer. The United States appreciates Jordan's efforts to help Iraq become a unified, free, and prosperous nation and Jordan's cooperation with P.M. Maliki's government. Jordan has helped lead Sunni outreach efforts in Western Iraq, and King Abdullah has made a number of public statements in support of Sunni-Shia reconciliation. Jordan has hosted over 54,000 Iraqi police for training, as well as a limited number of border, corrections, and counterterrorism personnel. Jordan has expressed deep concern for humanitarian issues, and it has provided significant humanitarian aid, set up a field hospital in Fallujah, and hosts an estimated 450,000–500,000 Iraqis who have been displaced from their homes. The Government of Jordan is an active participant in the Expanded Neighbors Process and hosts the Neighbors Working Group on Refugees. Jordan maintains a limited presence at its embassy in Baghdad but does not have a resident ambassador. We continue to urge the Jordanians to return their ambassador to Iraq and to work with them to achieve the greatest possible support for the people and Government of Iraq.

RESPONSES OF ROBERT STEPHEN BEECROFT TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read the cable on Peace Corps-State Department Relations (04 State 258893).

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I agree to abide by the principles set forth in the cable. We have a robust Peace Corps presence in Jordan, currently with 55 volunteers in country, and it is important that they be able to carry out their mission effectively.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps' role and its need for separation from the

day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. Yes, I understand and I accept that the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our Foreign Policy, and the Peace Corps' role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I pledge to exercise my chief of mission authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSES OF HON. JOSEPH EVAN LEBARON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Based on your past service as Deputy Director of the Office on Iran and Iraq in the State Department and your prospective position as United States Ambassador to Qatar, how would you describe Qatar's relations with Iran? What concerns, if any, do you have about Qatar's relationship with Iran? How does Qatar view Iran's nuclear program?

Answer. Qatar maintains an activist foreign policy, and has relationships with all countries in the region. Many Qataris see Iran as a regional power with whom they must engage to protect their own national interest. Qatar also shares the immense North Field natural gas deposits with Iran.

Regional security, and the destabilizing role Iran is playing, is a regular topic of our consultations with Qatari officials. A key element of this is Iran's nuclear program. Although Qatari officials have supported Iran's right to a peaceful nuclear program, Qatar has also voted in favor of United Nations sanctions against Iran, specifically Security Council Resolutions 1737 and 1747 in 2006 and 2007. If I am confirmed, I will lead the embassy in continuing to engage the Qatari Government on our concerns about Iran's nuclear ambitions and other destabilizing actions in the region. Qatar is also sensitive to Iranian efforts to access the international banking system, and we will continue our frequent discussions with Qatari financial regulators on this topic.

Question. You have most recently served as the Foreign Affairs Advisor to Special Operations Command. Based on this experience and your prospective service as ambassador to Qatar—a country with a significant United States military presence how would you characterize the working relationship between the United States military and the State Department. What are the major hurdles to improving interagency cooperation and how do we begin to overcome them?

Answer. Thank you for these questions, which are important and complex in equal measure. To keep my answer as focused as possible, I would like to comment on the working relationship overseas in U.S. embassies, where personnel from State and Defense—and from other agencies and departments, as well—must work closely and cooperatively if they are to achieve the goals and objectives of the U.S. Government.

The State-Defense working relationship in U.S. embassies is generally good, in my opinion. But it can and must be even better, especially after 9/11. I believe the best way to overcome the major hurdles to interagency cooperation is for chiefs of mission to synchronize systemically across the country team their embassy's programs and activities. That is, led by the chief of mission, country teams should synchronize the objectives, programs, operations, and initiatives contained in the various planning documents that exist for each executive branch agency and department represented on the country team, military and civilian.

Once those foundation documents are synchronized in an integrated set of programs and activities, the impact, power, and efficacy of U.S. foreign policy in the host country should improve dramatically. Metrics should be developed to determine if that is, indeed, occurring. Such synchronization is a continuing process, of course, with regular chief of mission-led country team assessment meetings required to review rigorously and to recalibrate as necessary.

I believe the U.S. military would welcome such a chief of mission-led synchronization effort in U.S. embassies, since synchronization, at least at the tactical level,

is deeply embedded in its culture and training. While the interagency synchronization I envision is more strategic than tactical, I have every intention of introducing and operationalizing this process at Embassy Doha, if I am confirmed.

Question. In February 2008, the United States Department of State reported that "military relations between the United States and Qatar are extremely close, and Qatari support remains essential for United States operations in Iraq and Afghanistan." Given the importance of United States bases in Qatar to ongoing operations in the wider Middle East, can you foresee any developments that could endanger the bilateral relationship and United States access to its bases in Qatar?

Answer. The United States military presence in Qatar is extremely valuable to both nations, and reflects shared security priorities. While we continue to engage the Government of Qatar on certain policy aspects that are of concern to the United States, including human rights, democratization, and Qatar's relations with Iran and Syria, we are currently unaware of any issues to endanger either our larger bilateral relationship or United States access to military facilities in Qatar.

RESPONSES OF HON. RICHARD E. HOAGLAND TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable reference: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes. I have carefully reviewed this cable.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes. I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 State 258893 regarding Peace Corps-State Department relations.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other government agencies"?

Answer. Yes. I understand the need to keep the Peace Corps substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct of our foreign policy and, if confirmed, will strongly support this policy.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. I pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise my chief of mission authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSE OF HON. RICHARD E. HOAGLAND TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

Question. What is the status of the current Director of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Christian Strohal and the process to select his replacement?

Answer. Ambassador Christian Strohal is scheduled to depart his post in June 2008. Finding highly qualified successor for this critical job is a high priority for the U.S. Government. We have been working with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Chairman in Office and with like-minded allies to reach consensus on the best candidate from among several outstanding contenders. We understand the Chairman in Office intends to bring the process to conclusion within several weeks.

RESPONSES OF ROBERT STEPHEN BEECROFT TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. An April committee staff report on Iraqi refugees, entitled "Managing Chaos—The Iraqi Refugees of Jordan and Syria and Internally Displaced Persons

in Iraq," recommended that "the regularization of the status of Iraqis in Jordan and Syria should be made a first-order priority for American diplomats." Do you agree with this recommendation? What can be done, in your view, to encourage the Government of Jordan to take further steps toward regularizing the status of Iraqi refugees in Jordan?

Answer. The United States takes very seriously the challenge of regularizing the status of Iraqi refugees in Jordan and elsewhere in the region. The United States Government has made it a priority to intensify diplomatic efforts with Jordan and other host-country governments, and if confirmed, I will continue to focus on this issue as a top priority. We have already seen our efforts begin to bear some fruit. Last year, for example, Jordan lifted restrictions preventing Iraqi children whose parents lacked residency permits from attending public school after our embassy in Amman lobbied heavily for Iraqis to be able to attend school. Jordan has also permitted Iraqis to access public health facilities on the same basis as Jordanian citizens. In February, King Abdullah made a firm commitment to U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres that Jordan would not arbitrarily expel or refoule Iraqi refugees. We understand that Jordan is abiding by this commitment. We will continue to work with Jordan to regularize the status of Iraqi refugees and to ensure that they are protected and have access to needed services until they can return voluntarily to Iraq.

Question. The Millennium Challenge Corporation gave failing scores to Jordan in 2008 on its political rights and civil liberties assessment indicators. Will you commit to making it a priority, if confirmed, to support the freedom of Jordanians to assemble, associate, express their opinions, and participate in public life?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will make it a priority to engage with the Government and people of Jordan in support of political rights and civil liberties. To that end, I believe it is of utmost importance to continue United States support to the efforts of Jordanian reformers to improve freedoms of assembly, association, speech, press, and movement, and to increase citizen participation, particularly among women, in civil society and the government.

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

Answer. I have worked in the Middle East and in Washington to promote human rights and democracy. I count among my most meaningful experiences my responsibility for human rights at our embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

At our embassy in Saudi Arabia, I engaged directly with the Saudi Government to press for increased human rights, reform, and democratization; drafted the human rights report on Saudi Arabia; coordinated with third-country embassies to build support for a joint approach to the Saudi Government on key points of our human rights policy; conducted meetings with third-country embassies with large expatriate populations in Saudi Arabia (e.g., India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and others) to develop a coordinated approach to the Saudi Government on the need to improve and respect the human rights and religious freedom of foreign guest workers; organized meetings between United States Government officials and third-country national leaders of underground churches regarding their experiences with the lack of religious freedom and the persecution of religious minorities.

Although far from successful in resolving all human rights concerns in Saudi Arabia, this work was necessary and helpful to the cause of human rights. Specifically, it served to encourage other embassies to increase their attention to the practices of the Saudi Government and to the human rights of Saudi citizens and third-country nationals. It also helped us and others to constructively engage and influence the Saudi Government on specific human rights cases and issues. Finally, it allowed us to make the Saudi Government aware that we were monitoring particular issues, cases, and individuals and thereby discourage any government action to curtail or diminish the human rights and religious freedom pertinent to those particular issues, cases, and individuals.

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. As the Department stated in its 2007 Country Human Rights Report, the Government of Jordan respected human rights in some areas, but its overall record continued to reflect some problems. Jordan's most pressing human rights issues fall into four major categories—political rights and freedoms, prisoner rights, labor rights, and the rights of women and minorities. The United States continues to

monitor religious freedoms in Jordan, although Jordan has historically been a model for religious tolerance in the Arab world.

Through a broad array of efforts, the United States works in close collaboration with government officials and local civil society actors on a broad range of rights and freedoms. Our assistance aims to increase citizen participation in the political, economic, and social development of the country; increase the capacity of the parliament to promote transparency and accountability; strengthen independent media; improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the judicial system; strengthen the rights of women; and increase religious freedom and tolerance. The United States pursues these goals through direct dialog with the government and targeted programmatic assistance efforts through USAID, the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), and the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. These programmatic efforts focus on the rule of law, protecting human rights, and political participation that engage both government institutions and Jordanian civil society.

In addition, the United States conducts human rights and rule of law training for the military to help instill democratic principles, including civilian control of the military, and promote respect for human rights. An ongoing U.S.-funded counterterrorism fellowship program teaches the country's military personnel how to combat terrorism while respecting the rule of law, human rights, and civil rights. Approximately 300 members of the military receive U.S.-funded training through these programs each year. We have also initiated an International Visitor Program for corrections officers to expose them to Western prison management practices.

On a regular basis, we engage Jordan on measures to combat trafficking in persons and exploitative labor practices. The United States Government is funding a 5-year program entitled, "Better Work Jordan," through the International Labor Organization and International Finance Corporation. This program includes training for management and workers on rights and responsibilities of workers, with a particular focus on migrant workers, as well as technical assistance to improve the capacity of Jordanian labor inspectors to identify and resolve labor issues. USAID has also funded an international advisor to assist the Jordanian Ministry of Labor in bringing its labor standards up to international levels. We continue to stress the importance of criminally investigating and punishing acts of forced labor.

U.S. assistance designed to advance and promote the role of women in society continues to achieve tangible success. A 3-year U.S.-supported program through an international NGO which started in January 2008 promotes advocacy against gender-based abuse and funds an annual antiviolence campaign which holds events throughout the country.

Finally, working to promote religious freedom and tolerance, the United States sponsors exchange visits and, in numerous contacts with private American and Jordanian groups, encourages interfaith dialog and understanding. A U.S. grant supports exchange visits between Americans of diverse religious backgrounds and Jordanian Shari'a judges, scholars, and students. The embassy also regularly engages directly with government officials urging progress on applying internationally recognized standards of religious freedom and removal of restrictions on religious minorities. Examples of specific embassy actions include publicly supporting conferences to promote effective interfaith dialog, raising reported cases of religion-based harassment and intolerance, and advocating on behalf of expatriate religious workers and students who request legal residency.

If confirmed, I intend to continue these important initiatives and programs as well as increase our focus on other areas of reform, such as prisoner rights. I am confident that through our concerted efforts and work with the Government and people of Jordan, we will be able to help the Government and people of Jordan to expand and deepen their rights and freedoms.

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 and democracy in general?

Answer. Jordan has made significant and important strides to reform. The United States supports Jordan's efforts and engages its Government and its people to encourage further reform and development. There are, however, some institutional practices and public sensitivities, as well as regional political conditions, that affect United States measures to address human rights issues in Jordan. For example, discriminatory attitudes toward women persist in certain professions and among parts of the populace; media freedoms continue to be hampered by self-censorship; the correctional system continues to draw its prison guards from the larger pool of Jordanian police, rather than fostering a professional cadre of correctional officers, which slows the process of changing management and individual attitudes; and the government faces challenges in working with Parliament to pass needed labor re-

forms concerning the abuse of foreign workers and the enforcement of labor standards. As Jordan advances its reform agenda, it will face the challenge of ensuring appropriate and complete implementation of its reforms.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Jordanian Government and people to overcome institutional obstacles, address public sensitivities, and meet the challenges of implementing their reforms. I will also work to offer the United States support and assistance needed to help Jordan successfully carry out reform and development.

Question. In your new position, what steps would you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post/bureau activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Promotion of human rights will be a central component of our ongoing dialog with Jordanians on reform. If confirmed, I will instruct every office in my mission to encourage and support Jordan's reform and development efforts. In addition, I will ensure that every embassy officer integrates support for our human rights agenda into her or his portfolio, and I will see that such work is professionally rewarded through the presentation of appropriate Department of State awards and the preparation of appropriate employee evaluation reports, which serve as the basis for promotion and advancement. I will also work to ensure that the promotion of human rights and democracy remains a central pillar of our USAID, DRL, MEPI, and other assistance programs.

RESPONSES OF HON. JAMES B. CUNNINGHAM TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

BACKGROUND

You have had an impressive career as a Foreign Service officer spanning more than three decades. However, you have never been posted to the Middle East and appear to have relatively little background in Middle East affairs, including Arab-Israeli issues. In your written testimony to the committee, you stated that you "learned a great deal about the dynamics and pain" of the Middle East during your time as Deputy Representative to the United Nations from 1999 to 2004.

Question. Please explain in more detail your engagement on Israeli and Arab-Israeli issues at the United Nations.

Answer. In almost 5 years as Deputy Representative, working together with the Representative, I handled, or supervised the handling of, issues related to the Middle East in the Security Council and in the General Assembly. In my first year in New York, I worked closely with Ambassador Holbrooke on a major, successful effort to find Israel a home for the first time in the groupings of countries that do much of the U.N.'s day-to-day business and, importantly, propose countries as candidates to head U.N. groups or committees. From September of 2000, with the beginning of the second intifada, until I departed New York in the summer of 2004, I dealt with a constant stream of draft resolutions and statements in both the Security Council and the General Assembly. Some of them produced positive elements such as recognition of the importance of the Road Map, or the affirmation by the Security Council of President Bush's vision of two states living in peace, embodied in UNSCR 1397 in 2002. Much more frequently, however, we were confronted with ill-advised, unbalanced, or hostile attempts to use the U.N. bodies to prejudice events on the ground, to prejudge the outcome of political discussions, or to take actions detrimental to Israel—while ignoring or underplaying the terrorist attacks taking place against Israel itself. At the extreme, this was an almost full-time activity. Our success in defeating or turning aside unhelpful activity in the Security Council eventually led the Palestinians and others to take recourse in the General Assembly, where obtaining the votes necessary to pass tendentious measures was a more certain proposition.

This meant defending United States policy in the Middle East, and Israel's need for and indeed its right to security, in a complicated and sometimes hostile environment. It meant developing a close working relationship with the Israeli delegation, understanding the history and regional politics, and the legal and political histories of many of the issues we were dealing with—territories, terrorism, the rights and obligations of the parties, and the political processes at play and those we were trying to create. It also required an understanding of the dynamics and politics of the Arab world, and of the Palestinians themselves, since their interests are not mono-

lithic. Syria was on the Security Council for 2 years during this period, creating an additional challenge, with an intense dynamic. I developed close working relationships with some of my Arab colleagues as well, and good professional relationships with others. I also worked with and developed expertise in the relationships and interests of other major players in the region—the U.N. itself, of course, the European Union, and the Quartet.

Question. What portion of time would you estimate you spent engaged on Israeli and Arab-Israeli issues while at the United Nations?

Answer. That is difficult to estimate. At times it was almost 100 percent of my time. For example, in times of high tension there were almost around-the-clock discussions and negotiations that could last for days on end. There would also be periods of relative inactivity, although Middle East issues, including Lebanon, were a regular fixture on the U.N. agenda. I would guess that overall I spent one-quarter or more of my time on Israel and Arab-Israeli issues, and more than that percentage of my time on Iraq, which was simultaneously a pressing issue, especially after September 11.

Question. To what extent was this engagement focused on the so-called "final status" issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (defined in the 1993 Oslo accords as "Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest")?

Answer. In many respects it was all about "final status" issues, because the debates and resolutions revolved around terror and security, the use of force and violence, settlements, the separation fence, Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon and its aftermath, the relationship of Israel to its neighbors, a two-state solution, and the rights and obligations of Israel and Palestinians under international law. Also at issue was the underlying question of whether the conditions existed, or could be created, to get underway a meaningful process leading to an end to violence and ultimately to a peace process, and the appropriate role of the international community—issues which remain relevant today in a different context.

Question. In which other of your assignments have you been engaged on Israeli and Arab-Israeli issues?

Answer. I have not been very directly engaged on Israeli and Arab-Israeli issues in other assignments, but I have dealt with other issues in the region, and have long experience applicable to the region. My first assignment to USUN, as deputy political counselor, came just after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. I was heavily engaged in the mission's activities on Iraq, and the liberation of Kuwait and the aftermath, for the entire time I was in New York for that assignment. If I am confirmed, I believe my extensive background in security and political/military affairs, and knowledge of NATO, the European Union, and the U.N. will prove valuable, since security and international community support will be key elements of any peace process.

Question. What role do you expect to play, if confirmed, in the Annapolis process?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the Annapolis process by ensuring that Embassy Tel Aviv's resources are fully devoted to supporting the President's and the Secretary's personal diplomacy. I will also assist Generals Dayton, Jones, and Fraser in fulfilling their mandates. I will seek to build support among Israeli leaders and publics for the Annapolis process, and use my contacts with Israeli leaders to advance it. I will maintain the best and most constructive relationships I can with all segments of the Israeli political spectrum, ensure that United States policy and objectives are understood, and provide the President and the Secretary the best information we can on Israeli views and concerns and on the political dynamics at play. I will, of course, also present U.S. views clearly, and seek to build the closest possible relationship with this important friend and ally. I have considerable experience with difficult negotiations, and hope to contribute to finding solutions to the issues on the table.

RACHEL CORRIE

On March 16, 2003, Rachel Corrie, an American citizen, was killed by an Israel Defense Forces bulldozer in Rafah, Gaza, while protesting home demolitions.

Question. Please provide a detailed account of steps taken, if any, by the executive branch and the Department of State, including the United States Embassy in Tel Aviv, to encourage the Government of Israel to undertake a thorough, credible, and transparent investigation into Ms. Corrie's death.

Answer. The United States Government takes its responsibilities involving American citizens abroad very seriously and has repeatedly engaged the Government of Israel at the highest levels about this issue. Immediately following Ms. Corrie's tragic death, President Bush telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Sharon to request a thorough and transparent investigation and was given personal assurances by the Prime Minister that there would be one. Additionally, then-Secretary Powell, Ambassador Kurtzer, Deputy Chief of Mission LeBaron, Assistant Secretary William Burns, and Deputy Assistant Secretary David Satterfield, among others, raised this issue with their counterparts and other appropriate authorities in the Israeli Government.

More recently, during a visit to Israel, former Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Maura Harty specifically raised outstanding issues again with her counterpart at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yigal Tzarfati. Assistant Secretary Harty also gave Mr. Tzarfati a letter that reiterated the U.S. Government's request for a full and transparent investigation of the incident.

The Government of Israel has not yet fully responded to Assistant Secretary Harty's letter, and specifically her request for a full and transparent investigation. The United States Embassy in Tel Aviv will continue to follow up with the Israelis for a response to our inquiries. If confirmed, I will ensure that this follow-up takes place and press the Government of Israel for a response.

Additionally, in late October, representatives from the Department of State met with the Corrie family and with Congressman Baird and his staff at his offices to discuss concerns that the Corrie family still has with respect to the death of Rachel Corrie. We are continuing to investigate charges of irregularities with the Israeli Government's handling of the case and to respond to the family's concerns to the maximum extent.

Question. In your opinion, has a thorough, credible, and transparent investigation taken place? If not, what specific, concrete steps will you commit to take, if confirmed, to ensure that such an investigation does take place?

Answer. The Department remains committed to providing the highest standards of citizen services to the Corrie family. If confirmed, I will continue to press the Government of Israel for a thorough and transparent investigation of the tragic death of Rachel Corrie.

RESPONSES OF HON. JAMES B. CUNNINGHAM TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

Question. Well, I would like to get more information about the role you are going to play [in helping to achieve progress on the ground and in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks launched at Annapolis last November].

Answer. The Administration is firmly committed to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is not only in the interest of Israelis and Palestinians, but also an American national interest. If confirmed, as Ambassador to Israel I will ensure that the embassy's resources are fully devoted to supporting the President's and Secretary Rice's personal diplomacy, and utilize my own contacts with Israeli leaders and publics across the political spectrum to solidify support for the process launched last November in Annapolis, and to advance it. I will provide the President and the Secretary with the best information available to the embassy on Israeli views and concerns, and on the political dynamics involved. I will also support the process by presenting United States views clearly to the Israeli Government and maintaining the best possible dialog between us.

Since Annapolis, we have been working to achieve progress on four parallel, complementary tracks. First we are supporting the parties' bilateral negotiations, which began in earnest shortly after Annapolis with the creation of a negotiating structure and a vigorous schedule of bilateral talks on the full spectrum of issues. The parties have kept the substance of these talks private, which reflects the seriousness of their effort. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary Welch are deeply and personally engaged in supporting the parties' efforts in this area. As the President's representative to Israel, if confirmed, I would be an integral part of our engagement with senior Israeli officials on this most delicate issue, working with the Secretary and Assistant Secretary Welch to help keep the talks on track.

Second, we are working to promote progress by the parties in fulfilling their commitments under the Roadmap. For the Palestinians, this means combating and dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism, undertaking institutional reforms, and ending incitement. For Israel, it means halting settlement expansion, removing unauthorized outposts, easing movement and access to improve Palestinian economic

and humanitarian conditions, facilitating security coordination, and reopening Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem, consistent with previous agreements. The President and Secretary Rice have asked Lt Gen. William Fraser III to monitor developments in this area and to work with the parties to promote progress on Roadmap implementation. As ambassador, I would work closely with General Fraser to ensure the success of his mission, and I would utilize my regular contact with senior Israeli officials to effect visible progress on these important issues. Another element to this effort is security coordination between Israel and the Palestinians. I would engage directly with the Minister of Defense and his staff to help ensure coordination and support is as effective as possible in response to the efforts we are now seeing by the Palestinian Authority Security Forces.

Third, we are working to support Palestinian economic development and institutional capacity building. Former United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair, in his role as Quartet Representative, has taken a leadership role on this issue, identifying priority projects and working with the parties and international donors to facilitate implementation on the ground. As Ambassador to Israel I would work to ensure Israeli coordination and support for the important programs that these funds will support, as well as for the efforts of LTG Keith Dayton, the U.S. Security Coordinator, who is working to reform and professionalize the Palestinian security forces, including a program providing training and nonlethal equipment.

Fourth, we are working to sustain and expand regional support for the parties' efforts. Arab political and financial support will be crucial in order for both Israel and the Palestinians to make the difficult decisions necessary for peace. As Ambassador to Israel my role in this area would be less direct, but I would hope to use my experience in the dynamics of the region to contribute to our thinking about how to advance on this track.

Question. So I am very interested in finding out just exactly what is that portfolio? What do they expect to do? And also I would like to know who is the team? Who is in charge? How are they going to work this out?

Answer. I earlier described the four tracks we are working to advance—bilateral negotiations, Roadmap implementation, Palestinian capacity building, and building regional support. The administration has structured its effort to ensure focused attention is paid to each of these important sets of issues. Generals Dayton, Jones, and Fraser are each working on separate but related areas. Each is important, but distinct from the others. I have met two of the three, and both told me that there is no confusion among them, and that they are all in frequent contact. For Lt. General Dayton, whom I have not yet met, the focus is building the capacity and professionalism of the Palestinian Authority Security Forces and helping to foster internal reform and improved security coordination with Israel. For General Jones, the focus is on exploring the security aspects of a permanent status agreement, helping to define each party's security needs and what regional arrangements and international support might be needed. For Lt. General Fraser, the focus is on monitoring and promoting progress by both parties on their commitments under the Roadmap. At the same time, the United States Ambassador to Israel and the United States Consul General in Jerusalem are providing logistical and policy support to these missions, keeping Washington informed of developments on the ground, and maintaining our bilateral contacts and dialog with Israel and the PA.

All of this work on the four tracks, as well as the effort of our considerable diplomatic establishment in both the embassy and the Consulate General, as well as throughout the region, is conducted at the direction and under the oversight of the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, David Welch, and the Secretary of State. Their personal engagement, and that of the President, is really the engine that makes this process run, along with the good will and determination of the Israeli and Palestinian leadership who are committed to peace. The current United States structure is helping to achieve real progress in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and on the ground, ranging from the easing of restrictions on West Bank movement, to training and equipping the PA security forces. We are hopeful that our continued efforts will be successful in helping the Israelis and Palestinian realize our shared goal of a peace agreement before the end of 2008.

RESPONSES OF HON. JAMES B. CUNNINGHAM TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. In the wake of the 2007 Annapolis Conference, many have expressed optimism that a major agreement could be reached between the Israelis and Palestinians by the end of the Bush administration. As Secretary Rice prepares to

make her fourth visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories since the Annapolis conference, much of this optimism appears to have faded. What is the status of negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority and what must the United States do at this point to jumpstart the process and increase the likelihood of a successful outcome? Also, on a related note, without the constant presence of a U.S. special envoy responsible for all aspects of the negotiation, do you believe the United States can provide the oversight of the talks necessary to ensure success?

Answer. As you know, the administration in firmly committed to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We view this as not only in the interest of Israelis and Palestinians, but also an American national interest. Since Annapolis we have been working to achieve progress on four parallel, complementary tracks.

First and foremost, we are supporting the parties' bilateral negotiations, which began in earnest shortly after Annapolis with the creation of a negotiating structure and a vigorous schedule of bilateral talks on the full spectrum of issues. The parties have kept the substance of these talks private, which reflects the seriousness of their effort. As part of this process, Secretary Rice has enlisted the services of General (ret.) Jim Jones, former Commandant of the Marine Corps and NATO Supreme Allied Commander, who is looking at the security aspects of permanent status. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary Welch are also deeply and personally engaged in supporting the parties' negotiating efforts. The President's commitment is also clear. We must recognize, however, that a peace agreement cannot be imposed from outside, and it is the parties themselves who must work through the difficult compromises necessary for peace. They are having serious discussions in an organized process. The United States will support them, will work to ensure the talks stay on track, and when appropriate we will offer ideas to help facilitate progress.

Second, we are working to promote progress by the parties in fulfilling their commitments under the Roadmap. For the Palestinians, this means combating and dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism, undertaking institutional reforms, and ending incitement. For Israel, it means halting settlement expansion, removing unauthorized outposts, easing movement and access to improve Palestinian economic and humanitarian conditions, facilitating security coordination, and reopening Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem consistent with previous agreements. The President and Secretary Rice have asked LTG William Fraser III to monitor developments in this area and to work with the parties to promote progress on Roadmap implementation. Given the secret nature of the bilateral negotiations, progress on the ground is crucial to reflect the seriousness of the process as well as progress that is being achieved in the negotiations.

Third, we are working to support Palestinian economic development and institutional capacity building. France hosted a donors' conference in December which generated pledges of $7.7 billion dollars in budgetary and programmatic support for the PA. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee will meet on May 2 to maintain close donor coordination. Former United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair, in his role as Quartet Representative, has taken a leadership role on this issue, identifying priority projects and working with the parties and international donors to facilitate implementation on the ground. The United States is doing its part. In Paris we pledged $545 million in support for the PA, including $150 million in budgetary support which was delivered to the Fayyad government in mid-March. Additionally, LTG Keith Dayton, the United States Security Coordinator, is working to reform and professionalize the Palestinian security forces, including a program providing training and nonlethal equipment. There is a particularly urgent need for budgetary support for the Palestinians, and we are strongly encouraging Arab governments to do their part.

Finally, we are working to sustain and expand regional support for the parties' efforts. Arab political and financial support will be crucial in order for both Israel and the Palestinians to make the painful compromises necessary for peace. The Arab Peace Initiative was an important step. Now, as President Bush said in July, "Arab nations should build on this initiative—by ending the fiction that Israel does not exist, stopping the incitement of hatred in their official media, and sending cabinet-level visitors to Israel."

We will promote progress on each of these four tracks, each of them vital to the goal of a peace agreement by the end of the year. Secretary Rice is traveling regularly to the region to advance the process. President Bush's January trip to Israel and the West Bank, his first as President, and plans for another Presidential trip in May reflect his personal engagement and commitment to this issue. There are substantial obstacles that must be overcome to reach the goal of a permanent status agreement. And opponents of peace are working to undermine the leaders' efforts as evidenced by the serious escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel in February and March, and the tragic terrorist attack in Jerusalem on March 6, and

more recently against Gaza crossing points. Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that an agreement can be reached before the end of 2008. Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas are partners truly committed to peace, and they enjoy our full support in their historic effort to realize the Palestinian people's aspirations for a better life and statehood, and the Israeli people's aspiration for peace and security.

Question. It is reported that Israeli maintains more than 500 checkpoints and roadblocks in the Palestinian Territories, representing one of the major points of contention in the ongoing talks. What is the status of Israeli roadblocks in the Palestinian Territories and what specific steps is the administration taking to encourage the Israelis to reduce the number of checkpoints and improve the daily lives of average Palestinians in the West Bank?

Answer. The United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported on May 1 that Israeli obstacles to movement in the West Bank had increased to over 600. These range from earthen mounds, some put in place in association with specific Israelis security operations, to major checkpoints on the roads between large Palestinian population centers. The Government of Israel views these roadblocks and checkpoints as a vital component of Israel's efforts to prevent terrorists from infiltrating and carrying out attacks in Israeli cities. For the Palestinians, these obstacles to movement are both a daily nuisance and a major constraint to economic growth and development.

Israel has committed to reducing obstacles to Palestinian movement in the West Bank, both under the Roadmap, and in the November 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access that Secretary Rice brokered. There is an urgent need for progress in this area to build confidence between the parties, sustain popular support for negotiations, as well as to facilitate progress on important economic and capacity building projects for the Palestinians. Easing restriction on Palestinian movement is inextricably linked to Palestinian security performance. If the Israelis can trust that the Palestinian Authority security forces (PASF) are taking the necessary steps to uphold law and order and combat terrorism, it will be much easier for Israel to ease West Bank movement and access restrictions.

These are priority issues for our diplomatic missions in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and the special envoys the Secretary and President Bush have appointed to advance Israeli-Palestinian peace. LTG Keith Dayton is spearheading U.S. and international efforts to train, equip, and professionalize the PASF. At the same time Quartet Representative Tony Blair and General Jim Jones (ret.) are working to integrate economic and capacity building projects with PASF deployments. We are also working with Israel to help rationalize the easing of movement and access restrictions which are necessary for these projects to succeed. Meanwhile, Lt. Gen. William Fraser III, who heads U.S. efforts to monitor and promote progress on Roadmap implementation, is reporting on progress on the ground and keeping the Secretary of State informed so she can support both parties' efforts in this area. Secretary Rice met with Israeli Defense Minister Barak and Palestinian Authority PM Fayyad on March 30 to discuss this issue, among others. That meeting resulted in agreement to remove more than 50 roadblocks and to improve security coordination. Israel followed through and removed more than 50 roadblocks, some of them significant. Much more remains to be done, and improved performance by the PASF and Israeli-Palestinian security coordination should help facilitate continued progress. Progress on the ground remains a vital component of overall progress toward peace, and as such will remain a high priority.

Question. King Abdullah II of Jordan hosted Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert yesterday in Amman. After this visit, a Jordanian royal palace statement urged Olmert to work on "improving the living conditions of Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip." Despite a significant infusion of foreign aid, the World Bank has recently warned that the Palestinian economy is not likely to grow this year, largely due to continued IDF restrictions on movement. Yet, a recent report by a group of retired Israeli generals and Palestinian officials identified 10 major West Bank checkpoints that could be removed—boosting the Palestinian economy—without jeopardizing Israeli security. Are you aware of this report, do you find the report credible, and what actions, if any, are the Israelis taking to implement its recommendations?

Answer. Improving the living conditions of Palestinians is a top priority for the United States Government and a key focus in our efforts to achieve progress between Israel and the Palestinians. As the World Bank and IMF have pointed out in recent reports, obstacles to movement and access of people and goods in the West Bank remains a serious impediment to the type of economic revival that the U.S. Government and the international community would like to see and are working to

support. We are aware of the recent study published by ex-Israeli military generals and Palestinian officials regarding the 10 West Bank checkpoints.

We continue to encourage and work with Israel and the PA to foster improved Palestinian security performance and Israeli-Palestinian security coordination, and to move forward with vital steps to ease restriction on Palestinian movement and access in the West Bank. Secretary Rice just returned from the region where she engaged with Israeli and Palestinian officials on the need to improve conditions in the West Bank, including through a reduction in the number of obstacles to movement in the West Bank that significantly undermine Palestinian economic development. We are also working to professionalize the Palestinian security forces so that they can take the necessary steps to uphold law and order and combat terrorism. These are issues that clearly are most effectively addressed in concrete terms rather than in the abstract. With that in mind, we are working closely with the parties on an integrated approach to security performance and coordination, economic development and capacity building projects, and movement and access issues. Jenin will be the first target of these collaborative efforts and we are hopeful that this new approach will yield tangible benefits and bring new life and hope to Jenin, setting an example that can be followed elsewhere in the Palestinian territories.

RESPONSE OF HON. RICHARD E. HOAGLAND TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

Question. Any information that you could give me on just what the status is in replacing, I think it is Christian Strohal, who is now head of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, I would appreciate. Because it is really important that Kazakhstan and everyone understands how important that person is to the future in terms of the responsibilities of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. So if you have got any recent information on that, I would like to have it back because we are really trying to figure out who is the best person. And to my knowledge, right now, our Government is not pushing anybody for that role. But I really think it is important that we do have a role in making sure that we get the right person there.

Answer. The Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe announced on May 14 that all participating states had joined consensus in approving the nomination of Slovenian State Secretary Janez Lenarcic to be the next director of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, replacing Ambassador Christian Strohal, who is scheduled to depart his post in June 2008. The Department of State is pleased that this highly qualified candidate for this critical job obtained the support of all 56 participating states. Ambassador Lenarcic displayed the qualities that made him an outstanding candidate when he served as the representative in Vienna of the then-Chairman-in-Office during the Slovenian chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Department looks forward to working with Ambassador Lenarcic when he assumes his position on July 1, 2008.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2008

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

Bernicat, Marcia Stephens Bloom, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau
Bodde, Peter W., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi
Booth, Donald E., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia
McMahon Hawkins, Patricia, to be Ambassador to the Togolese Republic
Milovanovic, Gillian Arlette, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mali
Myles, Marianne Matuzic, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde
Nolan, Stephen James, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana
Thomas-Greenfield, Linda, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia
Tritelbaum, Donald Gene, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana

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The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Russell D. Feingold presiding.

Present: Senators Feingold and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator FEINGOLD. This hearing will come to order. Good morning everybody.

We have an impressive array of foreign policy experience and expertise before us this morning. I would like to begin by thanking our nine nominees for being here today, but more importantly, for your many years of service and for your willingness to work in some of the most demanding positions in the U.S. Government and in some of the more difficult postings around the world.

I would also like to offer a warm welcome to your families and friends whose ongoing support will be necessary as you set off, once confirmed, to undertake your new position. And I encourage you, when you make your brief remarks, to please introduce any of your family members or friends who are with you today.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to acknowledge and welcome my colleague, Senator Johnny Isakson, who is joining us as the ranking member of this committee for the first time. Senator, I am looking forward to working with you on a range of countries and issues related to Africa, but it seems appropriate that our first committee hearing together is one in which we will engage with the men and women who have accepted the challenging responsibility of serving as the face and overseer of United States policy in 10 sub-Saharan African countries.

And I will give the Senator an opportunity to welcome the nominees and deliver some opening remarks in just a moment, but first, I hope you do not mind if I lay out what I see as the primary challenges facing the United States Government in Africa today very briefly.

As ambassadors for the United States, you will undoubtedly have to juggle conflicting priorities. Security is a top concern, but the source and nature of the threat differ widely, as does the approach needed to effectively address it. For example, the rebellions and illegal trafficking in Mali's lawless northern territory require a different response than the need for, for example, security sector reform in Liberia or the lack of maritime defense capacity in Cape Verde. You will also face different and evolving partners, with young foreign ministries and uneven military infrastructures. The challenges are many—and subject to rapid change, especially in countries that have upcoming elections.

Additionally, you will be developing and implementing policies at the same time that the new United States combatant command for Africa is establishing its role on the continent.

In addition to security concerns, you will have to address a range of other U.S. strategic interests, including the promotion of democratic principles, human rights, good governance, and sustainable development. U.S. credibility in these countries depends upon our consistent adherence to and advocacy of these fundamental values. Particularly in countries where the United States does not have a long history of engagement or much institutional knowledge, building solid relationships—not just with government officials but also with business, religious, civil society, and other community leaders—is critical to informing and implementing an effective U.S. policy.

And you will also have to ensure that financial, material, and human resources are allocated to address strategic challenges and long-term objectives in your respective countries, and not just to current needs or emergency requirements.

If you are confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you as you meet these responsibilities. I hope you look to the Senate as a resource and to this committee as a source of support and guidance during your tenure at your respective posts. I think you will find this committee to be about the most bipartisan and cooperative one—I will not say in the entire Senate, but certainly one of the most. That is the way it has always been. This has never been a source of partisan conflict, and I have been on this committee now for 16 years.

Now, I look forward to your testimony and to a brief discussion about your qualifications and expectations going into these impor-

tant positions, but first I would like to invite my colleague, the ranking member, Senator Isakson, to offer some opening remarks.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Senator Feingold. I am looking forward to the opportunity of serving with you. I have admired your commitment to the African continent and United States relations there and I hope to benefit and learn from your knowledge and serve as a contributing member as ranking member of this committee.

I want to thank our nominees all for being here today. I have had the occasion to meet with all of them over the last week or so, and they all have very impressive and longstanding records of service to this country and places all over the globe, both challenging and exotic. And I am delighted that you are all here today and welcome your family members and loved ones. I think Senator Feingold and I both recognize we could not do what we do without the love and support of our families, and we know the same is true with you. And we appreciate very much the commitment that they make.

I was telling some of the nominees yesterday in a meeting that I, personally, in the 21st century, do not think there is any question that Africa is the continent of the 21st century as far as the United States of America is concerned. I have visited there twice in the last couple of years, as recently as January, in some of the regional areas where some of these nominees will be serving. And it is an opportunity for the United States to develop a lasting friendship, economic opportunities, and shared arrangements with some wonderful people in some growing and emerging countries.

I commend the President on his commitment to Africa in terms of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and I am looking forward to working with each and every one of the nominees, when they are confirmed, in any way I can to support their effort on the continent and their effort on behalf of the United States of America.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Senator Isakson.

At this time, I would like to request that a statement by my colleague, Senator Hagel, in support of Mr. Bodde's nomination for the position of U.S. Ambassador to Malawi be submitted for the record. Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Senator Hagel appears at the end of this hearing in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section.]

Senator FEINGOLD. And now I will turn to Congressman Pomeroy for his introduction of Ambassador Milovanovic. Congressman, it is good to have you here.

STATEMENT OF HON. EARL POMEROY,
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NORTH DAKOTA

Mr. POMEROY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to be here. Good to see my former colleague, Senator Isakson, once again.

I am here to speak in support of and introduce Ambassador Milovanovic, who is presently serving as our Ambassador to Macedonia. She has been designated as Ambassador-designate to the country of Mali, and I am here because I care deeply about both countries and have had a chance to observe the Ambassador in her performance as our representative in Macedonia.

I am a member of the House Democracy Assistance Commission. This is an effort within the House, bipartisan, to try and mentor parliamentarians in emerging democracies. We are partnering with 14 different countries, and in that connection, I have had the occasion to go to Macedonia twice during the period the Ambassador has served there.

This has been a period, like everything in the Balkans, of substantial political complexity, and there have been many things for the ambassador to assist us and assist the country of Macedonia in steering their way through these difficult years, among other things, basically a complete fruition of the Accra Accords as they came through a period of near civil war to a period of governing stability, helping to guide Macedonia in their position relative to Kosovo, the world's newest independent country.

She has assisted them in becoming NATO-ready. They were not accepted into NATO, as you know, at the Bucharest meeting, but they have made great strides and have our full support as they continue their quest for NATO membership.

She has expanded our Peace Corps operations in Macedonia.

As a member of the House Democracy Assistance Commission, I have had a chance to observe her as she has interacted with the various political factions, the various ethnic factions, the parliament, the president, the prime minister. We have also had a chance to visit extensively about the complex state of affairs in Macedonia, and she has a complete grasp. She was so incredibly helpful to me and the other HDAC members as we tried to scamper up the learning curve ourselves in our interaction with the parliamentarians.

She is heading into, with your approval, a very new and interesting assignment with the country of Mali. In my opinion, the country of Mali is led by one of the continent's great leaders, President Toure. He has, I believe, served almost a George Washington-like role in leading, in 1991, a military coup that deposed a very corrupt government and got the country on track to democracy. But he did not stand as the first president. That was President Konare, who served his two terms, and then allowed the peaceful transition, according to their constitution and democratic election, to the new government. President ATT, as he is known, Toure, stood for election, was elected, recently reelected. It was my privilege to represent Speaker Pelosi at his inauguration last June.

Mali is a country that, in a tough neighborhood, has run four successful democratic elections for President. They are the recipient of one of our most significant Millennium Challenge grants, a $429 million grant, that literally could affect substantial lasting change in this country. I believe one of the ambassador's largest responsibilities will be making certain that this comes along and comes along in a successful way.

I think that we have got an outstanding diplomat to partner with an outstanding President on the ground in Mali, and I could only think very good things will happen in a little country I care very deeply about.

So I thank you and I am very happy—for what it is worth, a House guy endorsing without reservation the consideration of Ambassador Milovanovic for the Mali assignment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pomeroy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. EARL POMEROY,
U.S. CONGRESSMAN FROM NORTH DAKOTA

Chairman Feingold and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I am pleased to testify briefly this morning in support of your consideration of Ambassador Milovanovic, presently serving as Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia, for a new position as Ambassador to the Republic of Mali.

I have a deep interest in both Mali and Macedonia and have had the opportunity to observe the leadership of Ambassador Milovanovic as she has represented the United States in the Republic of Macedonia.

I am a currently a member of the House Democracy Assistance Commission. This commission is a bipartisan undertaking in the House of Representatives, charged with establishing mentoring relationships with members of Parliament in new and emerging democracies. Presently, we have relations with 14 countries, including the Republic of Macedonia. Through this commission, I participated in exchanges with Macedonia in November 2006 and in March of this year.

On each occasion I met with Ambassador Milovanovic and had the opportunity to witness her interactions with members of Parliament from across the spectrum of parties and ethnic groups. I also had the honor to witness her employ considerable diplomatic skills during a meeting with the present Prime Minister.

As this committee knows well, Macedonia is a vibrant newly emerging democracy that faces many complex challenges. In extensive discussions with Ambassador Milovanovic, I was impressed with her thorough grasp of the issues facing the country and the positive leadership role that she has played as the official representative of the United States Government.

I have been very interested in the Republic of Mali since a trip there in 2001 where we evaluated the emerging commitment of basic education for all children—especially in improving the access to education for girls. In subsequent years, I have closely followed Mali's successful transition to democracy. In 2007, Mali successfully concluded its fourth democratic election for President—a notable record in light of the long, corrupt, and repressive nature of the government of Moussa Traore, which was ended by military coup in 1991.

President Konare, who succeeded Moussa Traore, and his successor, President Toure, are model leaders on the continent of Africa. They each have demonstrated extraordinary skills in trying to establish the tradition of democracy in one of the poorest countries in the world. What is all the more remarkable is the fact that they are achieving this in a very tough neighborhood where neighboring countries are facing diverse governance and security challenges.

Mali's exemplary efforts have been recognized by the United States in their receipt of a Millennium Challenge grant from the administration. This grant award in the amount of $461 million is one of the largest Millennium Challenge grants awarded to date.

The Republic of Mali deserves one of our finest diplomats. Many would view Mali as strategically insignificant to the United States. I, however, hold a different view. I believe that Mali is vitally important to the United States. It is a role model for the rest of the continent, having demonstrated how a successful transition from a system of entrenched authoritarianism can be successfully undertaken. Mali's success shows how free, open elections can produce positive changes for the people of a country, even in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

The Republic of Mali deserves one of our finest diplomats, and when I learned that Ambassador Milovanovic had been selected for Mali, I was delighted. I believe that Ambassador Milovanovic's nomination to represent the interests of the United States in Mali perfectly matches a tremendously talented United States diplomat with a country that is very deserving of her service.

I hope the committee will move quickly to confirm Ambassador Milovanovic as the next United States Ambassador to Mali.

Thank you.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Congressman. Of course, your words are most welcome and I congratulate the nominee on receiving such high words of praise from our colleague. Thank you so much, Congressman, for being here.

Now we will go to the nominees, and we will begin with Ms. Bernicat, who would be the Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

STATEMENT OF MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL AND THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

Ms. BERNICAT. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today. I wish to thank the President and the Secretary of State for the confidence that they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

In the interest of time, Mr. Chairman, I have a slightly longer written statement I would like to submit for the record with your permission.

Mr. Chairman, my sons, Sunil Christopher and Sumit Nicolaus, with whom I have been enormously blessed to share the adventure of service overseas, are here today. They and several friends they brought with them have studied the function of advice and consent this year and wanted to see it for themselves.

Senator FEINGOLD. Where are they?

Ms. BERNICAT. They are right here.

Senator FEINGOLD. Please stand up. Welcome. Glad to see you guys. [Applause.]

Ms. BERNICAT. It has been my great fortune to represent the American people in seven countries located in five geographic regions, including three postings and an internship on the African continent, since joining the Foreign Service in 1981.

The Senegalese people have a proud democratic tradition, including peaceful transitions of government, religious tolerance, a free press, and the rule of law, even as they struggle to overcome persistent economic and governance difficulties that challenges of development impose. If confirmed, one of my most important responsibilities will be to work with President Abdoulaye Wade and his government to ensure an environment that encourages the broadest participation in the political process by all elements of the population.

The United States also supports transparency and accountability in government spending, critical market-based economic reforms, and continued progress towards the Millennium Challenge compact.

Senegal maintains its active role internationally and is a strong partner of the United States in the war on terror. President Wade has provided vital personal leadership in promoting religious tolerance and mutual understanding. He will be the chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference for the next 3 years and

has been a leading proponent of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Having worked with earlier peacekeeping training programs in Malawi, I look forward, if confirmed, to supporting Senegal in its role as a leading contributor to peacekeeping operations around the world, including Darfur.

As someone who has lost too many friends and colleagues in the last decade to HIV/AIDS and malaria, if confirmed, I will work to redouble our efforts to fight these diseases, as well as address other health issues in both countries.

Guinea-Bissau continues to face formidable challenges in establishing political stability and economic prosperity. Its democratic institutions and rule of law remain weak, but the country has reached the important milestone of seating a government that conforms to its constitution. I will work, if confirmed, to promote the dual goals of a democratic, transparent political system and a complementary economic program to help reduce the levels of poverty that contribute to regional instability.

If confirmed, I am eager to apply the lessons I learned in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean to fight the growing contagion of illicit narcotics trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. I relish the prospect of developing a successful interagency strategy which would also engage international partners to combat this scourge and to provide the people of Guinea-Bissau with material and moral support in that fight.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your continuing interest in Africa and the positive role the United States can play in its development. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you, your committee, and other Members of Congress to advance America's interests in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. It would be a great privilege to travel the length and breadth of both countries to proudly represent the people of the United States.

I would be happy to respond to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bernicat follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today. I wish to thank the President and the Secretary of State for the trust and confidence that they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my sons, Sunil Christopher and Sumit Nicolaus, with whom I have been enormously blessed to share the adventure and the challenge of service overseas. It has been my fortune, as well, to have represented the American people in seven countries in five geographic regions since joining the Foreign Service in 1981. If confirmed, it would be a great privilege to serve our country in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. Both countries are friends of the United States.

The Senegalese people are well known for their proud democratic tradition, including peaceful transitions of government, religious tolerance, a free press, and an acknowledgement of the importance of the rule of law, even as they struggle to overcome persistent economic and governance difficulties posed by the challenges of development. Senegal continues to participate actively in international organizations and including the Organization of the Islamic Conference in which President Abdoulaye Wade will chair for the next 3 years. President Wade remains a dynamic African leader, as evidenced most recently by his key role in brokering an agreement between Chad and Sudan to work toward reducing tensions in their volatile region. He has also been a leading proponent of the New Partnership for Africa's

Development (NEPAD). Senegal is a strong partner in the war on terror and President Wade has provided vital personal leadership in promoting religious tolerance and mutual understanding.

Having had the privilege of working with our earlier peacekeeping training programs in sub-Saharan Africa, I look forward, if confirmed, to supporting Senegal in its role as a leading contributor to United Nations and other peacekeeping operations around the world, including in Darfur.

Senegal conducted Presidential and legislative elections in 2007, but the parliamentary elections were boycotted by the opposition and local polling has been deferred until 2009. If confirmed, one of my most important responsibilities will be to work with President Wade and his government to ensure an environment that encourages the broadest participation in the political process by all elements of the population. In addition, it will be important to promote governance, transparency, and accountability in government spending.

To achieve momentum in its development, Senegal will need to exert maximum effort to make the critical market-based reforms that underpin the solid economic foundation of any dynamic society. The United States will continue to work closely with Senegal on these reforms. After a series of false starts, Senegal is working to secure a Millennium Challenge Compact.

The United States is intensely engaged with Senegal to reduce the incidence of malaria and to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Thankfully, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Senegal is relatively low, but this pandemic knows no borders. As someone who has lost too many friends, colleagues, and counterparts in the last decade to these two preventable diseases, if confirmed, I will work to redouble our efforts in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau to fight HIV/AIDS and malaria, and address other health issues.

Guinea-Bissau continues to face formidable challenges to establish political stability and economic prosperity. Although its democratic institutions and rule of law remain weak, the country has reached the important milestone of seating a government that conforms to the demands of its constitution. The upcoming parliamentary elections could be a harbinger of the direction that political development will take there.

If confirmed, I am eager to apply the lessons learned from our country team efforts in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean to fight the contagion of illicit narcotics trafficking that afflicts Guinea-Bissau at worrisome levels. I relish the prospect of developing a successful interagency strategy, which would also engage international partners, to combat this scourge and to provide the people of Guinea-Bissau with material and moral support in this effort. I will also work, if confirmed, to promote the dual goals of a democratic, transparent political system and a complementary economic program to help reduce the levels of poverty that contribute to regional instability. I am aware of how difficult these challenges will be.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your continuing interest in Africa and the positive role the United States can play in its development. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you, your committee and other members of Congress to advance America's interests in Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, and throughout the region. It would be an honor to travel the length and breadth of both countries to proudly represent the people of the United States of America.

I would be happy to answer your questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Ms. Bernicat.

And now we will go to Ms. Milovanovic.

STATEMENT OF HON. GILLIAN ARLETTE MILOVANOVIC, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALI

Ambassador MILOVANOVIC. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, members of the committee, I am very honored also today to appear before you to discuss my nomination by President Bush to become our country's next Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. I am deeply honored by the trust placed in me by President Bush and by Secretary Rice. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my level best to be worthy of that confidence and to advance the goals of the United States in Mali and in the region. I know that my success will depend on a relationship of close cooperation and consultation with this committee, with its staff, and

with others in the Congress, and I look forward to establishing such a relationship.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like simply to acknowledge my family who are not able to be here today, but I would like to mention my husband, Zlat, and my two daughters, Alexandra and Anna. The Foreign Service has been more than just my career. It has really been and still is my life, but also theirs. And their patience, sacrifice, flexibility, good humor, curiosity, and unfailing support have made possible any successes that I have achieved as a professional and as a human being.

With over 16 years of democratic experience, Mali is an example for West Africa and beyond. It is led, as Congressman Pomeroy mentioned, by an extraordinary president. Mali has a strong human rights record. It has hosted the Community of Democracies Ministerial in November of last year and it is a strong partner with the United States against terrorism and extremism. It has also deployed on several international peacekeeping operations.

Unfortunately, Mali's political progress has not been matched by improved social and economic indicators. In 2007, the U.N. ranked Mali 173 out of 177 countries in its Human Development Index. Literacy rates, health indicators, and a per capita GNP that are among the lowest in the world, together with food security issues, insecurity, and the presence of al-Qaeda-aligned terrorists in the country's sparsely inhabited northern regions are all serious threats to democracy and regional stability and contributors to this poor showing on the Human Development Index.

If I am confirmed, I will continue to deepen and expand our important relationship with Mali. President Bush's recent trip to Africa and his meeting with President Toure in Washington highlighted U.S. support for key programs, among them the President's Malaria Initiative and PEPFAR to deal with HIV/AIDS. Mali's enormous $461 million Millennium Challenge Compact entered into force in September of last year. Our Peace Corps program in Mali is one of the largest in Africa. Mali is a key member of the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership. Through TSCTP, we are helping Mali to be better able to control its borders and to counter the efforts of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. The well received, ACOTA, African Contingency Operations Assistance program, along with the visit of AFRICOM's General Ward at the end of February both underscore Mali's status as a key partner in regional security.

Mr. Chairman, this is my 30th as a Foreign Service officer. If confirmed, I would bring to my assignment in Mali prior experience as a Chief of Mission, 9 years of service in Africa, and 15 years of experience working with societies in political and economic transition.

I have worked closely with the Defense Department, State National Guards, and other partners to reform and modernize defense establishments in Europe and in Africa and to strengthen their capacity to contribute to peacekeeping, regional security, and the global war on terror.

If confirmed, I particularly look forward to the opportunity to continue my long relationship of collaboration with the Peace

Corps, an agency whose mission and whose volunteers truly represent the best that America has to offer.

Mali faces significant challenges in seeking to improve the health of its citizens, advance education, and promote human rights. To help Mali achieve these goals, if confirmed, I would draw on my experience with USAID and Peace Corps education programs, and I would take a task force approach, which has been successful for me in the past, dealing with such issues as combating trafficking in persons and other abuse and to promote the rights of women and children. I believe my experience with CDC and with PEPFAR would also assist me in leading our mission effectively and advancing United States interests in Mali.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed, you will find in me a responsive partner, fully committed to working with you and with this committee to advance United States interests in the Republic of Mali, and you will find in me a Chief of Mission whose highest priority will be to ensure the security of embassy personnel, their families and other Americans in Mali. It would be, indeed, a great honor to be entrusted with carrying on the work of my distinguished colleagues who have preceded me as serving as Ambassador to the Republic of Mali.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I too look forward to taking your questions. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Milovanovic follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. GILLIAN ARLETTE MILOVANOVIC, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALI

Mr. Chairman, honorable members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today to discuss my nomination by President Bush to become our country's Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. I am deeply honored by the trust placed in me by President Bush and by Secretary Rice. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my very best to be worthy of that confidence, and to advance the goals of the United States in Mali and in the region. I know from experience that my success will depend on a relationship of close cooperation and consultation with this committee, its staff and others in the Congress. It is a relationship that I hope to begin with you today, building on the foundation of my previous years of service in Africa.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge my husband, Zlat, and my daughters, Alexandra and Anna, although they are unable to be here today. The Foreign Service has been more than just my career. It has been, and is, my life and that of my entire family. My family's patience, sacrifice, flexibility, good humor, curiosity, and unfailing support have made possible any successes I have achieved as a professional and as a person. If I am confirmed, it will be my honor and privilege to represent the United States in Mali. We all look forward to returning to the continent where we have already spent 9 rewarding years as a family and where Anna was born.

With over 16 years of democratic experience, Mali serves as an example for West Africa and beyond. Mali has a strong human rights record, hosted the Community of Democracies Ministerial in November 2007, is a strong partner against terrorism and extremism, an active participant in international organizations, and has deployed troops to several international peacekeeping operations.

Mali's political progress, however, has not been matched by improved social and economic indicators. In 2007, the U.N. gave Mali a ranking of 173 out of 177 countries in its Human Development Index, due in large part to literacy rates, health indicators, and a per capita GNP that are among the lowest in the world. These factors, along with food security concerns, insecurity, and the presence of al-Qaeda-aligned terrorists in the country's sparsely populated northern regions, constitute serious threats to democracy and regional stability.

The United States has been a key partner in helping Mali to overcome these challenges, and, if I am confirmed, I will continue to deepen and expand this important relationship. President Bush's recent trip to Africa, and his meeting with Malian President Touré in Washington, have highlighted United States Government sup-

port for important programs such as the President's Malaria Initiative and PEPFAR for HIV/AIDS. Mali's $461 million MCC Compact entered into force in September 2007, and it is a high priority for President Touré. Our Peace Corps program in Mali is one of the largest in Africa. Mali is a key member of the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Through TSCTP, we are helping Mali augment its ability to control its borders and counter al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb efforts in the region, ensuring that northern Mali remains inhospitable to extremism. The United States Government has a well-received African Contingency Operations Assistance (ACOTA) program in Mali, and the visit of AFRICOM's general ward at the end of February underscored that Mali is a key partner in regional security.

Mr. Chairman, this year marks my 30th anniversary as a Foreign Service officer. If confirmed, I would bring to my assignment in Mali prior experience as a chief of mission, 9 years of service in Africa, and 15 years of experience working with societies in political and economic transition.

It has been my privilege to work closely over the years with the Defense Department, State National Guards, and other partners to reform and modernize defense establishments in Europe and Africa and to strengthen their capacity to contribute to peacekeeping, regional security, and the global war on terror.

During my career, I have been very proud to swear in new Peace Corps volunteers on a number of occasions. I am particularly delighted that, if confirmed, I will have the opportunity to continue my long collaboration with the Peace Corps, an agency whose mission and whose volunteers represent the best that America has to offer.

Mali faces significant challenges in seeking to improve the health of its citizens, advance education, and promote human rights. If confirmed, to help Mali achieve these goals I would drawn on my experience with USAID and Peace Corps education programs, and I would foster a multiagency task force approach to combat trafficking in persons and other abuse, as well as to promote the rights of women and girls. When assigned to Botswana and South Africa I gained immense respect for the work of CDC and was privileged to be "present at the creation" of the PEPFAR program in South Africa. Should I be confirmed, I believe this experience too would help me to lead our mission effectively and to advance United States interests in Mali.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed, you will find in me a responsive partner, fully committed to working with you and with this committee to advance United States interests in the Republic of Mali, and a chief of mission whose highest priority will be to ensure the security of embassy personnel, their families, and other Americans in Mali. It would be a great honor to be entrusted with carrying on the work of the distinguished colleagues who have served as Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. With that Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I thank you for your attention and I look forward to responding to your questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much.

And now we turn to Mr. Teitelbaum, who would be the Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana.

STATEMENT OF DONALD GENE TEITELBAUM, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Mr. TEITELBAUM. Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, I have full remarks to be entered into the record.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Mr. TEITELBAUM. I would like to deliver shorter remarks now, if I may.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana. I thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust and confidence.

Mr. Chairman, I like to start by introducing some people who have influenced my life. It is pretty big crowd, though.

Senator FEINGOLD. That is all right.

Mr. TEITELBAUM. First, my wife, Julianna Lindsey, and her parents, Jon and Annette Lindsey.

Senator FEINGOLD. Please stand.

Mr. TEITELBAUM. My parents, Bob and Fumie Teitelbaum; my older brother, Alex, and my sister, Romie, my seven nephews——

[Laughter.]

Mr. TEITELBAUM [continuing]. Greg, Adam, Mark, David, Chad, Alex, and Robbie. And last but not least, the best friends anybody could ask for: Allen Crane, Scott Findley, John Carter, and Gary Boswick.

Senator FEINGOLD. All welcome. I am sure seven nephews is an all-time record for this committee in spite of its 200 years as a committee. [Laughter.]

Well done. You may proceed.

Mr. TEITELBAUM. Although not a blood relative, speaking for the many of us here I think who have been with the Africa Bureau for a long time, I would like to also acknowledge the presence of Ambassador Ruth Davis who is very much family for all of us who have been with the bureau.

Mr. Chairman, as a Foreign Service officer in South Africa, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda, and at the National Security Council, I have seen the opportunity that embraces the continent, but I have also seen the suffering, conflict, and despair that stifle progress in too many African nations.

The intricate nature of the continent is present in Ghana. A democracy since 1992, Ghana has held four free and fair national elections. Ghana has an apolitical military and a lively, free media. Ghana has demonstrated consistent economic growth and is poised to achieve its Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty by 50 percent. Ghana is a strong partner in peacekeeping and was a supportive ally on the United Nations Security Council, and the Ghanaian people are benefiting from improved schools, sanitation, and health services as a result of sound macroeconomic policy and debt relief.

However, political and social upheaval marked the years following Ghana's independence. Democratic institutions are young and political power is highly centralized. Economic gains remain fragile. Broadly shared prosperity has yet to be achieved. Political patronage and connections still taint commercial and economic opportunities.

America's centuries-old relationship with Ghana has similar contrasts. The dark era of the slave trade intertwined our histories. Our economic interaction was once largely that of debtor and creditor. Past international issues, such as Ghana's relations with Libya, strained our relationship.

But now Ghanaian students studying in America and Americans tracing their heritage in Ghana characterize our people-to-people contacts. America's civil rights struggle and Ghana's national independence movement inspired each other. Our militaries cooperate through many programs. We are trading partners under AGOA and President Bush had a successful visit to Ghana in February.

If confirmed by the Senate, my priority will be to support transformation in Ghana and America's relationship with Ghana. It is time to put the donor-recipient nomenclature away and continue our journey toward true partnership. It is time to stop talking about potential and start achieving measurable goals.

If confirmed by the Senate, I will have the power of sound policy and programs to push transformation. There are opportunities for Ghana to transform and for the United States to assist. I see op-

portunity in the upcoming elections in December and in strengthening democratic institutions. I see opportunity in making wise decisions regarding offshore oil discoveries. I see opportunity in alleviating poverty, making economic growth durable, and spreading its benefits widely. I see opportunity in continuing the fight against malaria, for which the Congress has provided bipartisan support.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, Ghana and America's relationship with Ghana do not lack for opportunities to transform. If confirmed by the Senate to be the next United States Ambassador to Ghana, my duty will be to turn those opportunities into outcomes. I will depend on the people at the embassy in Ghana, and I will seek out strong commitments from my counterparts in Ghana. Importantly too, I will count on continued communication and consultation with this committee and with Congress so that our efforts yield the greatest benefit for the American and Ghanaian peoples.

Thank you for your attention. I am very pleased to be here and happy to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Teitelbaum follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DONALD GENE TRITELBAUM, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana. I would like to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for this opportunity and for their trust and confidence.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to start today by introducing some people that have influenced my life. First, my wife, Julianna Lindsey, and her parents, Jon and Annette, my parents, Robert and Fumie Teitelbaum, my older brother, Alex, and my sister, Romie, and their families; and, last but not least, the best friends anybody could ask for: Allen Crane, Scott Findley, John Carter, and Gary Boswick.

Mr. Chairman, I come to this point in my career with a deep respect for the countries of Africa and a firm belief that the United States of America must engage across the continent. As a Foreign Service officer, I was immersed in Africa on the ground in South Africa, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda, and from the vantage point of the National Security Council. Through these experiences I have seen the promise, opportunity, and hope that embrace the continent. But I have also seen the suffering, conflict, and despair that stifle progress in far too many African nations. I have seen stark, complicated contrasts—abundant natural resources, fledgling democracies, incredible personal courage, and historical global links standing toe-to-toe with challenges such as civil wars, HIV/AIDS, poverty, and corruption.

The intricate nature of the African continent is present in Ghana. A democracy since 1992, Ghana has held four free and fair national elections—including a peaceful transition from one party to another in 2000. Ghana has an apolitical military and a lively, free media. Ghana has emerged as a regional leader and a strong partner in peacekeeping, on conflict resolution, and as a supportive ally during its tenure on the United Nations Security Council from 2005–2007. Ghana has started to implement its $547 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact. And the Ghanaian people are benefiting from improved schools, sanitation, health services, and other basic infrastructure as a result of sound macroeconomic policy and debt relief.

However, political and social upheaval marked the years following Ghana's independence in 1957. Democratic institutions are still young and political power is highly centralized. Economic gains remain fragile. Poverty has decreased markedly but broadly shared prosperity is yet to be achieved. Political patronage and connections still taint commercial and economic opportunities. Additionally, the current government lacks capacity to fight escalating drug trafficking.

America's centuries-old relationship with Ghana has similar contrasts. The dark era of the slave trade intertwined our histories. Our economic interaction was once largely that of debtor and creditor. Past international issues, such as Ghana's relations with Libya, strained our relationship.

But now, Ghanaian students studying in America and Americans proudly tracing their heritage in Ghana characterize our people to people contacts. Our coinciding fights for freedom—America's civil rights struggle and Ghana's national independence movement during the middle of last century—inspired each other. The first United States Peace Corps overseas mission was established in Ghana in 1961. Our militaries cooperate through many programs, including the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program, Africa Command's Africa Partnership Station, and the International Military Education and Training program. Ghana is one of Africa's premier peacekeeping partners. We are trading partners under the African Growth and Opportunity Act. And President Bush had a successful visit to Ghana in February.

Ghanaians and Americans share a love of democracy, human rights, educational opportunity, free enterprise, peace, and stability. These shared values implore the United States to be active in Ghana. I believe that every corner of the globe is significant in the fight for freedom, peace, and prosperity. Successes and failures in Ghana can affect its neighbors, the region, the continent, and, indeed, the world.

If confirmed by the Senate, I will use the resources of the United States Government wisely, efficiently, and effectively to bring the utmost benefit to the peoples of Ghana and of America. My priority will be to support transformation in Ghana and of America's relationship with Ghana. It is time to put the donor-recipient nomenclature away and continue our journey towards true partnership. It is time to stop talking about potential and start achieving measurable goals.

If confirmed by the Senate, I will have the power of sound policy, programs such as those of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and USAID, and the talent and skills of embassy personnel to push transformation. There are opportunities for Ghana to transform and for the United States to assist. I see opportunity in the upcoming elections in December. I see opportunity in making wise decisions regarding offshore oil discoveries. I see opportunity in alleviating poverty, making economic growth durable, and spreading its benefits widely. I see opportunity in continuing the fight against malaria, for which the Congress has provided bipartisan support. I see opportunity in immobilizing drug trafficking. I see opportunity in strengthening democratic institutions.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, Ghana and America's relationship with Ghana do not lack for opportunities to transform. If confirmed by the Senate to be the next United States Ambassador to Ghana, my duty will be to turn those opportunities into outcomes—to move from a picture of stark contrasts to freedom, prosperity, and peace. I will depend on the people at the embassy in Accra and I will seek out strong commitments from my counterparts in Ghana. Importantly too, I will count on continued communication and consultation with this committee and Congress so that our aim stays true and our efforts yield the greatest benefit for the American and Ghanaian peoples. Thank you for your attention. I am very pleased to be here and I am happy to answer any questions you have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Mr. Teitelbaum.

Now we will go to Ms. Linda Thomas-Greenfield to be Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia. I believe you are the one with Wisconsin ties?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I am.

Senator FEINGOLD. And I believe you have that in common with the President of Liberia.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. And I have that in common with you, sir.

Senator FEINGOLD. And me, of course. That is the most obvious one. [Laughter.]

But I have talked at length with the President of Liberia about how cold it was in Wisconsin.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. And it was. I came there from Louisiana.

Senator FEINGOLD. Why do you not go ahead?

STATEMENT OF LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you, sir. Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, I am truly, truly honored and delighted to be here today as President Bush's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to Republic of Liberia. I would like to thank the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust that they have shown by nominating me for this key position. As you know, Liberia is one of the United States closest friends on the continent of Africa.

Mr. Chairman, if you will allow me, I would like to also recognize my family. My husband, Lafayette Greenfield, is retired from the Foreign Service and is responsible for enticing me nearly 30 years ago to pursue this career. And my two children, Lindsay and Deuce, both of whom grew up in the service and, with their dad, supported me throughout my 26-year Foreign Service career.

I would also like to recognize my long-time friends, Sarah Sommers, Delores Justice, and Lisa Connor.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome, all of you.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, I have spent the better part of my career working on Africa and African issues. For the past 2½ years, I have served in the Bureau of African Affairs, first as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for West Africa and then in my current position as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary.

Not long ago, Liberia was mired in civil war and spreading conflict throughout the region. Now it is well along the road to recovery. I was honored to observe the first round of Liberia's national elections in 2005 that led to the election of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. With these democratic elections, Liberians chose peace over war, a future over stagnation, and a return to the community of nations. Now the government of President Sirleaf is making major strides, reforming its institutions, attracting investment, and setting Liberia on the path to stability and economic growth.

But Liberia is not out of the woods yet. The peace is fragile. Its economy remains weak and high unmet expectations risk compromising Liberia's future.

Liberia will face many challenges over the next several years. It must grow economically, creating jobs and reviving its economy. It must develop its civil society, an independent media, to reverse the social and cultural damage done by decades of conflict. In 2011, Liberia will face another major test of its democracy as it will hold presidential and legislative elections.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I would work diligently to continue the strong engagement of the United States to keep Liberia moving in the right direction. United States engagement will remain critical to Liberia's success. Thanks to the generous support of Congress, our assistance to Liberia spans the entire range of programs and areas averaging over $180 million per year. In a country with only 3.5 million people, that support can have an enormous impact. If confirmed, I would work with our excellent embassy team, USAID, DOD, and other agency staff to ensure that our assistance achieves maximum impact and is coordinated with the efforts of other donors and with the Government of Liberia.

If confirmed, I would also use my position to confront those who threaten Liberia's recovery. I would not hesitate to publicly attack corruption, human rights abuses, and old ways of doing business in Liberia that contributed to its breakdown and to its civil conflict. Liberia's proud and strong people deserve a government that will serve the public interest and that will protect the people, not prey on them.

Governance reforms are an important means of attracting foreign investment, and if confirmed, I would work to advance United States business interests for the benefit of the American economy, as well as the Liberian economy.

Finally, sirs, I am especially pleased to be here today to come full circle back to Liberia. In the late 1970s, I studied in Liberia as a graduate student from the University of Wisconsin. Liberia opened my eyes to the wider world. It inspired my passion for Africa. If confirmed, I hope to have the chance to contribute to Liberia's development and to advance our important bilateral relationship. I will also look forward to working with this committee to advance United States policy in Africa.

Thank you for this time.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Thomas-Greenfield follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored and delighted to be here today as President Bush's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia. I would like to thank the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have shown by nominating me for this position. Liberia is one of the United States closest friends on the continent of Africa, and I am grateful to be nominated to serve there as the United States Ambassador.

Mr. Chairman, I would like the take the opportunity to introduce my husband, Lafayette Greenfield, a retired Foreign Service officer, who enticed me nearly 30 years ago to pursue this career. I also recognize my two children, Lindsay and Deuce, both of whom grew up in the service and who with their dad have supported me throughout my 26 years in the United States Foreign Service.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have spent the better part of my career working in Africa and on African issues. For the past 2½ years, I have served in the Bureau of African Affairs, first as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for West Africa and now in my current position as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. Nearly half of my Foreign Service career focused on refugee and humanitarian issues, including as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration where I had oversight for refugee, humanitarian, and migration programs in Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

Not long ago, Liberia was mired in civil war and spreading conflict throughout the region; now it is well along the road to recovery. I was honored to be an observer for the first round of Liberia's national elections in 2005 that eventually led to the inauguration of Africa's first woman President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. With those democratic elections, Liberians chose peace over war; a future over stagnation; and a return to the community of nations. Now we are 5 years past Liberia's civil war, and the government of President Sirleaf is making major strides, reforming its institutions, attracting investment, and setting Liberia on the right path to stability and economic growth.

But Liberia, as they say, is "not out of the woods" yet. Its peace is fragile, its economy remains weak, and high unmet expectations risk compromising Liberia's future. If confirmed as ambassador, I would work diligently to continue the strong engagement of the United States to keep Liberia moving in the right direction, and I would ensure that our attention and commitment to Liberia does not waver or diminish during this crucial post-conflict period.

Liberia will face many challenges over the next several years. It must grow economically, creating jobs and reviving the agricultural sector. It must develop its civil

society, independent media, and community organizations to reverse the social and cultural damage done by years of conflict. The government must fix its broken justice system, train and develop its civil service, and build its security services to keep the peace. In 2011, Liberia will face another major test when it holds Presidential and legislative elections. Liberia must continue on the path of democracy.

Throughout this period, United States engagement will remain critical to Liberia's success. Thanks to the generous support of the Congress, our assistance to Liberia spans the entire range of program areas and averages some $180 million per year. Liberia has the second largest USAID program in Africa, after Sudan. In a country with only 3½ million people, that support has an enormous impact on the health and education of Liberia's people and the improvement and reform of its Government.

If confirmed as ambassador, I would work with our excellent embassy, USAID, DOD, and other agency staff to ensure that our assistance achieves maximum impact, and is coordinated with the efforts of other donors and of the Government of Liberia. I am pleased to report that Peace Corps, an important face of America, has already begun reestablishing itself in Liberia and volunteers will be arriving soon.

If confirmed, I would also use my position to confront those who threaten Liberia's recovery. I would not hesitate to publicly attack corruption, human rights abuses, and the "old ways of doing business" in Liberia that contributed so much to its breakdown and civil conflict. Liberia's proud and strong people deserve a government that will serve the public interest, not private agendas, and that will protect the people, not prey on them. President Sirleaf has made that commitment and, if confirmed, I, as the President's representative to Liberia, will stand with her.

Governance reforms are also important as a means of attracting foreign investment. I believe Liberia's growth and recovery will depend on inflows of private capital, particularly from American businesses seeking opportunities in mining, agriculture, services, and other sectors. If confirmed as ambassador, I would work to advance United States business interests for the benefit of both the American economy and the Liberian economy.

Finally, on a personal note, I am especially pleased to be here today, to come full circle back to Liberia. In the late 1970s, I spent a year and a half in Liberia as a graduate student from the University of Wisconsin, where I studied political science. Liberia opened my eyes to the wider world and inspired my passion for Africa and my decision to make the Foreign Service a career. Now, some 30 years later, if confirmed, I hope to have the chance to contribute to Liberia's development and to advance our important bilateral relationship. Thank you again, Chairman Feingold, for today's hearing. I look forward to your questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much.

And now we turn to Ms. Patricia McMahon Hawkins to be Ambassador to the Togolese Republic.

STATEMENT OF PATRICIA McMAHON HAWKINS, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC

Ms. HAWKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson. I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Togo. I thank both President Bush and Secretary Rice for this opportunity and for their trust and confidence in my ability to serve our country in this position.

I would like to mention my husband, also a Foreign Service officer, Richard Hawkins, who is currently serving as the team leader of the provincial reconstruction team in Al Muaydi, Iraq, embedded with the 3rd Combat Brigade team of the 3rd Division of the United States Army.

If I am confirmed as the Ambassador to Togo, I will draw on 25 years of Foreign Service experience to advance United States policy objectives in Togo. Our overall vision of our relationship with Togo is focused on democracy and respect for human rights, prosperity and security, and health.

Togo is a small country on the coast of West Africa, and it has been poorly governed since the 1960s. In the 1990s, in response to

a repressive government's violation of democratic principles and human rights abuses, Togo's multinational and bilateral partners, including the United States, terminated assistance programs. In the ensuing years, the economy has stagnated and the physical infrastructure has deteriorated.

Despite a flawed and violent electoral process in 2005, the new President was able to initiate a dialog with his major opponents that culminated in the Global Political Agreement in August 2006. The centerpiece of the agreement was the organization of legislative elections which took place in October of 2007 and were declared free and fair by numerous local and international observers.

If confirmed, I will continue the work of my predecessor to encourage progress on improving election legislation and processes so that future elections, including the presidential elections in 2010, will be fair and transparent, on the development of stronger political parties, and on encouraging better collaboration among the parties. I intend to share American diplomatic values with the Togolese by focusing on principles of tolerance and equal access to media. I will seek to accelerate the improvement in civil-military relations and press for a further reduction of the military's involvement in the government and in civil society. I will look for opportunities to cooperate with Togo's military and security forces to combat drug trafficking and transnational crime, including the trafficking of persons, and to promote Togolese participation in regional efforts to strengthen maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

President Bush recently designated Togo eligible to receive benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act. If confirmed, I will work to promote Togo's full participation and enjoyment of these benefits for the prosperity of the Togolese people. I will assist the Government of Togo in its efforts to fight corruption and to promote the rule of law, using our limited democracy and human rights fund allocation and regional USAID programs.

As in so many countries in the world today, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other risks to health and well-being menace Togo's stability and prosperity. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that our assistance in combating disease is utilized to maximum effectiveness. The Peace Corps will continue to play an important role in combating HIV/AIDS with approximately one-quarter of the volunteers working full-time in the field of community health and all 100 volunteers engaged in some way. We will continue to collaborate with other donor countries and international organizations to increase the capacity of Togolese officials to combat HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, and we will use strong media outreach to promote health education and awareness.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, Togo, as small and as poor as it is, holds promise for the future despite the many challenges that remain. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the leaders and people of Togo and this committee to sustain the current forward momentum toward political and economic reform so that the Togolese people might enjoy fully the fruits of freedom.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity, and I would be pleased to respond to any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hawkins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PATRICIA MCMAHON HAWKINS, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Togo. I thank both President Bush and Secretary Rice for this opportunity and for their trust and confidence in my ability to serve our country in this position.

If confirmed, I will draw on 25 years of Foreign Service experience, 12 of which have been spent either in Africa or focusing on African issues, to advance United States policy objectives in Togo. Our overall vision for the direction of our relationship with Togo is focused on democracy and respect for human rights, prosperity and security, and health. In pursuing our goals, we face a dual challenge. We must maximize our impact in the three priority areas with the program resources at our disposal, while ensuring that Washington is poised to increase United States Government engagement if and when Togo completes the emergence from its long political and human rights crisis.

Togo, a small country on the coast of West Africa, has been poorly governed since the 1960s. In the 1990s, in response to a repressive government's violation of democratic principles and human rights abuses, Togo's multinational and bilateral partners, including the United States, terminated assistance programs. In the ensuing years, the economy has stagnated and the physical infrastructure has deteriorated.

Despite a flawed and violent electoral process in 2005, the new president, Faure Gnassingbe, son of long-time autocratic ruler Gnassingbe Eyadema, was able to initiate a dialog with his major opponents that culminated in the Global Political Agreement in August 2006. The centerpiece of the agreement was the organization of legislative elections, which took place in October, 2007, and were declared free and fair by numerous local and international observers.

If confirmed, I will continue the work of my predecessor to encourage further progress on improving election legislation and processes so that future elections, including presidential elections in 2010, will be fair and transparent; on the development of stronger political parties; and on encouraging better collaboration among the parties. I intend to share American democratic values with the Togolese by focusing on principles of tolerance and equal access to media. I will seek to accelerate the improvement in civil-military relations, and press for a further reduction of the military's involvement in the government and civil society. I will look for opportunities to cooperate with Togo's military and security forces to combat drug trafficking and transnational crime, including the trafficking of persons, and to promote Togolese participation in regional efforts to strengthen maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

President Bush recently designated Togo eligible to receive benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). I will work to promote Togo's full participation and enjoyment of those benefits for the prosperity of the Togolese people. The mission will encourage the Government of Togo to privatize its hotel, communications, banking, cotton, and mineral parastatal organizations. Over the long term, I will assist the Government of Togo in its efforts to fight corruption and to promote the rule of law, using our limited Democracy and Human Rights Fund allocation and regional USAID programs.

As in so many countries in the world today, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other risks to health and well-being menace Togo's stability and prosperity. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that our assistance in combating disease is utilized to maximum effectiveness. The Peace Corps will continue to play an important role in combating HIV/AIDS, with approximately one quarter of the volunteers working full time in the field of community health and all 114 volunteers engaged in some way. The mission will cooperate closely with the Peace Corps to leverage the effects of the volunteers' grass roots health work. We will continue to collaborate with other donor countries and international organizations to increase the capacity of Togolese officials to combat HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, and we will use strong media outreach to promote health education and awareness.

Mr. Chairman, Togo, as small and as poor as it is, holds promise for the future, despite the challenges of democratic and economic reform that remain. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the leaders and people of Togo to sustain the current forward momentum toward political and economic reform, so that the Togolese people might enjoy fully the fruits of freedom.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to respond to any questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you and thanks to the whole first panel.

We will now begin questions for the first panel, 7-minute rounds. I will start with questions for Ms. Bernicat.

Can you please talk a little bit about the key challenges in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau? How will your engagement with each of these countries differ, including allocation of time and resources between the two countries?

Ms. BERNICAT. Thank you for that question, Senator. I told a member of your staff earlier that dividing my time between two countries will be considerably less of a challenge than dividing it between the seven countries I had when I was in Barbados. But you are right to point out there are very different challenges.

If I could talk about what I think is by far the most dangerous and troubling of trends. We have seen the increase of illicit drug trafficking in Africa absolutely explode from 2003 until now, and witnessing the trafficking that goes through Guinea-Bissau, it is not difficult to understand when you look at the geography of the country, the coastline dotted with violence and an unguarded coastline, its proximity to Europe, the poverty that exists there. Guinea-Bissau is one of the poorest countries in the world, the corruption that comes with that kind of poverty, the history of instability, which has eroded the rule of law and a whole series of institutions there, and last but not least, the very strength of the Euro, which is pulling a lot of the cocaine trafficking east and north to the European markets.

Observers estimate that approximately 10 times the GNP of Guinea-Bissau in drugs traffic through that country every month. That is over $340 million in product. The most recent seizure was 2.4 tons of pure cocaine by the French navy from a Liberian ship off the coast of Guinea-Bissau, to give you an idea of how diversified that trade is.

If confirmed, I would like to use the lessons learned in the eastern Caribbean where ironically our successes in fighting the trafficking that was moving up the eastern coast of the Caribbean, when it was pushed off of the west coast by the success of our Plan Colombia, has now found its way across the Atlantic and is moving through Guinea-Bissau and other points in West Africa. But to use a combination of a full country team effort—every office of the country team has something to contribute in this regard, as well as our international partners, both in terms of intel sharing and asset presence in the region to push the traffickers out of what is currently an easy realm in which to operate.

Senator FEINGOLD. In terms of time, I am going to move to another question for you. I had the opportunity to visit Senegal a few years ago and meet with President Wade when he was, I think, relatively newly elected. And, of course, you mentioned Senegal's proud democratic tradition, but there have been some worrying signs of backsliding in recent years. President Wade has always demonstrated a rather unilateral leadership style that seems increasingly repressive of the opposition while seeking to consolidate his own and his party's power.

What is your assessment of the current state of Senegal's democracy, and how will you strive to ensure that fundamental democratic principles and processes are respected in the 2009 local elections and beyond?

Ms. BERNICAT. Thank you for that question, Mr. Chairman.

I believe that the state of Senegalese democracy is very strong. The history of Senegal and the fact that it is one of the few African states that has never had anything but a peaceful transition of power—it does have a constitution which favors a very strong executive to begin with, and President Wade is, indeed, a very strong president. The fact that the opposition boycotted the legislative elections last year increased—in fact, gave him a virtual majority in that house.

That said, we are vigilant of what we see as efforts to increase even more the power of the executive and note in particular arrests of journalists last fall, response to shutting down a television station covering violent food riots more recently, but also note that there is a very strong civil society in Senegal which pushes back. And the President has shown that he respects that and understands those limits.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you. Time is short, so I appreciate your answers.

I want to turn to Ms. Milovanovic regarding Mali. I have had two wonderful visits to Mali. I met with both President Konare and President Toure who Congressman Pomeroy mentioned and am very impressed with that country's potential. But the challenges are, of course, enormous as you have indicated.

What do you see as the top threats to national and regional security emanating from Mali, and what role can the United States play to help and contain and combat these threats?

Ambassador MILOVANOVIC. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the question.

Fundamentally I think that Mali's own success is the greatest way of combating—keeping it on that success is the greatest way of combatting any threats that exist. I think that there is great clarity about the fact that there are difficulties in the north, which is sparsely populated, and where there is a combination of unrest amongst elements of the Tuareg and there is also the problem of this al-Qaeda in the Maghreb.

But fundamentally, the tools to be used I believe in keeping Mali as a positive force are exactly the tools that have been used so far, keeping the democracy strong, continuing with the decentralization process, providing Mali's government with the necessary instruments and the resources to be able to demonstrate to its public and to its citizens that the government is doing the things or is trying to do the things that the citizens need, whether it is health, whether it is education, whether it is improvements in the economy more generally. And that is the way to get most fundamentally at some of the challenges.

Of course, the existence of this uncontrolled or relatively uncontrolled area in the north is in and of itself a threat, and it cannot only be resolved, of course, by the issues of continuing democratization and improvements in economy and improvements in delivery of services. There is also the Algiers Accords which very much need to be implemented and the use of all of the resources that we can bring to bear through TSCTP which include both the appeals to the public regarding where their interest lies and continuing their

moderation and not being seduced by the siren songs of the wrong guys and any military support that is appropriate.

Senator FEINGOLD. Senator Isakson, I am going to just finish with this Ambassador, then turn to you, and we will do a second round so I can get to everybody.

Ambassador, what impact has the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative, TSCTI, had in Mali and the region?

Ambassador MILOVANOVIC. Thank you.

I believe that it has had a positive effect. It is a good opportunity for both the Defense Department, USAID, and the State Department to be working together, coordinating their efforts because these challenges that are faced are of a variety of natures, and just as a country team needs to work together with every agency contributing to finding solutions, TSCTP is a manifestation of that interagency process. I think the combination of the training and the support and the strengthening of law enforcement, the military so that there is a slightly better ability to control the border is excellent, but together with that, to have all of the efforts, whether they are through military funds or through USAID or State funds to get to the public to do humanitarian and small developmental activities that show the public that their interest is in a good democratic government in their country.

Senator FEINGOLD. And what experience do you have in coordinating with U.S. and foreign intelligence and defense agencies?

Ambassador MILOVANOVIC. I have in the past been a political military officer in Brussels, and of course, as three-time DCM and also now as Ambassador, an enormous part of what I am responsible for is exactly this. And I have taken very much a task force approach every place that I have gone, having law enforcement working groups and intelligence working groups at my embassies, which are opportunities not only to exchange general information, but to actually work together within the limits that there may be on certain agencies, to facilitate each other's work, and to get results irrespective of who is the agency that is getting the results because ultimately the results are for the United States and for the goal, not for a particular agency.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Senator, I apologize. We are just getting through an awful lot of nominees today. So it is slow going.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. Teitelbaum, in your remarks you referred to offshore gas and oil opportunities in the Gulf of Guinea. I have recently returned from Equatorial Guinea where they had one of the largest natural gas finds in the world, which has transformed the economy of that country.

Are you aware of any exploration by the United States or by the United States in cooperation with the Ghana Government in the Gulf of Guinea at this time?

Mr. TEITELBAUM. Thank you for that question, Senator Isakson.

In fact, one of the companies that is a primary player in the oil consortium in Ghana is an American company called Cosmos. And I think that this find is a very important issue for the Government of Ghana and it presents a real challenge to ensure that the re-

sources they have discovered, which do appear right now to be there in commercially exploitable quantities are used to broadly benefit the people of Ghana. If confirmed, I think that ensuring that this is the case would be one of my top priorities, and I think it is very helpful that one of the companies involved is, in fact, an American company.

Senator ISAKSON. For the four of you that are on the coast there, the one observation I would make is that in my recent visit there, I observed very aggressive Chinese investment in Africa.

It was a United States company that partnered with Equatorial Guinea to find the natural gas that they are now liquefying and shipping to the United States. But as those opportunities are found, I think it is very important for our Ambassadors to be a conduit for American investment and American companies to be partners with these countries as they develop this magnificent resource. I mean, Equatorial Guinea went from being the poorest country in the world to the fastest growing economy in the world in 20 years, and the same type of thing could happen again with energy discoveries like that.

Ms. Hawkins also made a reference to the Gulf of Guinea with regard to security. My understanding is there is still a fair amount of piracy and not very much security on the coastline. Are you aware of any cooperation between the coastal countries to improve the security?

Ms. HAWKINS. Yes, Senator Isakson. Thank you for the question.

Yes, there has been cooperation with American naval forces and with the Togolese, to which I can speak in particular, but I believe certainly with the countries my colleagues are nominated for. Togo is still emerging from a rather dark period, and its armed forces and military security forces leave—are somewhat to be desired in their ability to cope with piracy, with drug trafficking, with the trafficking in persons. But we have worked with them through the IMET program and through other regional development programs to improve their ability to cope with these problems. Obviously, it is something that will have to be worked on considerably in the future.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, it is a big issue, and also with the presence of al-Qaeda or the opportunity for organizations like al-Qaeda to take advantage of ignorance and poverty and with little security on the coastline, to me it is a very important issue all along the African coast.

Ms. Thomas-Greenfield, you made a very passionate statement. I tried to write it down real quickly.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. I hope you have a copy of the statement.

Senator ISAKSON. I do have a copy, but I was listening rather than reading. So I wrote down you were going to aggressively—you were willing to unabashedly and aggressively and publicly attack corruption. Did I get that right?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. You did, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I want to commend you on that. Again, with the ignorance and poverty issue and the conversation about drugs that has taken place in some of the other testimony, the Am-

bassadors can bring a world of help in that part of the world to try and minimize and eliminate the corruption.

And I go back to my trip to Equatorial Guinea. When they made the find of natural gas, of course, the $64,000 question was whose pocket is all this money going into. And remarkably, I think because Ambassador Johnson, who is now on the ground there in Guinea and his unabashed outspokenness against corruption, they have just finished building a state-of-the-art hospital that is as good as any hospital I have ever seen and a lot of other infrastructure for the citizens of the area. I am sure there is some spending money going into some pockets somewhere, but I was delighted to see that amount. So I hope as these finds take place, as the resources are developed, you will all be outspoken on that.

I would be happy to hear any comment from you regarding corruption.

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you for that question, sir.

Corruption is really a cancer and it can destroy any country's progress. Liberia, the country that I hope to get confirmed for, is a country that cannot afford corruption. It is a country that is coming out of 14 years of civil war in which its infrastructure was totally devastated, people's lives were destroyed, and a whole generation of young people went without education.

The United States taxpayers are putting a lot of money into Liberia. We are the largest donor. I see it as my responsibility, if confirmed as Ambassador, to ensure that our taxpayers' dollars go to where we hope and plan for those dollars to go, but also, I think it is very important for the funding and support that we are giving to the Liberian people, that that money goes to the Liberian people and not into the pockets of those people who would steal from the coffers of the government.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, there is an economic term called the "Dutch disease," and that is when a country has a singular source of wealth and it never develops itself internally. That is what has happened in the Middle Eastern countries, and the same opportunity for that to happen exists on the coast of Africa. So everything we can do to get that money invested in improving the lives of the people I think will help us avoid another part of the world with the type of problems we have in the Middle East.

One last real quick question. Ms. Bernicat, with regard to the drug issue, which you underlined in your speech and which you addressed again, did I understand you to say that our success in Colombia—that some of the expansion of the drugs there, on the West African coast, are actually some of the same people that were in Colombia? Was that correct?

Ms. BERNICAT. That is correct, sir. As we put pressure on traffickers who moved drugs up the west coast of the United States, they shifted to trafficking through the eastern Caribbean. And as we put pressure successfully with the interagency and our foreign partners on those trafficking routes, the traffickers simply shifted to West Africa.

Senator ISAKSON. This will be my last question. Is it at the point where it would be a target for a program similar to what we did with the country of Colombia?

Ms. BERNICAT. I do not believe so, sir, but again, the Europeans have been taking a lead, given the fact that they are for the moment the recipients of the vast majority of this product. Our goal, I believe, and if confirmed, I would pursue, would be to apply the lessons that we have learned from Plan Colombia and from our work in the Caribbean to help thwart the trafficking that is now going through the west coast to help the Europeans.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Senator, we will start the second round.

Mr. Teitelbaum, what are you greatest concerns regarding the upcoming presidential and legislative elections? And if confirmed as Ambassador, what steps will you take to help Ghana's government, democratic institutions, political parties, and civil society prepare for the December 2008 polls?

Mr. TEITELBAUM. Thank you for that question, Mr. Chairman.

If confirmed, the upcoming elections due in December would be not only one of my top priorities, but it would certainly be the most immediate priority.

I think, first and foremost, on the very bright side, since 1992 Ghana has already had four elections which were widely viewed as free and fair and were generally peaceful. And I think the primary expectation and the hope of all players is that this next election will be more of the same. In fact, in one of their previous elections, the Ghanaians also had a transfer of power between parties. So they have some very good precedents, and they are beginning to establish a democratic history.

That said, it is still a very young democracy. Institutions still need to grow and to strengthen and to build.

These elections are expected to be very, very close. I think that since the United States, of course, has no interest in any individual candidate, of course, our interest is in ensuring that the elections are free and fair, that the playing field is level, that the elections themselves reflect the will of the Ghanaian people, and that, most importantly, they be well run and transparent so that whatever the results of those elections, they have credibility and engender trust in the people of Ghana. And I think that the United States Government has a very substantial role to play in ensuring that part of the elections, both on the governmental side and also there are roles for nongovernmental organizations.

The Carter Center had a preelection role to play and was in Ghana in February. The United States Government is funding with approximately $600,000, I believe, or $625,000 medium-term and election day observers from among Ghanaian organizations. And the United States has a program of approximately $300,000 to encourage greater participation in the elections by persons with disabilities.

So I think we have a very strong role to play and, if confirmed, I would seek to strengthen these roles and also ensure that the embassy itself sends out observers on the day to ensure that this is a free, fair, and transparent election.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Ghana is rich in natural resources and also seems to actually have a chance at being the first African country to avoid the so-called "resource curse," which Senator Isakson, of course, was get-

ting at a little bit, of corruption leading to poverty. The government exported $1.3 billion in gold in 2006. An oil discovery just last December has put reserves at over 3 billion barrels.

Do you think Ghana should become a compliant country under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative? And outside of EITI, what steps would you take to assist Ghana in moving toward greater transparent management of its natural resources?

Mr. TEITELBAUM. Thank you.

I think that Ghana has had quite a good success in recent years in growing its economy, but they remain very dependent on a few resources, gold, cocoa, and perhaps in the not too distant future they will begin to diversify that with oil.

Ghana is a member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. I think they have made it very clear that it is their intent to ensure that these resources are used wisely to benefit their people. And I believe that the United States has an important role to play in encouraging and supporting the Ghanaian Government in this role.

One area that I would mention as providing this is the Millennium Challenge Corporation's compact with the Ghanaians. Of course, part of qualifying for the compact is ensuring a certain transparency and accountability in government operations, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation's compact is aimed at building Ghanaian infrastructure and supporting their agricultural industry, which would help further diversify their economy and help them get away from the one or two crops and the one or two areas that they are focused on now.

Senator FEINGOLD. I understand you mentioned that they were a member of EITI, but the goal here is compliant as well.

Mr. TEITELBAUM. They are not fully compliant yet.

Senator FEINGOLD. That is important, I think.

Mr. TEITELBAUM. Yes, sir.

Senator FEINGOLD. Ms. Thomas-Greenfield, as you know, Liberia represents one of the relatively few truly enthusiastic supporters of the new United States combatant command, AFRICOM, on the continent. What role do you think AFRICOM can play in Liberia and the region?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you for that question.

I have worked very closely with DOD over the past year and a half in the formation and creation of AFRICOM. I think AFRICOM can play an extremely important role, particularly in Liberia, in terms of helping with security sector reform, with training, with helping build the confidence of Liberians in their future. We are hoping that at some point, once AFRICOM is fully operational, that they will work closely with the newly formed Liberian army to mentor them, to train them, and to help them become a professional army that contributes to the country and one that does not take away from the people of the country.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, Liberia is becoming increasingly stable, as you have talked about, in the wake of its bloody civil war. Its neighbors, particularly Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, are decidedly less so.

What skills and experiences do you have that could assist you to deal with humanitarian needs and conflict-related situations should the circumstances in Guinea or Cote d'Ivoire worsen?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Thank you again for that question, sir.

In addition to considering myself an Africanist, I consider myself, with over 12 years of experience working on humanitarian and refugee issues, to be a humanitarian, as well. I formerly worked in the Bureau for Population Refugees and Migration. I was the Deputy Assistant Secretary there working on humanitarian issues around Africa, but particularly working on the issues related to Liberian refugees, the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, the situation in Guinea.

I think I have the experience and the background to work with our ambassadors in the surrounding countries, if I am confirmed, to come up with a strategy to deal with the issues in the neighborhood. I would particularly like to work with ambassadors in the Mano River region to come up with a regional solution for Liberia because Liberia's stability really depends on the situation in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone remaining stable.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Ms. Hawkins, I see that you have extensive experience working in public diplomacy for the United States both at home and abroad. How will that assist you in managing the United States mission in Togo and the role you see of United States diplomacy as an element of foreign policy more generally?

Ms. HAWKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Yes, I am a public diplomacy officer and have been for the 25 years I have been in the Foreign Service. I firmly believe that public diplomacy probably is the strongest arrow in our quiver, if you will. It is the best way to reach people. We have the tools. We have the talent that is needed to form people-to-people relationships which will survive beyond any minor policy disputes. It is a tool that we have to use if we are going to persuade people that we have their best interests at heart.

As far as working in Togo goes, it may be the only tool that I will have because we are at a point in our relationship with Togo that is just starting to develop, and I intend to focus very strongly on public outreach, on media outreach. I would like to start a speakers bureau at the embassy to get all of my younger officers and family members out. I would like to see everyone in the embassy travel extensively so that they can reach populations that we might not have reached before.

We are going to have to provide assistance to education, assistance to women and child health, assistance across the board, and perhaps the best way of doing that is by education and media outreach.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Ms. Hawkins.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Milovanovic, Mali is the largest, geographically, of these five countries. It is also one of the poorest and the most sparsely populated. I worry, again as I mentioned earlier, about al-Qaeda, and I know this is a heavily Islamic country to boot, I believe, if my information is correct.

How much in the counterterrorism effort with United States is the Mali Government cooperative in that, or are we developing good relationships with regard to that?

Ambassador MILOVANOVIC. Thank you, Senator Isakson, for the question.

I am pleased to say that one of the real positives, not that it is the only one by a long shot, but one of the real positives is the excellence of the relationship with the Government of Mali, with the President, with the leadership there. So we are really working in what my colleague earlier spoke of, a partnership and a genuine partnership. And this is extremely important as you have indicated because, obviously, if there is only one part of the group pulling to get the results, you do not succeed as well as if everyone is pulling in the same direction.

In Mali, there is clearly a commitment on the part of the government and the President himself, be it on democracy, be it on sustainable development, be it on improvements to health and education for the benefit of the citizens, but also a commitment to do all of these things and more because they are also, in addition to being good for his own country and his own citizens, clearly important with respect to the struggle to ensure that this relatively ungoverned—not ungoverned but sparsely populated with unclear borders north—is not a danger and not a threat but increasingly and sustainably feels absolutely part of this immense country of Mali.

Senator ISAKSON. Ms. Thomas-Greenfield, you mentioned you worked with DOD in the development of AFRICOM. Did any of the others of you have interface with DOD on that?

As an observation, having just come back from Djibouti in January—and AFRICOM is not clearly understood by a lot of people. However, I want to commend you because when I visited Admiral Hart and the other officers there, I was so impressed with the technical assistance, such as well drilling, bridge building, all the things that the military was doing in cooperation with countries in Africa to improve the plight. A lot of people have looked at AFRICOM as a "military operation," but it has got a tremendous humanitarian aspect to it.

I took some input from somewhere. So I will give you the credit if you were the one working with DOD for doing that. They really have a clear mission, and I think as AFRICOM fully develops and ultimately locates on the continent, it is going to be good for the United States and our relationship with a lot of those countries.

Any comment on that you would like to make?

Ms. THOMAS-GREENFIELD. Yes, sir, and thank you very much for that question.

We worked diligently to ensure that AFRICOM had a mission that was understood and that was supportive of the State Department and the other civilian agencies who are working in Africa. There has been a lot of questions raised about AFRICOM militarizing United States foreign policy and United States diplomacy, and we have worked with the command and with others in DOD to make sure that in our communications strategy we developed the language that was understood by Africans and by others that AFRICOM was not there to take over diplomacy but would be

working with our embassies under the direction and authority of our ambassadors to carry out the foreign policy goals that have been established by the State Department.

Senator ISAKSON. It almost reminded me of the PRT's in Iraq where you have the State Department and the military working hand in hand with the people to reconstruct and develop. So congratulations on the work that you did.

My only other comment, Mr. Chairman, is for Mr. Teitelbaum. Being a Georgian in the home of Coca-Cola, I know Coca-Cola is a tremendous investor in Ghana, and I hope you will encourage everyone to drink Coca-Cola. [Laughter.]

Senator FEINGOLD. Nicely done, Senator.

I thank the panel very much and wish you well, and we ask the next panel to come forward, please.

All right. Let us get the committee to order here and begin with the testimony of the second panel. I am going to have to ask the panelists to keep it brief so that everybody has a chance to talk and so that we can have some questions.

Mr. Bodde, do you want to begin please for us, Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi?

STATEMENT OF PETER W. BODDE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

Mr. BODDE. Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, it is an honor and privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to Malawi. I am grateful for the trust placed in me by the President and Secretary Rice. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and my colleagues in the United States Government to further the interests of the United States in Malawi and in the region.

I also want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the special efforts the committee has made to schedule these nomination hearings.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my wife, Tanya, who is also a member of the Foreign Service; our daughter, Sara, who is a third grade teacher in Montgomery County; and our son, Christopher, who flew in from London. And I am especially proud and happy that my father, Ambassador William Bodde, is here today. About 30 years ago today, I sat where he is sitting today during his first confirmation hearing, when he appeared before the late Senator Paul Tsongas, prior to becoming Ambassador to Fiji.

Senator FEINGOLD. Where are you folks out there? Can we see you? Welcome all. Great.

Mr. BODDE. Thank you.

Among the lessons I have learned during my career is that the success of every United States mission abroad depends on a strong interagency effort and a cohesive country team. It also requires clear goals, strict accountability, adequate funding, and trained personnel. These same critical concepts apply to our bilateral engagement projects and the delivery of significant levels of U.S. assistance at a critical juncture in Malawi's development. You have my full assurance that should I be confirmed, I will provide the necessary leadership to ensure that these concepts are an essential element of all mission programs. While the generosity of the Amer-

ican people is great, all of us involved in the stewardship of this generosity must be accountable for measuring success and failure.

In my current position in Islamabad, as well in my previous position as consul general in Frankfurt, I have had the opportunity to regularly brief dozens of your colleagues, both in the House and Senate. Such regular interaction, whether at post or in Washington, is critical to our continued success. Frank exchanges of accurate information that build trust are essential for the Congress to make difficult resource and policy choices.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. It faces the daunting challenges of chronic malaria, widespread HIV/AIDS, poor infrastructure, and a lack of mineral wealth. Yet, the Malawian Government has made a meaningful commitment to raising living standards and improving the lives of its people. The United States is an important and growing partner in this process. We are working with Malawi to promote political and economic development, decrease the country's dependence on humanitarian assistance, and increase its ability to make positive contributions to regional security and the broader global community.

If confirmed, I will make protecting and deepening Malawi's democratic systems one of my highest priorities. Malawi's political parties are currently locked in a bitter struggle that has placed serious strains on the country's political institutions. All eyes are now shifting to national elections scheduled for mid-2009 that will be a critical test for Malawi's democratic processes. If confirmed, my recent experience in Pakistan, as well as my previous experience in Nepal and Bulgaria, in helping young or challenged democracies conduct fair and credible elections will serve me well.

I also want to note how much I look forward to serving again at a post with a large and well-established Peace Corps program. I have seen firsthand the significant impact a single Peace Corps volunteer can make. I want to assure you that should I be confirmed, I will provide considerable support to this inspiring American outreach program.

In closing, I want to note that anyone who represents the United States has a unique responsibility. More often than not, we are the only nation that has the will, the values, and the resources to solve problems, help others, and be a positive force for change in our challenged world. Being nominated to serve as an ambassador representing our Nation is in itself an incredible honor. With your consent, I look forward to assuming this responsibility while serving as the next United States Ambassador to Malawi.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bodde follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PETER W. BODDE,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to Malawi. I am grateful for the trust placed in me by the President and Secretary Rice. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and my colleagues in the United States Government to further the interests of the United States in Malawi and in the region. I also want to take this opportunity to

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Among the lessons I have learned during my career is that the success of every United States mission abroad depends on a strong interagency effort and a cohesive country team. It also requires clear goals, strict accountability, adequate funding, and trained personnel. These same critical concepts apply to our bilateral engagement and the delivery of significant levels of United States assistance at a critical juncture in Malawi's development. You have my full assurances that, should I be confirmed, I will provide the necessary leadership to ensure that these concepts are an essential element of all mission programs. While the generosity of the American people is great, all of us involved in the stewardship of this generosity must be accountable for measuring success and failure.

In my current position in Islamabad, as well as in my previous position as consul general in Frankfurt, I have had the opportunity to regularly brief dozens of your colleagues both in the House and Senate. Such regular interaction, whether at post or in Washington, is critical to our continued success. Frank exchanges of accurate information that build trust are essential for the Congress to make difficult resource and policy choices. Should I be confirmed, I will make every effort to interact on a regular basis with the members of the committee and other members of the Congress and congressional staff.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world; it faces the daunting challenges of chronic malaria, wide-spread HIV/AIDS, poor infrastructure, and a lack of mineral wealth. Yet, the Malawian Government has made a meaningful commitment to raising living standards and improving the lives of its people, and the United States is an important and growing partner in this process. The primary objective of the United States mission in Malawi, of course, is to promote and protect the interests of the United States and United States citizens who are either in Malawi or doing business with Malawi. In addition to that fundamental responsibility, we are working with Malawi to promote political and economic development, decrease the country's dependence on humanitarian assistance and increase its ability to make positive contributions to regional security and the broader global community.

If confirmed, I will make protecting and deepening Malawi's democratic systems one of my highest priorities. Malawi's political parties are currently locked in a bitter struggle that has placed serious strains on the country's political institutions. All eyes are now shifting to national elections scheduled for mid-2009 that will be a critical test for Malawi's democratic institutions. If confirmed, my recent experience in Pakistan, as well as my previous experience in Nepal and Bulgaria, in helping young or challenged democracies conduct fair and credible elections will serve me well. Success, however, will require United States and international donor support to reinforce Malawi's developing democratic system.

On the economic front, Malawi's near-term prospects look bright, largely because of good rains and the positive impact of the government's fertilizer and seed subsidy programs. From a longer-term perspective, however, Malawi remains highly dependent on rain-fed agriculture in an area prone to periodic droughts. In order to achieve sustainable improvements in living standards, Malawi must increase investment in irrigation and agricultural diversification, raise productivity and education standards, and reduce high transport and public utility costs. The Millennium Challenge Corporation's selection of Malawi as a compact eligible country in late 2007 has created significant new opportunities, not only for funding strategic public investments but also for new public-private partnerships to promote sustainable growth.

Disease, including HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and chronic malnutrition poses a tremendous obstacle to Malawi's continued growth. The Malawian Government has been a willing partner in addressing the challenges of improving access to health care, but government and public sector capacity remain weak. The United States, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund, has played a critical role in increasing access to treatment and increasing public awareness about the disease. If confirmed, I will be proud to shepherd the continued growth of these critical programs.

As Malawi continues to develop domestically, it is increasingly able to play a constructive role in advancing important issues throughout the region. One example of such a contribution is Malawi's planned deployment of a peacekeeping battalion to Darfur. The United States is working with the United Nations to support Malawi's efforts and prepare Malawian troops for deployment in 2009. If confirmed, I will work diligently to keep these plans on track.

I also want to note how much I look forward to serving again at a post with a large and well-established Peace Corps program. I have seen firsthand the significant impact a single Peace Corps volunteer can make. I want to assure you that, should I be confirmed, I will provide considerable support to this inspiring American outreach program.

In closing, I want to note that anyone who represents the United States has a unique responsibility. More often than not, we are the only Nation that has the will, the values, and the resources to solve problems, help others, and to be a positive force for change in our challenged world. Being nominated to serve as an ambassador representing our Nation is in itself an incredible honor. With the consent of the Senate, I look forward to assuming this responsibility while serving as the next United States Ambassador to Malawi. Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Bodde. Thank you so much.

And now we turn to Donald E. Booth, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD E. BOOTH, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

Ambassador BOOTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson. I am deeply honored to appear before you today, and I greatly appreciate the trust and confidence that the President and Secretary of State have placed in me to be their nominee as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia.

I am also grateful for the unwavering support of my wife, Anita, who is a retired Foreign Service officer, who is currently in Liberia where I have had the honor of serving as Ambassador for the past 3 years. I would also like to introduce my daughter, Alison, and my son, Peter, who are in the back. My youngest son, David, is currently attending Lawrence University in Wisconsin, so he is not able to be here today.

I have spent the better part of my 32 years in the Foreign Service trying to resolve conflicts and promoting development and understanding of the United States in many different parts of Africa. During my 2 years as the Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of Southern African Affairs, I worked to keep Zambia from being drawn into the then ever-widening conflict in the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo. I was also the coordinator of our efforts to engage the member states of the Southern African Development Community on security cooperation, regional water resource management, and in arresting Zimbabwe's slide toward arbitrary rule, among others.

Zambia has been fortunate to escape the wars and civil conflicts in Southern Africa since its independence in 1964. However, despite its vast mineral wealth, Zambia remains a poor country where 87 percent of the population lives on less than $2 a day. The reasons for this low quality of life for most people in Zambia are similar to those I have been working to address during my time as Ambassador to Liberia—corruption, gender-based violence, unequal access to opportunity, and lack of quality education and health care.

If confirmed, I would do my best to ensure that the assistance funds appropriated and authorized by Congress are effectively utilized to help the Government of Zambia address the underlying causes of poverty there. Poverty that can lead to despair and create opportunities for those who would seek to harm the American people. My experiences in Africa have left me convinced that we can only make a difference by working in partnership with those Africans who have the desire to tackle their problems themselves.

Zambia also suffers from the curse of HIV/AIDS and malaria, and that is why Zambia was one of the first countries to benefit from the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief, as well as from the President's Malaria Initiative. Over 75 percent of United States assistance to Zambia is directed to addressing HIV/AIDS and malaria. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to ensure that our emergency interventions receive the Zambian support needed to make them sustainable and thus truly capable of controlling the scourge of those diseases that have so restrained development in that part of the world and can still threaten the region's stability.

Mr. Chairman, I believe our relationship with Zambia should not be defined by what we do to help Zambia, but rather by how much we can accomplish together to expand the horizons of freedom, peace, and economic opportunity. Zambia has been in the forefront of true multiparty democratic governance in southern Africa, and I believe we need to encourage Zambia to work through the Southern African Development Community, SADC, to advance democracy and accountable government in southern Africa and beyond. I am pleased to note that as the chair of SADC, Zambia recently convoked an extraordinary summit to address the deteriorating situation in neighboring Zimbabwe.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for inviting me to appear before you today, and I would be happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Booth follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD E. BOOTH, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today. I greatly appreciate the trust and confidence the President and Secretary of State have placed in me as their nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia. I am also grateful for the support throughout my Foreign Service career of my wife, Anita, who is in Liberia where I have had the honor to serve as ambassador for the past 3 years, as well as of my daughter, Alison, and sons, Peter and David. Alison and Peter are here with me today. David is currently attending Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin.

I have spent the better part of my 32 years in the Foreign Service trying to resolve conflicts and promoting development and understanding of the United States in many parts of Africa. During my 2 years as Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of Southern African Affairs, I worked to keep Zambia from being drawn into the then-widening conflict in neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo. I was also the coordinator of our efforts to engage the member states of the Southern African Development Community as a group on security cooperation, regional water resource management and in arresting Zimbabwe's slide toward arbitrary rule. As Ambassador to Liberia, I have seen the impact regional peer pressure can have in ending conflict and restoring democratically elected government.

Despite the wars and civil conflicts in southern Africa, Zambia has been fortunate to escape conflict since its independence in 1964. However, despite its vast mineral wealth, Zambia remains a poor country where 87 percent of the population lives on less than $2 per day. The reasons for this low quality of life for most people in Zam-

bia are not dissimilar to those I have been working to address during my time as Ambassador to Liberia—corruption, unequal access to opportunity and lack of quality education and health care. If confirmed, I would do my best to ensure that the assistance funds appropriated and authorized by the Congress are effectively utilized to help the Government of Zambia address the underlying causes of poverty in Zambia, poverty that can lead to despair and create opportunities for those who would seek to harm the American people, their friends and allies. I would also work with the Government of Zambia to meet the criteria for compact status under the Millennium Challenge Account. My numerous experiences in Africa have left me convinced that we cannot impose solutions to Africa's problems. We can only make a difference by working in partnership with Africans who have the desire and will to tackle their problems themselves.

Zambia also suffers from the twin afflictions of HIV/AIDS and malaria. That is why Zambia was one of the first countries to benefit from the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), as well as from the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). Over 75 percent of United States assistance to Zambia is directed at addressing HIV/AIDS and malaria. If confirmed, I will make it a priority not only to help Zambia combat those diseases, but also explore ways we can ensure our "emergency" interventions receive the Zambian support needed to make them sustainable and thus truly capable of controlling these two diseases that have so restrained development and could still threaten the region's stability. Another impediment to Zambia's development is the unequal status of women and the prevalence of gender-based violence. If confirmed, I would ensure these problems are addressed through the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, as well as through programs that combat trafficking in persons.

Mr. Chairman, I believe our relationship with Zambia should not be defined by what we do to help Zambia, but rather by how much we can accomplish together to expand the horizons of freedom, peace, and economic opportunity. Zambia has been in the forefront of true multiparty democratic governance in southern Africa and I believe we need to encourage Zambia to work through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to advance democracy and accountable government in southern Africa and beyond. I am pleased to note that as chair of SADC, Zambia recently convoked an extraordinary summit to address the deteriorating situation in Zimbabwe. The United States Ambassador to Zambia is also accredited to the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). While COMESA is a broad group of nations in various states of development, if confirmed, I will try to help COMESA identify ways it can advance meaningful regional economic cooperation that will better integrate its member states into the global economy.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer your questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Booth.

Now we go to Mr. Stephen James Nolan, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana.

STATEMENT OF STEPHEN JAMES NOLAN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

Mr. NOLAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and Senator Isakson, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana and Special Representative to the Southern African Development Community. I am grateful for the trust placed in me by the President and Secretary Rice. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to further the interests of the United States in Botswana and the region.

With me today is my wife, Judy. She has been a real source of support and wise counsel since we were married 30 years ago in Senegal, our first Foreign Service post.

Since then, two-thirds of my career has been spent with the African Bureau, during which I have been responsible for handling a variety of management and policy issues. During the last 4 years, I have been the Executive Director of the African Bureau where Ambassador Ruth Davis, who has been a wonderful boss and great

leader, has really been behind me in every sense of the word, right until this moment. [Laughter.]

Should I be confirmed, this experience will greatly inform my work in Botswana.

My affinity for Africa is not accidental. My father was a Foreign Service officer until his death in Yemen in 1973. It was his example, with encouragement from my mother, that inspired my career choice, but it was our family's years in Kenya and Sierra Leone that sparked a lifelong interest in Africa. I am sure my father is looking down on these proceedings with a smile on his face.

The highest priorities for any ambassador are to protect American lives and to ensure a safe environment for all personnel in the mission. My sensitivity to this is based on experience. I was in the embassy in Nairobi when it was bombed by al-Qaeda in August 1998. For me the events and aftermath of that day underscored the importance of leadership and preparedness. If confirmed, I will not lose sight of this critical responsibility.

Botswana is a leader in the region, with a long record of political stability and sound institutions. Yet, for all its storied success, Botswana still faces critical challenges that will affect the sustainability of its remarkable development. Although democracy and good governance are firmly established, civil society organizations are not yet fully mature. Working with the government, civil society, and the media, I will strive to foster robust and dynamic democratic institutions.

Diamonds account for a third of Botswana's GDP, and the government has used this resource wisely to spur development. But 30 percent of Botswana's citizens still live in poverty and the gap between rich and poor is growing. With diamonds expected to run out in the not distant future, there is an urgent need for greater economic diversification with less reliance on the public sector. To this end, the United States is helping Botswana become more competitive in the global marketplace and to take full advantage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. If confirmed, I will work to foster economic growth and seek to expand United States commercial engagement with Botswana.

The devastating coepidemics of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis touch everyone in Botswana. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the U.S. has provided over $300 million to support prevention and treatment efforts and to help the Government of Botswana achieve its goal of an AIDS-free generation by 2016. If confirmed, I will be proud to champion the continued development of this vital program.

Additional important objectives would be supporting Botswana's role as a regional partner on peace and security issues through the International Military Education and Training Program, maximizing the impact of the International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone, and working to help protect Botswana's environment and unique natural heritage.

If confirmed, I would build on Ambassador Canavan's efforts to identify areas for closer collaboration with the Southern African Development Community. We already enjoy useful cooperation on trade expansion and environmental protection, and more recently SADC has shown leadership in coordinating a regional response to

the electoral crisis in Zimbabwe. It is important that we continue to engage with SADC, encouraging its expanding role as an advocate for constructive economic policies and deepening democratic institutions.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Isakson, should I be confirmed, I promise to work hard to maintain and expand our excellent relationship with Botswana for the betterment of both the American and Botswana people.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I look forward to answering your questions.[The prepared statement of Mr. Nolan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHEN JAMES NOLAN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana. I am grateful for the trust placed in me by the President and Secretary Rice. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to further the interests of the United States in Botswana and in the region as the Secretary of State's Representative to the Southern African Development Community.

With me today is my wife, Judy, who has been a source of strength, support, and wise counsel since we were married 30 years ago in Dakar, Senegal, our first Foreign Service post. While I have also served in Europe and the Near East, two thirds of my career has been at our posts in Africa or in the Bureau of African Affairs in Washington. On the continent, I have had the pleasure to serve as Consul General in Cape Town, two tours in Nairobi, and tours in Harare and Dakar. This affinity for Africa is not accidental. My father, Bernard Nolan, was a Foreign Service officer until his death in Yemen in 1973. His example, with encouragement from my mother, inspired my career choice, but it was my family's years in Kenya and Sierra Leone that sparked my life-long interest in Africa. I am sure he is looking down on these proceedings with a smile on his face.

During my career with the Foreign Service, I have been responsible for handling a variety of management and policy issues, most recently, as Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs. The rapid growth of health, development, and security assistance programs at many embassies in recent years has stretched human and financial resources, but I am proud of how our bureau's dedicated American and locally engaged personnel have risen to the challenge. This is an issue I plan to remain focused on as we need to ensure that we have adequate staffing to match the increase in program funds for proper management and accountability. Africa stands at a critical juncture, and Botswana is destined to play a key leadership role in the realization of Africa's future, particularly in southern Africa. If confirmed, I will work with dedication to promote stronger United States-Africa relations and to deepen our excellent bilateral relationship with Botswana.

The highest priority for any ambassador serving overseas is to protect American lives—whether private citizens or those working in the mission. My extreme sensitivity about this is based on my experience; when al-Qaeda bombed our embassy in Nairobi in 1998, I was serving there as the administrative counselor. This catastrophe and its aftermath underscored the importance of leadership and experience. Should I be confirmed, I will use both in carrying out this critical responsibility.

Botswana's stability and legitimacy derive from the strength of its leadership and institutions, adherence to democratic norms, and prudent management of revenues from its diamond industry. Yet Botswana, for all its storied success, still faces many critical challenges that will affect the sustainability of its remarkable development. Although democracy and good governance are firmly established in Botswana, the ruling party has won every national election since independence in 1966 and civil society organizations are not yet fully mature. The success of diamonds and the related broad-based and deeply rooted growth of the public sector have limited the emergence of a robust and entrepreneurial private sector. Diamond dependency (diamonds account for 33 percent of GDP) highlights the need to diversify the economy. The gap between rich and the poor is wide and growing. An estimated 30 percent to 40 percent of Batswana live in poverty, largely in sparsely populated rural areas. Furthermore, coepidemics of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis have devastated families

and affect every member of Batswana society. If I am confirmed, helping Botswana address these challenges will be central to my tenure.

Our strong relationship with Botswana provides many opportunities for positive engagement. Today, I would like to focus on several areas where the United States can contribute to the continuing success of Botswana and an even brighter future. First, with the inauguration of a new President in Botswana and a general election approaching in 2009, the United States has a unique opportunity to help Botswana move forward with improved democratic practices and respect for human rights. Working with the government, civil society, and the media, I will endeavor to foster more robust and dynamic democratic institutions to ensure more Batswana feel like they have a stake in their own polity and economic future.

Economic development and expansion of trade will also be key priorities. Botswana has already made great gains in just over four decades, financed largely and prudently by Botswana's "diamonds for development" program and guided by sound fiscal and monetary policies. Despite these gains, uneven development, skewed income distribution, and highly visible and palpable poverty are clear signs that more must be done. The realization has increasingly set in that "diamonds are actually not forever," and there is an urgent need for greater diversification in Botswana's economy. The United States is currently helping Botswana to become more competitive in the global marketplace and to make maximum use of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Our Government is also working with Botswana to help develop its energy resources, agricultural exports, and public-private sector policy dialog. If confirmed, I will make fostering increased and diversified economic growth a priority, while seeking to expand United States commercial engagement with Botswana.

I will continue our close collaboration with the Botswana Government in the fight against the coepidemics of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. As with many of its neighbors, Botswana has been devastated by HIV/AIDS. The national HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is estimated to be 24.1 percent, with a much higher rate in certain age categories. Botswana also has one of the world's worst tuberculosis (TB) epidemics and about 80 percent of TB patients also have HIV. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the United States has provided roughly $300 million in funding to support prevention and treatment efforts and to help the Government of Botswana achieve its goal of an AIDS-free generation by 2016. If confirmed, I would be proud to shepherd the continued development of this critical program.

Supporting Botswana's role as a regional partner on peace and security issues through the International Military Education and Training Program, maximizing the impact of the International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone, and working to help protect Botswana's environment and unique natural heritage would also be important objectives, should I be confirmed.

Finally, as the Secretary of State's Representative to the Southern African Development Community, known as SADC, if confirmed, I would continue Ambassador Canavan's efforts to identify areas for closer collaboration with this important regional organization, where we have already enjoyed useful cooperation in the areas of regional trade expansion and management of Southern African ecosystems. More recently, SADC has shown leadership in coordinating a regional response to the electoral crisis in Zimbabwe. It is important that we continue to engage fully with SADC, supporting its expanding voice as an advocate for constructive economic policies and deepening democratic institutions throughout southern Africa.

Mr. Chairman, committee members, should I be confirmed, I will work hard to maintain and expand our excellent relationship with Botswana for the betterment of both the American and Batswana people. Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Nolan.

And finally, Ms. Marianne Matuzic Myles, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde.

STATEMENT OF MARIANNE MATUZIC MYLES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE

Ms. MYLES. Thank you. Mr. Chairman and Senator Isakson, it is truly a great honor for me to be before you here today as President Bush's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde. Like my fellow nominees before me, I am

grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust that they have shown by nominating me for this position.

It is a tremendous pleasure for me to take a moment to introduce the many family members, friends, and colleagues who are with me here today. I am joined by my husband Stan, a retired Foreign Service officer, and my partner for almost 20 years now; our daughter Lee-Ellen, who is a seventh-grader at Roberto Clemente Middle School's Magnet Center; my sister, Nancy Edwards; her daughter Kate; good friend and neighbor, Jim Gierula; Lee-Ellen's classmate from Roberto Clemente, Frieda Lindroth. And from my current office, I would like to introduce Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda Taglialatela and colleagues, Bruce Cole, Margaret Dean, Bill Pope, Dick Christianson, Rachel Friedland, and Tijen Aybar.

Senator FEINGOLD. I will ask the whole audience to rise. [Laughter.]

Welcome all. Thank you very much for coming. Go ahead.

Ms. MYLES. Mr. Chairman, I joined the Foreign Service at the young age of 22 because of a very strong commitment to public service. I look forward to the opportunity, if confirmed, to utilize the skills I have acquired during my 30-plus year Foreign Service career to advance our interests in Cape Verde. My multiple assignments in Brazil, which is a country that shares many common interests with Cape Verde, fluent Portuguese, the work I oversaw on remittances, and the disaster relief I provided while Consul General in Naples, my work to protect American citizens in Bogota, as well as my interagency training at the National War College, and background as an economist have given me a wide range of useful tools. If confirmed, I will put those tools to best use.

Mr. Chairman, the Republic of Cape Verde is an African success story. It is one of Africa's oldest and strongest democracies with an unbroken tradition of civilian rule since independence in 1975. It is politically stable. Corruption is low. Transparency is high. And perhaps most important, Cape Verde's human rights record is excellent.

In the brief time I have this morning, I would like to mention a few important aspects of the United States-Cape Verde bilateral relationship. That relationship is strong, in part because it is a longstanding one, beginning with the opening in 1818 of our first consulate in sub-Saharan Africa. Extraordinarily close family ties also strengthen the relationship as a large number of Cape Verdeans are resident in New England, particularly in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The first factor of our strong relationship is that we share a common commitment to democracy. The United States has supported Cape Verde's continuing efforts to strengthen its democracy, and the commitment by Cape Verdeans and their political parties to democratic dispute resolution is extraordinary. Closely contested elections in 2001 and 2006 were resolved according to the constitution without political violence or heated rhetoric.

The second factor is a shared commitment to security. Cape Verde's location strategically positions it in major north-south sea routes. The Government of Cape Verde has provided strong support on security cooperation. Cape Verde's hosting of NATO's first live military exercise in Africa in June of 2006 was an historic event.

As you mentioned in your opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, there is much more to do with regard to maritime security. Cape Verde's solid support of United States ship visits and counternarcotics activities are indications of their policy to be an active, constructive partner, as well as a regional role model.

A third factor is economics. Cape Verde's AGOA eligibility, its new WTO membership, and its recent partnership status with the European Union offer Cape Verde the chance to become a transatlantic bridge for tourism, trade, and investment. Its economy is also benefiting from its selection in 2005 as one of the first Millennium Challenge Account countries.

Mr. Chairman, the United States remains a strategic partner with Cape Verde focused on three main goals: accelerating economic expansion, consolidating a stable democracy, and strengthening the rule of law. If confirmed, I will be eager to pursue these efforts, as well as develop other strategic partnerships. But as a first priority, I would carry out the chief of mission's responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of all Americans and U.S. Government employees. I understand and embrace the obligation to ensure the fair treatment and high morale of mission staff and family members.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and your colleagues and to welcoming you to Cape Verde.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Myles follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARIANNE MATUZIC MYLES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have shown by nominating me for this position.

It is my pleasure to take a moment to introduce the family members, friends, and colleagues who are with me here today. I am joined by my husband, Stan, a retired Foreign Service officer, our daughter, Lee-Ellen, a seventh grader at Roberto Clemente Middle School, my sister, Nancy Edwards, and her daughter, Kate, good friend and neighbor, Jim Gierula, and Lee-Ellen's classmate, Frieda Lindroth. From my current office, I would like to introduce Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda Taglialatela, and colleagues Bruce Cole, Margaret Dean, Bill Pope, and Tijen Aybar.

I joined the Foreign Service at the young age of 22 because of a strong commitment to public service. I look forward to the opportunity, if confirmed, to utilize the skills I have acquired during my 30-plus year Foreign Service career to advance our interests in Cape Verde. My multiple assignments in Brazil, a country that shares many common interests with Cape Verde, my fluent Portuguese, the work I oversaw on remittances and the disaster relief I provided while Consul General in Naples, my work to protect American citizens in Bogota, as well as my interagency training at the National War College and background as an economist, have given me a wide range of useful tools. If confirmed, I will put them to best use.

Mr. Chairman, the Republic of Cape Verde is an African success story. It is one of Africa's oldest and strongest democracies with an unbroken tradition of civilian rule since independence in 1975. It is politically stable. Corruption is low and transparency is high. Perhaps most important, Cape Verde's human rights record is excellent.

In the brief time I have this morning, I'd like to mention a few important aspects of the United States-Cape Verde bilateral relationship. That relationship is strong, in part because it is a long-standing one, beginning with the opening in 1818 of our first consulate in sub-Saharan Africa. Extraordinarily close family ties also strengthen the relationship, as a large number of Cape Verdeans are resident in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The first factor in our strong relationship is that we share a common commitment to democracy. The United States has supported Cape Verde's continuing efforts to strengthen its democracy. The commitment by Cape Verdeans and their political parties to democratic dispute resolution is extraordinary. Closely contested elections in 2001 and 2006 were resolved according to the constitution, without political violence and heated rhetoric.

The second factor is a shared commitment to security. Cape Verde's location 300 miles from the west coast of Africa strategically positions it in major north-south sea routes. The Government of Cape Verde has provided strong support on security cooperation. Cape Verde's hosting of NATO's first live military exercise in Africa in June 2006 was an historic event. And Cape Verde's solid support of United States ship visits and counternarcotics activities are further indications of their policy to be an active, constructive participant in a strategic partnership, as well as a regional role model.

A third factor is economics. Cape Verde's AGOA eligibility, its new WTO membership, and its recent partnership status with the European Union offer Cape Verde the chance to become a trans-Atlantic bridge for tourism, trade, and investment. Its economy is also benefiting from its selection in 2005 as one of the first Millennium Challenge Account countries. Cape Verde's recent graduation to lower middle income status means that it has to make further progress to meet higher policy performance standards; but Cape Verde has already made many improvements and has achieved very high levels of performance—even when compared to its new peers in this higher income group—in the areas of accountability, civil liberties, control of corruption, government effectiveness, and rule of law.

Mr. Chairman, the United States remains a strategic partner with Cape Verde, focused on 3 main goals—accelerating economic expansion, consolidating a stable democracy, and strengthening the rule of law. If confirmed, I will be eager to pursue these efforts, as well as develop other strategic partnerships. But as a first priority, I would carry out the chief of mission's responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of all Americans and U.S. Government employees. I understand and embrace the obligation to ensure the fair treatment and high morale of mission staff and family members.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Senator FEINGOLD. That was the first place I ever set foot in Africa, but it was for refueling. [Laughter.]

So I hope to have a better visit.

Ms. MYLES. Maybe you can stay longer next time.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thanks to the whole panel, and I will start with a round of questions.

Mr. Bodde, Malawi has one of the higher HIV prevalence rates in the world, but has not been a focus country for PEPFAR or a leading recipient of United States assistance. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you see your role and efforts to combat HIV/AIDS? What could or should the United States and other international partners do in this effort?

Mr. BODDE. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

While it has not been a focus-country recipient of PEPFAR, it has been a tremendous recipient of U.S. Government funding in our battle against AIDS. The role I see as chief of mission is to coordinate the entire U.S. Government approach to this, to be an advocate for this, to make sure that all the available sources of funding are adequately used and appropriately used. I think there are tremendous opportunities here. When you see the proportion of aid that is spent on health, it is almost over half. Close to 60 percent of all assistance going to Malawi is already spent on health. And I think there is tremendous room for expansion there.

But I think we also have to look beyond the health issue itself and look at the economy and what can be done there because what has happened in the impact of AIDS on the economy in Malawi is desperate. It has caused desperate problems, and I think it is af-

fecting Malawi's potential for economic growth. So I would also be looking to expand our programs in those areas.

Senator FEINGOLD. Prison conditions and restrictions on freedom of expression remain serious concerns in Malawi. How will you address these issues?

Mr. BODDE. Senator, I think there is only one way to deal with those issues and that is head on. I have lived in countries and worked in countries where this is sadly an issue. One has to confront the government. One has to be consistent in this. We also have to look a little broader, and one has to provide training. One has to encourage things like the training of investigative journalists. We have to encourage NGO's. One of my concerns, with the election coming up so quickly next May in Malawi, is how quickly can we get programs like this started and on the ground.

Another concern I have, quite frankly, is at this point in time, there is only about half a million dollars set aside for these programs. I have worked very closely with NDI, IRI, IFIS, NGO's like this over the years. They do tremendous work, and they are also very helpful specifically in how to address the lack of freedom of speech and expression.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Booth, how do you intend balance a desire for diplomatic relations with the Zambian Government with continued pressure for what is obviously central governance reforms?

Ambassador BOOTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think the situation in Zambia is one where we have had now two elections where you have had democratic change. President Kaunda who was the first President, the liberation hero, of the country did, under pressure, agree to step down back in 1991, and there was a change of government to the MMD, President Chiluba. He stayed in office 2 terms. His attempt to continue in office for a third term was beaten back, and it appears that President Mwanawasa now will, indeed, step down at the end of his second term in 2011.

So I think we have a good engagement with Zambia on the democracy front. I think what we want to do is try to engage Zambia more in a regional context where there are some players that have not embraced that commitment to democracy.

Senator FEINGOLD. According to a recent investigation by Human Rights Watch, domestic violence and a lack of access to health care, legal services, and basic economic rights, make Zambian women extremely vulnerable to HIV infection and general mistreatment. How is the United States supporting the removal of barriers to women's access to health care and legal services, and the protection of women against violence?

Ambassador BOOTH. Thank you very much for that question.

One of the programs we are about to initiate in Zambia is the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, and it has a budget over 3 years of about $11 million. It is just being launched now. There are three components to it. One is to try to improve how the police deal with gender-based violence crimes. Second is to work the Zambians in drafting legislation that would provide better protections to women, and the third is in providing assistance through USAID and CARE to the victims of gender-based violence.

Access to education for girls is a problem not only in Zambia. It is a problem that has to be dealt with in terms of trying to make sure that there are adequate facilities at schools, separate lavatory facilities, for example. And also there is a problem of parents who feel that educating their girls is not as high a priority as educating their sons and, therefore, unless there is some incentive, they will tend to take them out of school first. This is a problem we have seen in Liberia as well. So things like school feeding programs have been helpful. We do not have one of those in Zambia now, but certainly when I go out there, this is something that I will be looking at, how to make sure that there is not only access to the schools, but that, indeed, girls in particular stay in school.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Nolan, can you discuss Botswana's role with regard to human rights and political crisis in the neighboring country of Zimbabwe? And to this end, how is the United States embassy working with the Government in Botswana? What impact, if any, has the Zimbabwe situation actually had on Botswana?

Mr. NOLAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think it is remarkable that President Khama—in office for just a matter of days— was one of the first SADC leaders to invite Morgan Tsvangirai to come and speak with him about the crisis in Zimbabwe. I think this is an indication of President's Khama's intention to take a more proactive approach. He was supportive of the SADC initiative to call the heads of state to Lusaka to discuss this issue. It is promising that SADC is beginning to engage on these issues of human rights and to look at ways to solve problems in their own region.

Botswana is a front-line state, so to speak, by virtue of its long border with Zimbabwe. While only 150 or so Zimbabweans are formally registered as refugees in Botswana, there are 250,000 Zimbabweans who have moved across the border and are living in Botswana. They are putting strains on the delivery of services in Botswana. Zimbabwe has become a millstone for the entire region, and SADC is a potential vehicle for addressing the issue. Botswana is a country that will play an important role in helping to achieve, I think, a more productive resolution to the crisis and hopefully soon.

Senator FEINGOLD. And as to human rights within Botswana itself, some human rights groups remain concerned about periodic reports of secret executions taking place in Botswana. What is the U.S. Government doing to investigate these reports?

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Chairman, I would have to take that question. I have no specific knowledge of that. I am not aware of those reports, but I will certainly look into that and give you a response.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you for that.

And just one question for Ms. Myles, and then I will turn to Senator Isakson.

Although nearly 70 percent of the population in Cape Verde lives in rural areas, I understand that up to 90 percent of Cape Verde's food must be imported. How has the current food crisis affected Cape Verde, and how are the current government foreign donors, including the United States, responding?

Ms. MYLES. Thank you for that question, Mr. Chairman.

It is true that the vast majority of Cape Verde's food is imported. In fact, some sources put that estimate up to 98 percent of food.

At the moment, they are doing well with regard to feeding the population. I think that there is some worrisome aspect to the future in the sense that Cape Verde's climate is not conducive to agriculture. It is very arid, and although there are advances being made to diversify crops, including under the Millennium Challenge Account, there is a project underway of drip irrigation to produce crops that have not been produced in Cape Verde before. It is true that they are vulnerable to climatic changes and to drought in particular. I think you know that in the 1940s–1950s, the drought that took place at that time drove many people out of Cape Verde to the United States and other places.

So it is a situation that bears watching. It is a situation that could become critical. At the moment, it appears that they are able to produce sufficient food for their population.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Booth, you made a reference to gender-based violence in your statement. In my trips to Ethiopia, Egypt, some of the other countries in North Africa, where NGO's were taking United States foreign aid and investing it in basic education for Africans, post 9/11 we started making sure that women were not being discriminated against. There were some countries that were predominantly Muslim where they would not let women go to school. So gender-based discrimination in terms of both violence and education seems to be prevalent at least in some countries in Africa.

Have you worked with the NGO's in this area to ensure that as U.S. aid is being invested, it is invested while ensuring that there is no discrimination against women?

Ambassador BOOTH. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

In Liberia, this question of sexual exploitation and abuse has been a prime topic, both for the U.N. peacekeeping mission there and also for the NGO's that are providing assistance initially to internally displaced persons and returning refugees. And this is something that just simply requires constant attention to make sure that the staffs that are coming in are continually trained in how not to utilize their position of power, when you have very poor and vulnerable people that you are assisting, not to use your position of power to take advantage of women in particular.

In Zambia, the Muslim population is only about 5 percent, and so the attendance of girls in school is very high. There is about a 96 percent attendance rate at the elementary level, and that cuts across both sexes. However, we do find that the girls tend to drop out of school earlier, and so the illiteracy rate for girls is higher than for boys by about 10 percent.

But certainly the drive of all of our education programs, including the ones that I have had the pleasure to work with in Liberia, have focused very much on trying to encourage girls to stay in school, and I have certainly used my public speaking events in Liberia to push that and I encourage people to stay in school.

Senator ISAKSON. On that same topic, Ms. Myles, what is the general human rights situation in Cape Verde now?

Ms. MYLES. Thank you for that question, Senator. I am happy to be able to talk briefly about that question because it is also part of Cape Verde's success story.

Cape Verde stands out as a model for promoting human rights in Africa and particularly in western Africa. And the Government of Cape Verde is committed to the promotion of human rights. The annual human rights reports consistently show that the Government of Cape Verde respects the human rights of its people and that it is indeed a model.

That being said, Senator, there is always room for improvement in any situation. One of the areas that is not as positive as it could be is lengthy pretrial detentions, and there is some evidence of police abuses during detentions. And those are areas that, if confirmed, I would work hard to help improve.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much. I was reading a brief bio on you. Is this your first duty station as an Ambassador? I know you have had a myriad of responsibilities, including recruitment in the Department, but is this your first duty station as an ambassador?

Ms. MYLES. Yes, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, congratulations to you.

Ms. MYLES. Thank you.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Nolan, I know CDC has had a tremendous presence in Botswana, and Botswana is one of the 15 targeted countries and one of the largest recipients of PEPFAR money. Are the results on reducing AIDS infection turning the corner? Are we making good progress in Botswana?

Mr. NOLAN. Senator Isakson, thank you for that question.

I think that there is no greater challenge to the future of Botswana than HIV/AIDS. There is a good story to tell here. It is one of the countries that is making a difference in the fight against HIV/AIDS. One of the most serious infection rates in the world, but it has stabilized in large part because of the government's aggressive action. They have a very coherent, organized national plan.

We are closely partnered with the Government of Botswana. Our support of their programs is critical to their success. We have contributed over $300 million in the last 5 years, but more heartening than that is that the Botswanans themselves contribute $150 million a year for HIV/AIDS programs. These programs are beginning to have an impact and the penetration of the message is near universal. People who need access to antiretroviral drugs have them free of charge. There has been a remarkable drop in mother-to-child transmission from a rate of about 40 percent down to 4 percent. I think that is a signal of where this is going to go. It is a long struggle ahead, but the Government of Botswana's own goal of an AIDS-free generation by 2016 is not only a worthy goal but it is an achievable one.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bodde, I appreciate your comments about the Peace Corps. My predecessor, one Senate session removed, was Paul Coverdell who was the director of the Peace Corps and did a lot of expansion of the Peace Corps in Africa.

In terms of the Republic of Malawi, how many Peace Corps operatives do we have there?

Mr. BODDE. Sir, I understand we have 120 volunteers right now. It is one of our larger programs. It is a long-established program with great success.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I appreciate your supporting them. I know President Kennedy started that program, and they have been the great ambassadors for our country for now almost a half a century.

Ms. Davis, would you stand up? After all the bragging everybody has been doing about you, I thought we ought to recognize you. [Applause.]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. I want to thank all the nominees on both panels for their participation, their statements, and their answers to questions. And I especially want to thank Senator Isakson for his very extensive involvement here today.

This concludes the hearing.

[Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHUCK HAGEL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA

Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening today's nomination hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. One of the nominees, Peter Bodde, is the President's choice to be the Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Malawi. Peter has had a long, distinguished career in the Foreign Service, and I am proud to support his nomination to this position.

As Ambassador of the Republic of Malawi, Peter will be America's diplomatic face to an important African partner. Today, the Republic of Malawi, much like the whole of Africa, faces a number of daunting challenges and exciting opportunities. Heavily dependent on strong agricultural exports, Malawi must confront dangerous vulnerabilities from the rising cost of fuel and the ongoing threat of drought. Population growth, the global food crisis, and continued instability and violence will continue to be a difficult burden for the entire region to bear.

Despite these challenges, Malawi is in an encouraging position to prosper and grow. The country's transition to a multiparty democratic institution has been an impressive testament to its leaders and its people. The Republic of Malawi maintains strong diplomatic ties with western nations as well as all African countries and has played an important role in past humanitarian assistance for refugees from Mozambique, Rwanda, and Congo.

As the President's representative, the United States Ambassador is responsible for the development of an increasingly strong United States-Malawi relationship. Since 2005, Malawi has worked with the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation to reduce corruption and increase transparent, responsible, and effective government. Its success in this area led Malawi to be named as an eligible MCC Compact country in December 2007. In addition, the United States maintains a U.S. Agency for International Development mission and a strong contingent of Peace Corps volunteers there. As ambassador, Mr. Bodde will need to work closely with international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Food Program, as well as international NGO's and other countries in the region to leverage the world's assets in support of economic progress and regional stability.

Since joining the Foreign Service in 1981, Peter has served his country with the professionalism that defines the best of our country's proud diplomatic history. He brings an impressive record of public service in foreign posts throughout the world—most recently as Charge d'Affaires and deputy chief of mission at the United States Embassy in Pakistan. He has done much to help manage a complex and difficult United States-Pakistan relationship over the last several years. Mr. Bodde has also served in India, Nepal, Guyana, Germany, Bulgaria, and Denmark, as well as Washington, DC.

Mr. Bodde has dedicated nearly three decades to the Foreign Service, and he is well qualified to take on this important new responsibility. I enthusiastically support his nomination.

I want to acknowledge and thank Peter's family—his wife, Tanya, and his two children, Christopher and Sara—for their own service to our country. Each of us knows how fundamental the support of family is to such a demanding occupation such as this.

The committee looks forward to hearing the testimony of Charges d'Affaires Bodde, as well as that of the other nominees here today. I believe that each of these nominees are qualified and deserve positive consideration by the committee. I wish all the nominees here today continued success and want to thank them all for their important service at this critical time in our country's history.

Thank you.

RESPONSES OF MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What, in your view, are the most pressing human rights issues in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau? What are the steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in these countries? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Senegal's traditionally vibrant democracy has been characterized by some worrying developments in recent years. The executive has gained a disproportionate amount of power over parliament and the judicial branch, while the police appear to have clamped down on press and media actors. Four journalists were arrested in less than 2 months in the fall of 2007, and most recently the government forced one private television station to stop broadcasting a live feed of protesters and security forces clashing after the government ordered the break up of a demonstration against the rising cost of living.

The health of Senegal's democracy writ large is the most significant human rights issue facing the country and will remain my central priority, if confirmed as Ambassador. As chief of mission, I will ensure that the United States Government continues to pay close attention to freedom of expression, the powers of parliament and the judiciary, and the rights of civil society organizations and Senegalese individuals. I will maintain a frank dialog with government, business leaders, political party, and civil society counterparts in order to press the importance of human rights and democracy to Senegal's international standing.

Guinea-Bissau's human rights situation is adversely affected by the country's struggles with poverty, political instability, and most recently drug trafficking. Prison conditions are poor, impunity and corruption are problems, and violence and discrimination against women continue—as does the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). If confirmed, I will support the Government of Guinea-Bissau in its efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, the rule of law, and service delivery.

Security sector reform will also be a top priority. The size and expenses associated with Guinea-Bissau's military pose a threat to the country's stability and resources. If confirmed, I will work with Guinea-Bissau, the U.N., and other donor nations on security sector reform. In addition, I will press the Government to improve the overall conditions in Guinea-Bissau.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous responses? What challenges will you face in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, which have very different histories and records on these issues, in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. In spite of their different histories and records on these issues, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau both, though to a different degree, lack in resources, training, and institutional capacity for addressing human rights concerns. These shortcomings constitute the primary obstacles to effectively addressing human rights concerns. The United States and other donor countries have programs in both countries to assist in overcoming these impediments.

In Senegal, a number of nongovernmental organizations, both national and international, monitor human rights issues. Our embassy works with many of these groups, and, if confirmed, I will continue this cooperation. I will also work closely with contacts within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the government at large to underscore United States concern over the deterioration of press freedom and checks and balances within the different branches of the Senegalese Government.

In Guinea-Bissau, achieving political stability and national reconciliation after years of conflict are prerequisites for improving the human rights situation. I will work closely with contacts across the Government of Guinea-Bissau to assist institutions in developing their ability to resolve internal conflict and in improving oper-

ational capacity. I also believe that education plays a key role in improving human rights conditions, and, if confirmed, will work on effective public diplomacy strategies for both Senegal and Guinea-Bissau to inform and generate debate about human rights conditions.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Promoting democracy and human rights in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau is a top priority for the country team in Dakar. Until recently, Senegal has been viewed as a model for democracy and human rights within the region. Its unique brand of moderate Islam and longstanding traditions of democracy have created a solid architecture for tolerance and freedom. The embassy works to support this model. Our assistance to Senegal—including USAID programs, the Ambassador's Self-Help Program, Democracy and Human Rights funds, Public Affairs programs, and DOD humanitarian assistance, all reinforce our human rights goals.

While the human rights situation in Guinea-Bissau brings its unique set of capacity and resource challenges, Embassy Dakar is working with that country on improving conditions. If confirmed, I will ensure that human rights issues continue to be at the forefront of Embassy Dakar's programs and daily work. Also, I am a strong believer in the awards system, and, if confirmed, will recommend outstanding employees at Embassy Dakar for awards, including those who handle human rights issues concerning Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. I am proud to acknowledge that throughout the course of my career, and in my life, I have endeavored to encourage democratic principles and promote improved human rights. In addition to reporting on human rights conditions and supporting a multiplicity of programs in all of my postings, there are several efforts of which I am particularly proud:

- In Mali, as manager of the Ambassador's Self Help Program, I made a priority those projects that improved the health, education, and the economic situation of women and children, recognizing that they are too often the majority of victims of abuse and denied even rights guaranteed to them by their own governments.
- In India, I supported the ambassador's initiative to provide Indian officials responsible for human rights with copies of the Christopher Commission Report as a framework for how to provide accountability in the wake of human rights abuse cases. The tactic completely disarmed these officials, who expected to be lectured on their failure to protect human rights, opening an unprecedented and candid dialog on this key issue.
- I helped develop strong and productive relations between a professional army—Malawi's strongest institution—and a fast growing civil society in that country 6 years after it made the transition from a 30-year dictatorship to a multiparty democracy.
- For the last year and a half as the office director in the South Asia Bureau responsible for guiding our day to day relations with India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, I have worked relentlessly, especially with Human Rights Watch and the European Union, to get the Sri Lankan Government to improve its human rights practices, particularly to stop abusing its citizens and to release child soldiers. When the government remained largely nonresponsive to United States and international concerns, I worked in concert with Congress and my Department of Defense counterparts to restrict all military assistance to Sri Lanka except for limited funds to support the maritime interdiction of arms and other supplies to the Tamil Tigers. This has underlined the United States message to the Sri Lankans that, as a democracy, they have a responsibility to maintain the highest human rights standards, including in battle.

Question. Narcotrafficking is becoming an issue of increasing concern in West Africa. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to address it? How do you see this issue intersecting with or affecting efforts to further develop democracy and reduce corruption?

Answer. Narcotics Trafficking is a growing issue that threatens to derail West African countries' efforts to develop democratic institutions and establish the rule-of-

law. If left unchecked, the infusion of trafficking rings into West African societies will undermine countries' security and exacerbate corruption at all levels.

- Guinea-Bissau's geography is especially conducive to illicit trafficking, though media reports and intelligence indicate that traffickers have also gained a foothold in Guinea, Ghana, and other countries throughout the region. Colombian cartels are using Guinea-Bissau's ungoverned coastline and numerous small airfields as transshipment points for smuggling cocaine into Europe. Press and other sources have consistently highlighted military and other high-level government involvement in the drug trade.

If confirmed, I will first increase United States official presence in Guinea-Bissau by encouraging frequent travel, especially by United States Embassy staff and by those members of the interagency whose primary goal is to fight transnational crime. We will closely monitor and assess this issue and, together with the United States interagency and our European counterparts, develop an aggressive plan to deny traffickers access to the region modeled on the programs we executed when I served in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. I will also place narcotics trafficking high on the agenda as I engage with Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, and regional organizations and partners. If confirmed, I will also ensure that the embassy's public diplomacy efforts support this plan, promote awareness of the trafficking problem, and encourage support in the fight against it.

RESPONSES OF LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in Liberia are lengthy pretrial detentions, a weak judiciary, official corruption and impunity, gender-based violence, racial and ethnic discrimination, and incidents of child labor. There are also some reports of discrimination based on religious belief or practice. In confronting these problems, I would, if confirmed, help Liberia overcome the legacy of 14 years of civil war, rebuild its civil society organizations and government institutions, and achieve social and political reconciliation.

If confirmed as Ambassador to Liberia, I would make the promotion of human rights a central part of my work, particularly vis-a-vis the reform of Liberia's justice system. Today, Liberian police are relatively ineffective, vigilantism and mob justice are common, pretrial detention can stretch into years, and a culture of impunity pervades Liberian society. If confirmed, I would seek to strengthen existing U.S. programs that are establishing legal aid clinics; combating gender-based violence with victim abuse centers; training alternative dispute mediators; conducting public legal education; renovating courtroom facilities; conducting prosecutor and public defender training; and implementing criminal case management and case tracking systems. The key task is to help Liberia build the capacity of its police, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, court administrators, and others in the judicial system so that public confidence improves, the rights of detainees and prisoners are respected, and impunity is replaced by the rule of law.

As Liberia's leading partner in the reconstruction effort, the United States is also well-positioned to confront official corruption. As I said to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, if confirmed as ambassador I would not hesitate to publicly attack corruption, human rights abuses, and the "old ways of doing business" in Liberia that contributed so much to its breakdown and civil conflict.

If confirmed, I would also seek to build bridges between Liberia's racial, ethnic, and religious groups to promote reconciliation and prevent discrimination. Through public diplomacy campaigns and by supporting Liberian efforts such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, I would lend my support to Liberia's reconciliation process. I would also continue our embassy's tradition of hosting interfaith events, supporting faith-based civil society organizations, and meeting regularly with prominent members of various religious communities.

Labor conditions in Liberia demand close attention, particularly with respect to child labor. Ongoing U.S. Government programs have made strong headway in preventing child labor and returning children to school; if confirmed, I would support these programs. I would also support the Liberian Government's efforts to dramatically expand public education for all children. Liberia's recovery will likely span generations rather than years, and we must invest in Liberia's future by investing in education.

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

Answer. The most daunting obstacle to addressing human rights issues in Liberia is the sheer magnitude of Liberia's destruction during the civil war. Liberia's institutions were literally destroyed in the fighting and during years of mismanagement, misrule, and corruption under former President Charles Taylor. Even now, nearly 5 years after the signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement, Liberia's economy, Government, civil society, and social institutions are struggling to rebuild.

At the same time, Liberia enjoys an opportunity to break with the past and build institutions that will uphold human rights and promote democratic values. For example, in 2005, the United States took the lead in completely demobilizing the 14,000-strong Armed Forces of Liberia, replacing it with a new, well-trained 2,000 member force that has been vetted and trained in human rights to protect Liberia's people rather than prey on them. The United Nations has taken the lead in reforming Liberia's police force, and the United States is now engaged in building a police emergency response unit that will receive extensive human rights vetting and training. In addition, U.S. programs will emphasize the importance of oversight of the police force to ensure accountability. In the same way, Liberia's efforts to rebuild its government ministries, in partnership with the United States and other donors, represents a break with the past and a focus on best practices.

If confirmed as ambassador, I would help Liberia seize this opportunity to build a new Liberia that will be an example of hope for other conflict-affected societies.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. I firmly believe in the value of leading by example, and if confirmed, I would demonstrate through my own actions the value of promoting human rights. I would not only expect embassy officers in every section to promote human rights in their day-to-day work, but I would also show them how to do it through my own actions. I would make it clear that outstanding Foreign Service officers whose responsibilities include human rights and democracy will be recommended for promotions and performance awards.

Liberia, with more historical ties to America than any other African country, is fertile ground for human rights promotion through direct personal engagement. As security and road conditions improve, I would encourage embassy officers to travel throughout Liberia and make connections with Liberians on the social, political, economic, and human rights issues that confront their communities. I would encourage officers to engage in public speaking with youth groups, religious leaders, NGO representatives, and civil society to promote tolerance and respect for human rights. I would also seek to do the same myself.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have devoted the vast majority of my career as a Foreign Service officer to working on refugee and humanitarian issues and the promotion of human rights and democracy. From 1993–1996, I served as the refugee coordinator in Nairobi, Kenya, covering the Great Lakes and the Horn. I had the misfortune of being in Kigali for 5 days during the genocide. This experience has had a major impact on how I approach my work since the genocide was the result of the failure of efforts to promote human rights and democracy. Immediately following that period, I devoted the weeks following the genocide to assisting Rwandans fleeing the genocide, including the embassy's locally engaged staff to escape and benefit from resettlement to the United States or elsewhere.

As the refugee counselor in Pakistan, I worked to assist Iranian Christians and Bahais resettle in the United States and assisted Afghan women and other victims of the vicious Taliban rule in Afghanistan from 1993–1999.

As the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the State Department's Africa Bureau, I was part of the effort in 2006 to bring Charles Taylor to justice for crimes against humanity and human rights violations. This sent an important message to the Liberian people who were victims of his actions that he would be held accountable.

I strongly believe that the most important impact of efforts I made during my career saved lives and gave hope to people who had no hope. If confirmed, I hope to

bring that experience to bear in my efforts to promote human rights and democracy in Liberia.

Question. What are the foremost challenges facing Liberia as it seeks to move beyond a post-conflict state to a more stable democracy?

Answer. The key challenges facing Liberia today are lack of infrastructure, high levels of unemployment, lack of judicial capacity, and pervasive corruption. The United States development and diplomatic strategy in Liberia is designed to confront these problems.

Recent studies show that some 40 percent of post-conflict countries revert to civil war within 10 years. A key factor reducing the risk of conflict is rapid, broad-based economic growth, which in turn depends on (1) adequate security, (2) governance and rule of law (including anticorruption measures and contract enforcement), (3) investments in infrastructure and key economic sectors, and (4) investments in people to improve the quality of the work force.

U.S. programs are making major investments in all these areas. We are improving Liberian security forces so they can take over as U.N. peacekeepers draw down and eventually depart. We are engaging the justice sector to provide effective police and justice services and to adjudicate commercial and land disputes. We are working with the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP) to help the Liberian Government fight corruption and maximize its resources for economic development. We are investing heavily in infrastructure, focusing on roads and electricity, and we are improving key sectors such as agriculture, forestry, and mining. Finally, we are improving education and health care services so that Liberians are healthy, educated, and ready to work.

Question. In 2005, I posed the following question to the then-nominee for ambassador to Liberia: There is a history of deep-rooted corruption in Liberia, and there are serious allegations of corruption among members of the transitional government. How does the international community, including the United States, plan to address the problem of corruption? What plans do the United States and other countries have to ensure that corrupt government officials are held accountable for their actions? Liberia has made progress in many ways in the last 3 years. How would you assess its progress in fighting corruption? What areas need to be prioritized in the coming years?

Answer. The fight against corruption has taken major steps forward under the donor-funded Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP). GEMAP was initiated partly because of the allegations of corruption under the National Transitional Government of Liberia, and to address the need for outside expertise in the financial management of Liberian Government structures. Progress under GEMAP has been strong and should, along with progress in fighting corruption through the judicial system, result in significant improvements in anticorruption efforts. In addition, GEMAP has helped the Liberian Government raise and retain more revenues, which in turn helps improve corruption-fighting capacity.

GEMAP has brought the Liberian Government and key donors together to place financial controllers and other experts in key positions in Liberian ministries and state-owned enterprises. These experts have cosignature authority, which gives them effective oversight of financial transactions. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, these experts have a mandate to pass on their knowledge and expertise to their Liberian counterparts so that anticorruption efforts will outlast the GEMAP program.

Another area of improvement is the Liberian Government's efforts to indict and prosecute former officials for corruption under the transitional government. Several prosecutions are moving forward, and the United States and other donors are helping the Liberian judicial system build its capacity to handle these and other cases.

Through GEMAP and prosecutions, the Liberian Government has shown its willingness to roll back the culture of impunity that dominated Liberia for decades. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has, on several occasions, made a public stand against corruption. The Liberian legislature is currently investigating claims of corruption in its ranks, and the outcome of that investigation will be an important indicator of anticorruption efforts.

In the coming years, the reform process will include several key priority areas. GEMAP will continue for at least another year (it will expire upon Liberia's reaching the "completion point" under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries debt relief program), while justice sector efforts will continue well beyond then. Civil service reform efforts, already underway with United States and other donor support, will be an important way to attract honest and capable Liberians into government serv-

ice. Economic reforms will help broaden the base of economic opportunity for Liberians, and will provide a path to wealth and influence outside the realm of government rent-seeking.

RESPONSES OF HON. DONALD E. BOOTH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R, BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. Trafficking in persons and gender-based violence remain serious problems in Zambia. Excessive use of force and unlawful killings by security personnel, overcrowded prisons, lengthy pretrial detentions, child labor, and government corruption are other areas in which Zambia could improve.

If confirmed, I will work with the Zambian Government and civil society to help address these human rights issues and support democratic institutions in Zambia. I would utilize our Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative (WJEI) to counter gender-based violence (GBV) by helping the government strengthen its GBV laws, improve their enforcement, and provide care and support to victims of GBV. To counter trafficking in persons, I would, if confirmed, work to strengthen laws against trafficking and to see that they are better enforced. Additionally, I would continue our efforts to improve the Zambian police by sending police officers to the International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone, Botswana for training. I would also speak out on these and other human rights concerns in speeches and interviews so that there would be no doubt about United States interest in, and support for, human rights in Zambia.

Government corruption perpetuates impunity for human rights offenders and undermines confidence in democratic institutions. If confirmed, I would utilize resources from the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to tackle the corruption that most affects the average Zambian and attempt to restore confidence in democratic governance. I would also utilize Treasury Department advisers to help the Zambian Government establish tighter fiscal systems so it can better control and account for government revenues, as well as work with other international partners in supporting the government's efforts to hold past and present officials of government accountable for corrupt practices. This will build on the success of the government's efforts, to date, to convince office holders that they will be held accountable for acts of corruption.

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 Zambia in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. A relatively weak judiciary presents obstacles to combating gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, police abuse and systemic corruption. Persons who perpetrate these abuses must be successfully prosecuted and punished in order to convince others not to engage in those behaviors. These human rights issues are exacerbated by widespread poverty, unemployment, lack of quality education, and the widespread incidence of HIV/AIDS and malaria, as those issues have priority claim on the Zambian Government's attention.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make it the responsibility of all United States and locally hired staff of Embassy Lusaka to respect and promote respect for human rights. Whether it is the consular officer who hears of human rights abuses, the economic officer who reports on mining and other economic activity, or the public affairs officer who identifies human rights activists to participate in exchange programs, all members of Embassy Lusaka would have a role to play in promoting respect for human rights.

If confirmed, I will provide leadership on human rights issues by highlighting them in my speeches and interviews and by ensuring officers are encouraged to incorporate human rights activities into their work. I would recommend that those officers of Embassy Lusaka whose responsibilities specifically include human rights be recognized and rewarded for outstanding contributions toward advancing our human rights objectives in Zambia.

Question. In response to a question before your confirmation as Ambassador to Liberia, you described how you have worked to advance human rights quite personally and eloquently. How has your post in Liberia, which is seeking to solidify itself as a democracy after years of terrible conflict and mismanagement, influenced your perspective on this issue?

Answer. My experience in Liberia has reinforced my belief that American diplomats can play decisive roles in promoting democracy and improving respect for human rights.

Following the 2005 presidential elections in Liberia, I played a leading role in convincing the loser of the runoff election to accept the results. The losing candidate had secured a plurality in the first round election, in which 22 candidates ran for the presidency, and he assumed he would win the runoff election held a month later. When he lost, he claimed ballots had been added by the opposition. However, he lacked evidence of widespread fraud and his allegations to that effect were not credible given the widespread monitoring of polling stations by multiple international observer groups as well as of representatives of both parties. Thousands of his youthful supporters took to the streets to support his claim of victory. I went to see him and spent 2 hours, one on one, explaining why his claims of vote rigging and of his victory were not credible and how his persistence in those claims could send the country back into renewed civil conflict. He decided he would present his case to the courts and ask his supporters to cease demonstrations. After several more conversations, he agreed to withdraw his legal challenge so the inauguration of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as President could proceed without lingering legal questions about the election results that could have facilitated a return to violence in Liberia.

As Ambassador to Liberia, I supported the utilization of United States assistance to renovate some of Liberia's decrepit prison facilities so that women and minors could be separated from adult male prisoners. I also instituted a justice sector support program that trained Liberia's first public defenders. The new public defenders secured the release of numerous indigent prisoners who had been held in prison for months pending trial for minor or first offenses.

If confirmed as Ambassador to Zambia, I will continue to use the influence inherent in that position to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights. I would ensure that U.S. assistance is used to address issues such as gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, and corruption.

Question. Women and girls are economically, biologically, and socially more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, and young women in southern Africa are far more likely than their male counterparts to be HIV positive. Violence against women is also all too common in much of the region. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to address these issues?

Answer. Women suffer disproportionately from HIV/AIDS, partly because of their lower social and economic status. If confirmed, I would work to elevate the status of women in Zambian society by promoting girls' education through scholarships and other interventions that encourage parents to keep their daughters in school. I would speak out frequently against gender-based violence and enforce a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment within the embassy. I would ensure PEPFAR activities in Zambia seek to reduce the risky sexual behavior that results in large numbers of women becoming HIV-infected. Most importantly, I would ensure effective implementation of the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative (WJEI). The goals of WJEI are to strengthen laws against gender-based violence and expand enforcement of such laws. Gender-based violence will not decline until those who perpetrate it are consistently punished. Another goal of WJEI is to provide effective support to victims of gender-based violence. To achieve this, I would look at emulating programs that have proven successful in other countries of southern Africa.

RESPONSES OF HON. GILLIAN ARLETTE MILOVANOVIC TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. Mali generally respects the human rights of its citizens, although there are problems. Prison conditions remain poor, the judicial system's large case backlog results in long periods of pretrial detention, and discrimination against women persists, with social and cultural factors continuing to limit economic and educational opportunities for most women. Trafficking in persons continues to be a problem, although increased government attention has contributed to more successful efforts to

arrest traffickers and protect trafficking victims. Slavery is illegal in Mali but hereditary servitude relationships between and within certain ethnicities continue to impact groups such as the Bellah, or black Tamacheks, in rural areas.

If confirmed, I will support the continuation of our Shared Governance Program. This program supports Mali's decentralization and local governance efforts by providing training to local (commune) officials, including mayors, communal councils, civil society organizations, media outlets and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) in budget planning, financial management, establishing communal development plans and transparency in managing local resources. Community radio stations play a critical role in the program by broadcasting local debates on development priorities, budget preparation, tax collection and other local government issues. The program also assists women to participate to a greater extent in local government, and provides technical assistance to help women's organizations undertake revenue-generating projects. Finally, the program helps Malians advocate for greater independence in the management of local tax revenues and decision making. With this program, I hope to help the Malian Government and society strengthen their understanding of democracy and their democratic institutions.

If confirmed, I will also make a priority the improvement of the social and health issues that prevent women from full participation in the economic life of the country. Specifically, I hope to maintain programs that encourage girls and young women to attend (and stay in) school, including a scholarship program supported by my predecessor through the President's Africa Education Initiative, that offers educational support to 7,570 girls in 117 schools, principally in northern Mali. As for trafficking in persons, if confirmed, I will encourage the Malian Government to consolidate and fully implement the bilateral agreements it has signed with neighboring states to prevent the trafficking of women and children, and I will further encourage it to establish a law that outlaws all forms of trafficking. I will work with the Malian Government and local NGOs to improve their capacity to protect and reintegrate victims of trafficking and, to the extent possible, training of officials from the Malian judicial branch, to improve prosecution and enforcement efforts.

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

Answer. The Malian Government is committed to improving its already respectable human rights record. There are, however, several obstacles that prevent Mali from addressing specific human rights concerns. Ingrained societal attitudes toward the treatment of women and minority groups, for instance, have made it difficult for Malian political leaders to pass legislation that would provide improved rights for women and children, eliminate the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), or increase protections for marginalized groups. While there is evidence that many of these societal attitudes are shifting, changing deeply rooted viewpoints poses a long-term challenge. I heartily support the educational efforts I outlined in response to your first question, as well as our public outreach because I believe that education and good communication are fundamental tools in changing societal attitudes.

Mali's level of development poses another serious challenge to the advancement of human rights and democracy. In 2007, Mali ranked 173 out of 177 countries on the U.N.'s Human Development Index. This ranking was due, in large part, to Mali's poor health and education indicators which are among the lowest in the world. Individuals and NGOs working to improve Mali's human rights' practices often cite education levels, even amongst officials within the Malian judiciary and security forces, as one of the main obstacles to progress. Mali is the beneficiary of several Presidential Initiatives in both health and education, and I will help ensure that programs such as the President's Malaria Initiative and the African Education Initiative are effectively implemented.

Severe resource constraints constitute a third major obstacle. While the Malian Government is clearly committed to improving human rights, Mali remains one of the poorest countries in the world. As a result, many good-faith and sincere attempts by Malian officials to improve human rights and democratic practices lack basic funding. To address Mali's resource constraints, I will work with the Malian Government and NGOs to encourage economic growth, particularly in the areas of agriculture and commodities. This is in line with the Malian Government's recent initiative to invest in its agriculture with the goal of becoming a net exporter of grains. Our goals for Mali are increased incomes and poverty reduction. Our strategy is transforming agriculture and value-added commodities, expanding and strengthening markets, and facilitating access to finance. Our program works to develop and reinforce the private sector by targeting opportunities in the production, processing, and trade of selected commodities in key geographic areas. We are en-

couraging Malian Government policy changes, for example, in regional and international trade that can in turn improve the country's incomes. Our program includes the introduction, dissemination, and replication of improved technologies such as seed varieties, fish stock, and management practices in all aspects of agriculture—fisheries/aquaculture, millet/sorghum, and livestock. If confirmed, I will make sure that the mission carefully implements these economic programs which expand economic prospects beyond subsistence level productivity. Economic growth will help supply Mali with the resources it needs for stability and further democratization.

Finally, Mali is a huge country, with a long and porous border, much of it across the trackless expanse of the Sahara Desert. Tuareg unrest in the north is detrimental to progress because it requires the government's attention and resources that could be used instead on human rights efforts. The unrest destabilizes a region that is readily used for arms and drug trafficking. If confirmed, I will coordinate my efforts with those of the other United States Ambassadors to neighboring Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership countries to help stabilize Mali and the region.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. It has been my practice throughout my professional career with the Department of State to place a priority on the promotion of human rights in my country of assignment, and, if confirmed, I will ensure that human rights and democratization remain priorities for Embassy Bamako. I believe that all members of the mission—political and economic officers, consular officers, our public affairs staff, our USAID mission, and Millennium Challenge Account staff—have a responsibility to promote greater respect for human rights in Mali and the consolidation of the country's democratic institutions. If I am confirmed, I will make clear to all who work these critically important issues at Embassy Bamako that they enjoy the full support of the chief of mission, and I will recognize their achievements through the evaluation process, the mission awards program, and through active involvement in their search for an onward assignment.

Question. In response to a question before your confirmation as Ambassador to Macedonia, you described how you have worked to advance human rights in previous posts, particularly in South Africa. How has your posting to Macedonia, your first as chief of mission, influenced your perspective on this issue?

Answer. My posting to Macedonia has served to further strengthen my belief in the importance of human rights, particularly with regard to guarantees and respect for minority rights, and the need to support the development of multiethnic societies. These cornerstones of democracy are critical in South Africa, in Macedonia, and in Mali. In Macedonia, a prime goal has been to work with the Government of Macedonia, municipalities, political parties, and other societal actors to ensure continued implementation of the provisions of the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement. State Department, USAID, Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Treasury and other United States Government agencies each contributed to helping Macedonia reinforce its multiethnic democracy. We have worked to achieve more equitable representation of nonmajority populations in the public service, and the defense establishment. We have successfully assisted Macedonia's efforts to decentralize power and responsibility to the municipal level in order to bring government closer to the people, thereby providing more efficient services while allowing greater opportunity for citizens of all ethnicities to have an impact on municipal life and policies.

Also in Macedonia, I worked to promote human rights of the Roma. Along with the Government of Macedonia, the United States Government assisted a number of Roma to file for and receive citizenship, has provided scholarships that allow talented secondary and university students, many of them young women, to attend school and obtain degrees. With strong United States support, the Macedonian parliament passed legislation 2 years ago on the equitable preparation of electoral lists that resulted in a significant increase in the number of female members of parliament, making Macedonia a leader in this regard. A Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Tier Two country in danger of falling to Tier Two Watch List when I arrived, Macedonia is on the brink of Tier One status today. Indeed, women's rights, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons, domestic violence, and child abuse have been central to my work throughout my career. My time in Macedonia did not

change my perspective on human rights issues, because I have always felt their importance. But it provided an opportunity to focus on human rights issues and to participate, firsthand, in their development in a new and emerging democracy.

RESPONSES OF PATRICIA MCMAHON HAWKINS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What, in your view, are the most pressing human rights issues in Togo? What are the steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in the country? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Among the most pressing human rights issues in Togo is the uneven respect for basic human rights, including freedom of press, association, and speech. Unfortunately, Togo has experienced a long history of human rights abuses. Such abuses included abridgement of citizens' rights to change their government; severe restrictions on freedom of speech, movement, assembly, association, collective bargaining, and the press; unlawful beating and killing of civilians; unlawful imprisonment of journalists, political opponents, and critics of the government; torture; arbitrary arrest and detention; unfair and delayed trials; and harsh prison conditions.

President Faure Gnassingbe's declarations of his intention to institute political, electoral, and economic reform offer some hope that he will lead Togo on the path to democracy. The peaceful, free, and fair parliamentary elections in November 2007 sent a positive signal about President Gnassingbe's commitment but continued vigilance is required. If confirmed, I will press the Government of Togo to implement further political, economic, and electoral reforms.

Trafficking in persons, in particular of children, is another important human rights concern. Although the laws of Togo provide for free primary education, in practice there are financial and cultural constraints that prevent this from becoming a universal reality. The Code of the Child, passed in July 2007, contains harsh penalties for trafficking in children and strengthened the child trafficking provisions of Togo's 2005 Child Trafficking Law. The code should help address this problem, although the government must strengthen efforts to enforce, and raise public awareness about, this legislation. If confirmed, I would urge Government of Togo officials to actively prosecute human traffickers and to cooperate with neighboring governments to control its borders to prevent the trafficking of children through its territory.

Many of Togo's human rights challenges stem from a general disregard for the rule of law, and a lack of trust in the judiciary, security forces, and military. Bringing about lasting change will be difficult and will require the willingness and commitment of all parties—NGOs, civil society in dialog with the Government of Togo and the political opposition—as well as resources and time. If confirmed, I will make continued use of public diplomacy resources to encourage dialog, including digital video conferences, International Visitors Leadership, Humphrey Fellowships, Fulbright Scholar programs, and the use of experts and speakers from the United States to convene seminars in the areas of rule of law, access to media and freedom of the press, and strengthening the role of the judiciary.

If confirmed, I also intend to make effective use of Democracy and Human Rights fund monies in support of activities that address the main problems noted above. By taking these steps, I would hope to improve the political climate and thereby help influence Togo's evolution toward democracy.

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

Answer. If confirmed, the biggest obstacles I will face are those created by the interests and attitudes of persons still in positions of power and influence who have long benefited from practices that disregard human rights and democratic norms. Thirty-eight years of rule by one person inculcated behaviors and practices intended to reinforce the position of one small group of people. It will take time to overcome that legacy.

Specific obstacles include a culture of distrust of the government; an unsophisticated and inexperienced opposition that has unrealistic expectations; and the country's below par human rights performance. These obstacles can only be overcome by broadening the ethnic makeup of the military, allowing a more vibrant free press, and engaging with the opposition while being careful not to threaten long-time ruling party loyalists with a zero-sum outcome. Ethnic unevenness, particularly in the armed forces, and long-held biases are also problems. The judiciary, the security forces, and the military are badly in need of reform.

The challenges will include convincing political actors to keep their focus on a better future and not on past wrongs; convincing the opposition and the government, each deeply distrustful of the other, to engage in a genuine dialog; convincing the military that its real role is defending the country from external threat rather than maintaining the status quo related to one group's political control. The task of combating human trafficking, especially in children, will be complicated by the economic cost of providing real educational opportunities for all the children at risk, and by the force of the tradition or habit of putting children to work at an early age.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. The promotion of democratic systems and practices is a primary goal of the United States and therefore of Embassy Lome. If confirmed as chief of mission, I will continue my predecessor's efforts on this goal and provide highly visible leadership on this issue. The mission will actively look for opportunities to use our Democracy and Human Rights funds and our Ambassador's Self-help Funds for projects that advance the cause of human rights in Togo. All sections of the embassy, consular, political, economic, public diplomacy, and management have roles to play in this important endeavor. I will use the embassy awards program to recognize the valuable contributions in the field of human rights for all members of the embassy team.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. In all my Foreign Service posts the promotion of democracy and human rights has been one of my primary objectives. As a public diplomacy officer, I have been able to use all of the program tools—the International Visitors Leadership Program, the Fulbright Scholar and Humphrey Fellows programs, U.S. Speakers, libraries (now called Information Resource Centers), Educational and Cultural exchanges of all sorts—to advance these essential U.S. values.

In 1984, in Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, I guided the National Bar Association in its efforts to print copies of the Electoral Code in Lingala, the most commonly used language, thus making previously inaccessible information available to an enormous number of voters. The financial grant covered the translation, printing, and distribution costs.

In Burkina Faso, as the public affairs officer, I was able to use the programming resources available to support several women's groups as they worked to improve access to health care and political rights and in their fight against domestic violence.

In Colombia, I worked with a local Civitas group to promote civic education in primary and secondary schools, organizing workshops and training programs that brought United States speakers to schools in Colombia. I also funded the translation into Spanish and the publication of educational materials provided by the Center for Civic Education in Los Angles. These materials were the first of their kind to be used in Colombian schools and are still in use in many Latin American countries. In fact, when I arrived in the Dominican Republic, 5 years later, I found the same materials in use in the local civic education programs. I subsequently facilitated an intra-post purchase of hundreds of copies of the books and shipped them to my counterpart in Havana for distribution there. I received an award from the Government of Colombia in recognition of my efforts to further civic education and voter participation in that country.

In Côte D'Ivoire I continued my focus on human rights, again working with women's groups in their fight against domestic violence, trafficking in children, and uneven access to legal recourse. I helped to equip and fund the first-ever Legal Aid clinic, staffed by female lawyers and legislators, who worked to help women regain custody of their children or an equitable settlement in a divorce. I instituted a program to bring books on democracy, human rights, rule of law, an independent judiciary, and free markets, in French, to all 17 regional information centers throughout the country—many of which had no material of this kind available. I followed up with speaker programs on the same subjects at as many of the centers as possible, using local talent from the mission if we could not find an American expert willing to travel to such far-flung and sometimes dangerous locations. Following the first coup d'etat, during a time of great political and social unrest, I concentrated on programs concerning the media, and the training and protection of journalists.

In the Dominican Republic, greatly concerned with the increasing number of dangerous and illicit voyages across the Mona Passage to Puerto Rico, I created the first-ever public service campaign to expose the dangers and to focus public and governmental attention on the problem. Long an issue of concern to United States authorities and the United States Coast Guard and a bone of contention with the Dominican Government, these trips were blatant examples of trafficking in persons and exploitation of both men and women into indentured servitude and prostitution. Furthermore, the boats that transported people were increasingly used to smuggle narcotics. I worked with the narcotics affairs section of the embassy to produce a campaign that covered all fronts—TV and radio spots, large billboards, press articles, interviews with survivors of shipwrecks, pictures of heroic Coast Guardsmen rescuing Dominicans at sea—the full story of what was actually happening to get across the message that this was a Dominican human rights issue, not a United States immigration control problem. The campaign was an enormous success. Not only did the number of illegal trips diminish, but we succeeded in sensitizing the Dominican public and Government to the harm it was doing to the fabric of their society. The Dominican Navy started cooperating with our Coast Guard in interdiction and prevention, the GODR prosecuted, for the first time, the organizers of such trips for trafficking in people, and the Dominican media continued the campaign without our funding—as a public service. The campaign itself won several international awards for creativity and impact, and the President of the Dominican Republic publicly thanked the United States mission for its help to the Dominican nation.

RESPONSES OF MARIANNE MATUZIC MYLES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What, in your view, are the most pressing human rights issues in Cape Verde? What are the steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in Cape Verde? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The Government of Cape Verde is committed to the promotion of human rights and, as a whole, has a remarkably good human rights record. However, there are occasional reports of police abuse of detainees, prison conditions are poor, the judicial system is overburdened, and lengthy pretrial detentions and excessive trial delays are common. Domestic and other violence and discrimination against women are serious problems, as are mistreatment of children and child labor practices.

If confirmed, I would stress accelerated progress on human rights as a major point in our dialog with Cape Verde. I would urge Cape Verdean officials to use their country's continued eligibility for trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act as a vehicle to further improve Cape Verde's human rights record. I would also encourage nongovernmental organizations to work to increase Cape Verdeans' capacity in safeguarding human rights. Furthermore, I would use the reports on human rights and trafficking in persons to sensitize officials to human rights abuses in Cape Verde, and to stimulate improvement in the respect for those rights.

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

Answer. The latest annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices notes that the government generally respects the human rights of its citizens. There are appropriate constitutional and legal prohibitions against domestic violence, sex discrimination, and child labor. The government, civil society, and the media actively encourage reporting of abuses in these areas. However, longstanding social values and cultural traditions inhibit victims from doing so. Also, while there are mechanisms to deal with spousal abuse, for instance, these mechanisms neither ensure punishment of those responsible nor prevent future violence. Effecting change is, therefore, a considerable challenge.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. It is the responsibility of all United States and locally employed officers and staff at Embassy Praia to promote human rights. This pertains to the consular officer who hears of human rights abuses while conducting visa interviews and prison visits, to the public affairs officer who identifies human rights activists who should participate in our international programs, to the economic officer who learns of child labor violations.

As chief of mission, if confirmed, I will provide leadership on this issue and will recommend commendations for the outstanding contributions of staff members at my mission who are responsible for advancing our human rights objectives in Cape Verde.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. During my 30-plus year Foreign Service career, I have worked to protect human rights and advance democracy in many places and in multiple ways. In Bogota, Colombia, I made regular visits to Americans in prison, ensuring that they understood their rights, received adequate nourishment and medical attention, and were not physically abused. While there, I made it a point to meet other prisoners and learn about their treatment. I believe those expressions of interest alone served as a deterrent to potential abuse. In southern Brazil, I ensured the consular officers under my supervision established a regular schedule of such visits, and I met frequently with a wide range of law enforcement, media, and judicial and legislative branch officials to encourage improvement in Brazil's human rights record. I also oversaw our International Visitor Program selection process in which we carefully chose participants for rule of law, civil society, and democracy and journalism programs.

In Italy, I worked closely with law enforcement and military officials to address human rights and rule of law issues associated with the activities of the Camorra and Mafia. In Uruguay, I established strong relationships with the military to uncover, to the maximum extent possible, information about human rights abuses during the past period of military dictatorship—especially in the area of disappeared persons. Those cooperative efforts helped strengthen democracy and human rights in Uruguay by bringing under scrutiny the tragedy of past abuses and creating the opportunity for victims' families to have the benefit of closure on the past.

These activities and others were important for a number of reasons, not least among them the goal of ensuring that foreign publics knew that the United States stood squarely on the side of freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights. Similarly, foreign governments and officials knew that our close monitoring of these issues ensured that lapses or the abused would not go unnoticed and would affect our bilateral relations.

RESPONSES OF DONALD GENE TEITELBAUM TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. The Government of Ghana generally respects human rights. Continuing problems in Ghana include vigilante justice, the use of excessive force by police, harsh prison conditions, police corruption, impunity, violence against women and children, human trafficking, and child labor. Recently, the Government of Ghana has made significant steps to improve protection of human rights, including passing legislation on domestic violence and criminalizing the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM).

If I am confirmed, I will continue the broad programmatic outreach the embassy conducts under the Democracy and Human Rights Fund, and program funds from INL—Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs—to address existing human rights problems. As a result of past INL work with Ghana Police, human rights training has been incorporated in basic skills police training courses offered to new police recruits in Ghana's police academy. My public diplomacy section will also bring human rights issues to the forefront with speakers, NGO functions, journalist training sessions, and other activities. We will thus inform the public, work to address abuses, and engage closely with the local NGO community and the government.

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

Answer. The main obstacle that I foresee in addressing the human rights challenges in Ghana is lack of resources. The Ghanaian Government has the political will to effect change, and it has expertise in many areas. However, its capacity to engage on a broad front of human right issues is limited by budget shortfalls and staff capacity. Ministry officials with responsibility for assisting trafficking victims lack proper reception facilities, and have only limited funds for reintegration programs. The Justice Ministry lacks sufficient trained prosecutors for trafficking cases. Prison authorities have long acknowledged the harsh conditions in their prisons, conditions the result of dilapidated prison infrastructure and limited financial resources. The police have limited training facilities and training budgets to instruct officers in proper procedures. While Ghana's democracy is vibrant and respect for the rule of law is widespread, Ghana's institutions are still rather new and relatively fragile. Other obstacles to addressing human rights are corruption and some traditional practices which, in a modern context, would constitute abuse. If confirmed, I would work to engage Ghanaian society at all levels, throughout the country. I would remind Ghanaians of their challenges, but I would also remind them of our shared values of human rights and democracy, and consistently offer America's partnership and assistance.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana, I would seek to ensure that the activities of the United States Embassy consistently reflect the objectives of United States foreign policy and the core values of America. Support for human rights has been a cornerstone of our policy and values from the assertion of the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in our Declaration of Independence to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's enunciation of the "Four Freedoms" in 1941 to our current National Security Strategy which states that "People everywhere want to be able to speak freely; choose who will govern them; worship as they please; educate their children—male and female; own property; and enjoy the benefits of their labor. These values of freedom are right and true for every person, in every society—and the duty of protecting these values against their enemies is the common calling of freedom-loving people across the globe and across the ages."

If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that my own actions and statements make clear the importance of human rights promotion inside and outside the embassy. When embassy employees see the ambassador raising human rights issues frequently and assertively, they know that it is a mission priority. Actions usually speak louder than words. If confirmed, I would want to be sure that the embassy's internal policies and actions set a positive example. In particular, I would want the embassy's treatment of its American and Ghanaian employees to reflect the value that Americans attach to diversity, equal opportunity, and the respect and dignity due to all people.

If confirmed, I would encourage and recognize superior performance in human rights activities. Department-wide and embassy awards programs provide a tool for that purpose. I believe that being open about the Department's recognition, via promotion and assignments, of my own efforts on human rights will help encourage members of my staff to work for similar recognition.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. During my 23 years in the Foreign Service, many of my most professionally significant and personally rewarding moments have been linked to the promotion of human rights and democracy.

In Somalia, from 1992 to 1994, I worked with the United States Liaison Office and was attached on several occasions to the United States Marine Corps and the United States Army as a political advisor. In that capacity, I helped create a secure environment for the distribution of food and humanitarian supplies. I also worked to encourage Somali efforts toward reestablishment of government. The distribution of food and humanitarian supplies directly saved thousands of lives from starvation. Sadly, the cost of the failure of Somali leaders to take advantage of the opportuni-

ties provided by international intervention from 1992 to 1994 is starkly evident even today.

Working on Sudan issues from Nairobi from 1997 to 2000 and at the National Security Council from 2003 to 2005, much of my focus was on human rights and democratization. I believe that my work on North-South issues contributed to reaching the North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I worked with USAID and Southern Sudanese officials to reopen the Rumbek Senior Secondary School, at the time the only secondary school in South Sudan. I do not know what the future will hold for South Sudan. In the long term, however, creating educational opportunities for Southern Sudanese children will allow them to participate in their own governance, whatever shape it may take.

Since 2000, much of my time has been dedicated to the issue of HIV/AIDS. In Uganda from 2000 to 2003, I worked with USAID and CDC on HIV/AIDS programming which provided models of success that have been emulated globally. During that period, the United States Embassy in Kampala became what I understand to be the first in the world to establish a formal policy of providing ARV treatment for locally employed staff. Beyond the direct benefit for our staff, we used this program as a model for local employers. We showed them our cost-benefit analysis, demonstrating to them that providing ARVs was a sound financial decision as well as a morally correct decision. At the National Security Council I worked on the early phases of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). With bipartisan support from Congress, this program is well on its way to achieving its goals of supporting treatment for 2 million HIV-infected people, prevention of 7 million new HIV infections, and care for 10 million people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, including orphans and vulnerable children. In South Africa I have worked on the implementation of the world's largest PEPFAR program. We are currently on track to meet our target of achieving 25 percent of global goals.

Question. Ghana has a relatively strong record on human rights. Do you think it can serve as a model for other countries in the region that have struggled on this front?

Answer. Ghana does have a strong record on human rights and I believe that it does serve as a model for other countries in the region. However, we must always remain vigilant to ensure that this and any future Ghanaian administration continues to respect and protect human rights of its citizens. If confirmed, I would advocate continued respect for human rights in Ghana and urge the Ghanaian Government to encourage and to assist countries in the region which face human rights challenges to emulate their many successes.

RESPONSES OF PETER W. BODDE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What, in your view, are the most pressing human rights issues in Malawi? What are the steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in the country? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. While the Government of Malawi generally respects human rights, serious violations still occur in some areas. As indicated in the 2007 Country Report on Human Rights, unlawful killing by security forces, police use of excessive force including torture, occasional mob violence, and harsh and life-threatening prison conditions are problems in Malawi. Arbitrary arrest and detention, including politically motivated arrests have occurred in the past and threaten to undermine the legitimacy of the political system. Government restrictions on freedoms of speech, press, and assembly, and societal violence against women, child abuse, trafficking in persons, restricted worker rights, and forced child labor were also problems.

Over the past 8 months, an ongoing dispute between the ruling party and the opposition has become an increasing concern, as well. This dispute centers around the right of members of parliament to switch political parties during their terms. As a result of this dispute, there have been long periods during which Parliament has not met and Parliament has not been able to conduct any routine business. This matter has been put to the courts and there are ongoing negotiations between the ruling party and the opposition to resolve this dispute, which remains a significant obstacle to the smooth functioning of the democratic system in Malawi. If I am confirmed, and this matter remains unresolved, I will strongly encourage all parties to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.

Furthermore, I will also work with the Government of Malawi and civil society to help address the broad range of human rights issues and support democracy in Malawi:

- Through diplomatic outreach, ensure embassy officers, as well as myself, continue to raise human rights issues with appropriate Malawian Government officials and nongovernmental organizations.
- Through public diplomacy programs, promote discussion among American and Malawian academics, civil society representatives, and opinion leaders on issues such as corruption, good governance, and women's rights.
- With Human Rights and Democracy Fund grants, partner with nongovernmental organizations and civil society to raise awareness and support human rights and democracy activities.

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

Answer. The inability of the Parliament to address any routine business is one of the biggest obstacles to addressing human rights in Malawi at this time. In light of the ongoing dispute between the ruling party and the opposition and upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections in 2009, it is critical that the international community make every effort to support Malawi's democratic institutions and processes. If confirmed, I will continue Ambassador Eastham's efforts to encourage a resolution of the dispute over the right of members of parliament to switch political parties during their terms. I will also continue Embassy Lilongwe's efforts, through diplomatic and public interventions and financial assistance, to support preparations for the upcoming elections and key players in the electoral process including the media, nongovernmental organizations and international and domestic observers who will help ensure the legitimacy of the electoral result.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. The promotion of democracy and human rights has been, and will continue to be, a priority of the United States Embassy in Malawi, if I am confirmed as ambassador. I attach great importance to human rights issues, and if confirmed, I will ensure that all mission staff, no matter their agency affiliation, continue to collaborate with Malawian leaders and civil society organizations to promote democracy and human rights to the greatest extent possible. I will also ensure that employees working on human rights issues under my direction are professionally acknowledged, nominated for awards, and otherwise appropriately rewarded for superior performance.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. I believe it is the personal responsibility of all U.S. diplomats to work to promote human rights, on both a systemic and individual level. While it can be difficult to know the direct impact of our efforts, even simple inquiries when made on behalf of the U.S. Government, can lead to improved treatment of detained individuals, stronger democratic processes, and increased independence for the media. I have made promoting democracy and respect for human rights cornerstones of my career and will continue to advance these objectives in Malawi if I am confirmed.

Supporting free and fair elections is an important element of the democratic process. I have extensive experience as an elections observer from my time in Bulgaria in 1988 to my work on elections in Nepal in 1994–1995. Recently, I led the embassy's efforts during the 2008 elections in Pakistan. Our presence and active engagement in all these elections helped ensure a more dynamic process and greatly increased the likelihood of transparent and credible results.

I also have worked to promote the rights of refugees. While serving in Nepal, I became aware that the then newly-elected Nepalese Government, in an effort to enhance its relationship with China, had changed its longstanding policy of allowing Tibetan refugees to transit Nepal while en route to eventual settlement in India. Thanks in part to my interventions, the government reversed its policy and returned to its longstanding practice of allowing Tibetans to transit Nepal. While in

Nepal, I also worked with refugees and victims of torture from Bhutan, helping ensure they received appropriate medical care and protection.

As Deputy Chief of Mission in Pakistan, I have worked on the full range of human rights issues. For example, during a declared state of emergency, I personally advocated on behalf of political detainees so that they could have access to critical medicines and meet with family members and others during their confinement. I also advocated for their timely release. In addition, I have been a consistent and vocal advocate for press freedom, intervening on behalf of individual journalists and interceding with the Government of Pakistan regarding the issue of press freedom more broadly.

Question. Malawi has one of the higher HIV prevalence rates in the world but has not been a focus country for PEPFAR or leading recipient of United States assistance. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you see your role in efforts to combat HIV/AIDS?

Answer. While not a "focus country," Malawi has received significant United States Government support through PEPFAR and through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. From fiscal year 2004 to 2008, PEPFAR will have provided more than $89 million to support comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care programs in Malawi. These funds are used to leverage Global Fund activities. Since 2002, the Global Fund committed a maximum of $407 million for HIV/AIDS programs in Malawi. The United States Government is the largest contributor to the Global Fund, having provided approximately 30 percent of all resources to date, so that the United States share of Global Fund grants to Malawi is approximately $122 million.

While the United States has made a significant contribution to combating HIV/AIDS in Malawi, much remains to be done, particularly with regard to slowing the spread of new HIV infections and improving the distribution of drugs for treatment across the country. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to maximizing the impact of U.S. Government and other programs and work hard to fight this terrible disease.

RESPONSES OF STEPHEN JAMES NOLAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. While the Government of Botswana generally respects human rights, there are still areas of concern, including lengthy delays in the judicial process; overcrowded prison conditions; some restrictions on press freedom; violence against women; societal discrimination against homosexuals, persons with HIV/AIDS, and the ethnic minority San; and government restrictions on the right to strike. Some international and local nongovernmental organizations have also raised concerns about how the death penalty is administered in Botswana. The government has publicly recognized and sought improvements in several of these areas.

If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Botswana and civil society to help address major human rights issues and support democracy in Botswana. I will raise human rights issues with government officials and use all means of diplomatic outreach to ensure that these issues remain at the forefront of our diplomatic dialog. I will also use the media and public diplomacy programs to promote discussion among American and Botswana academics, civil society representatives, and opinion leaders on human rights issues including respect for marginalized communities, such as the San, if confirmed. Finally, I will encourage the mission to use Human Rights and Democracy Fund grants to support nongovernmental organizations and civil society in Botswana so as to raise awareness of and support for human rights and promote more active democratic debate.

Through these efforts, I hope to accomplish two goals. The first is the continued solidification and advancement of Botswana's democratic systems and processes as they relate to human rights. The second will be the promotion and encouragement of Botswana as a regional and continental leader in this critical area.

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

Answer. As Botswana transitions to middle-income status, it becomes increasingly incumbent on domestic organizations to advocate for respect for human rights and robust democratic debate. Helping local organizations and the government understand how to engage on such issues without relying on high levels of donor support will be one of my key objectives, if I am confirmed. Following the precedent set by Ambassador Canavan and our current team in Gaborone, I will seek to use modest grants, public diplomacy, and diplomatic outreach to increase the capacity of local organizations so that they are less reliant on international support and able to advocate effectively through the media and the domestic political systems on issues which they deem important to Botswana's continued development as a democratic country that fully recognizes the rights of all its citizens.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. The promotion of democracy and human rights remains a high priority U.S. goal to which I attach great importance. If confirmed, I will ensure that all mission staff—State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Defense (DOD), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other U.S. agencies active at post—continue to collaborate with Botswana leaders and civil society organizations to promote democracy and human rights to the greatest extent possible. I will also ensure that employees working on human rights issues under my direction are professionally acknowledged, nominated for awards, and otherwise appropriately rewarded for superior performance.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have always strongly believed that human rights begin at home, and that our embassies should be seen as leaders and role models in terms of employment benefits and labor practices for locally engaged staff (LES). As Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs, I have made the fair and equitable treatment of LES at our 50 posts a top priority. Despite tight operational budgets, we have approved salary increases each year, improved health coverage, and enhanced retirement plans for LES employees. Another priority area has been to support training programs that empower our LES personnel, helping them reach their full potential and enhance their operational effectiveness. I have also helped ensure that the Bureau of African Affairs has strong programs in place at our posts to prevent all forms of discrimination.

During my assignment as Consul General in Cape Town, South Africa, I oversaw an active and effective public affairs program focused on advancing the United States Government's public diplomacy goals across the spectrum of human rights issues. We sponsored events on awareness and prevention of violence against women, child abuse, HIV/AIDS stigma, and international crime, with an emphasis on trafficking in people. In the battle for public opinion, we used innovative as well as tried-and-true means to explain United States policies to South African audiences. We sent members of the historically disadvantaged black community to the United States on International Visitor grants, arranged for speakers, and linked local audiences with top U.S. experts via digital video conferencing (DVC) and satellite TV programs, helping to shape opinion by exposing people to points of view they would not have heard otherwise. We also aligned our Self-Help Program funds to support these objectives, with particular focus on projects supporting economic empowerment of women and the historically disadvantaged black community.

In terms of promoting democracy, our program to reach out to Cape Town's Muslim community was recognized as one of the most active and successful of its kind in Africa. The program included a multipart DVC series on "Islam in America," featuring prominent American Muslims and exposing South African Muslim journalists and opinion leaders to facets of United States life that were little known to them. The participants came away impressed with the breadth of Muslim life in the United States, and one participant noted that immigrant American Muslims seemed to have found "far greater" freedom of religion than in their countries of origin. We also provided training for key support staff of the South African parliament, exposing them to the American system of government and our legislative process.

Question. What accounts for Botswana's reputation as one of Africa's most democratic and stable countries? Are there any potential threats to this stability or to civil rights and liberties in the country? Can Botswana's democracy serve as a model

for countries in the region that have struggled to create or maintain democratic traditions or is it a product of circumstances that are not likely to be replicated elsewhere?

Answer. Botswana's tradition of consensus building, starting at the village level, has been an important element of the country's stability and success. Participatory pluralism permeates Botswana's politics, and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has ably ruled since independence in 1966. It is notable, however, that many local observers say that the longer one party continues to govern the greater the risk of governmental ossification, so often seen in other countries with long-term single party rule. As Botswana prepares for general elections in October 2009, continued support for the media and civil society will be vital to help ensure more Botswana feel like they have a genuine stake in their own polity and economic future, so as to enhance democratic systems and security, both domestically and regionally.

The uncertain situation in Zimbabwe posses a challenge to stability throughout southern Africa, and particularly to neighboring states such as Botswana. The Government of Botswana, through the Southern African Development Community (SADC), has encouraged actively a resolution of the Zimbabwean crisis in a manner that fully reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people. If I am confirmed, I will consider it my responsibility, both as Ambassador to Botswana and as Secretary Rice's Representative to SADC, to advocate aggressively for a full resolution of this crisis. The Mugabe regime and its security forces must stop the violence and intimidation against the Movement for Democratic Change and its supporters and recognize that the people of Zimbabwe voted for change and their will must be respected.

Finally, on the question of Botswana's role as a model for other countries in Africa, yes, I do believe Botswana can serve as a model and that other nations have lessons to learn from Botswana's impressive success. One of the most critical lessons one can draw from Botswana is the tremendous positive impact of having low levels of corruption. Botswana has been able to make maximum use of its diamond wealth in large part because corruption has not sabotaged its mining industry or warped its government. Thanks to the government's vigilant stand against corruption, Botswana has successfully provided critical health and education services to its populace and is in a strong position to attract foreign investment to help diversify and sustain the country's economic growth. Respect for human rights and dynamic political debate are also keys to Botswana's political stability and strength. While all democracies are a work in progress, Botswana has accomplished much and is rightly recognized as a model by many of its neighbors.

RESPONSE OF STEPHEN JAMES NOLAN TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. Some human rights groups remain concerned about periodic reports of secret executions taking place in Botswana. What is the United States doing to investigate these reports?

Answer. The Government of Botswana generally respects human rights and the legal system allows for a full trial and appeals process. Defendants in capital cases who cannot afford legal representation are provided legal counsel by the state. Some international and local nongovernmental organizations, however, have raised concerns about how the death penalty is administered in Botswana.

In a June 2007 report entitled "The Death Penalty in Botswana: Hasty and Secretive Hangings," the International Federation for Human Rights and DITSHWANELO-The Botswana Center for Human Rights (BCHR) questioned several elements of capital punishment administration including the quality of public council provided to defendants in death penalty cases and the lack of notice to families, attorneys, and advocacy groups when some sentences were carried out. The United States noted the concerns of BCHR in the 2003 Country Report on Human Rights Practices saying, "During the year, the Botswana Center for Human Rights (BCHR) protested the executions of four convicted murderers, whose families and attorneys had not received prior notice of the executions, and criticized the secrecy surrounding executions."

I take the concerns raised in the June 2007 BCHR report very seriously. Our embassy in Gaborone reports that while elements of the administration of capital punishment in Botswana could be improved, there is no clear evidence of a denial of due process or judicial review in the cases which have been brought to our attention. Should I be confirmed, I will continue United States efforts to work with the Government of Botswana, local and international nongovernmental organizations, and the media to promote respect for human rights and civil liberties in Botswana and throughout the region.

RESPONSE OF MARCIA STEPHENS BERNICAT TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. Senegal has been widely praised by Western and African civil society organizations alike for making strides toward good governance, rule of law, and adherence to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other human rights instruments. This trend makes the recent spate of arrests of and violence against gay men in Senegal all the more surprising and worrisome. If confirmed as United States Ambassador to Senegal, would you address these sorts of issues as human rights concerns? Do you believe the United States should play a role—perhaps by using HIV and Democracy and Governance funding—in decreasing the stigma against Senegal's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community and promoting a broader understanding of human rights? How?

Answer. The arrest of two gay men as a result of the publishing of photos of their marriage in a local magazine and the ensuing street demonstrations against homosexuals underscore widespread concerns about the state of human rights in Senegal. If confirmed, I would address these incidents as human rights issues in concert with local human rights NGOs such as Raddho (African Rally for Human Rights), the local chapter of Amnesty International, the National Human Rights Organization (ONDH), and the International Federation for Human Rights (FDIH).

I believe our role should consist of the continued use of embassy-sponsored programs and other educational tools to underline the universality of human rights, as defined in the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights and other key international covenants. In addition, there should be a U.S. role in decreasing this stigma through support for the activities of indigenous institutions and groups. All of the previously mentioned local NGOs played a role in the release of the two men who were arrested, and all of these groups have the potential to have an impact on Senegal's tolerance for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

Senegal's traditionally tolerant society is changing as its traditional mores confront western ones and is at a crossroads in accepting homosexuality in its society. Islamic traditionalists see homosexuality as contrary to the precepts of their religion. However, Senegal is a moderate country with a constitution that guarantees individual freedom. There are extremists who would like to see homosexuality treated as a criminal offense subject to severe sentencing and are trying to encourage Islamic leaders to lead the charge. Senegal's influential Sufi brotherhoods have so far elected not to press for criminalization of homosexuality. The manner in which the United States approaches the subject, and in which we engage and cooperate with local religious institutions, will require sustained effort as well as sensitivity to evolving local culture.

RESPONSE OF DONALD GENE TEITELBAUM TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. The State Department's most recent human rights reports note that in Ghana, "the law criminalizes homosexuality, and lesbians and gays faced widespread discrimination, as well as police harassment and extortion attempts." Such governmental abuse and discrimination have been described in reports by the U.S. Government and numerous United States and international human rights organizations for years, and yet the legal and societal issues remain unaddressed. Would you, if confirmed as United States Ambassador, be willing to meet with Ghanaian Government officials as well as some of the leaders of the LGBT human rights community in Ghana to discuss these serious findings?

Answer. If confirmed as United States Ambassador, I would meet with Ghanaian Government officials as well as some of the leaders of the LGBT human rights community in Ghana to discuss the findings in reports by the United States Government and by numerous United States and international human rights organizations. I believe it is important for U.S. Embassies to seek and maintain a broad range of contacts. I also believe that the words and actions of U.S. Embassies must reflect the core values of America, particularly the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

RESPONSES OF MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations as well as 07 State 78240, dated June, 6, 2007—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 STATE 258893 and 07 STATE 78240—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I fully understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies." Peace Corps' presence in a host country must be initiated by the host government, and Peace Corps programs are contingent upon support for and articulated need of both the host government and local communities in which volunteers serve. A close working relationship between Peace Corps and the host government is essential to Peace Corps' ability to function, and this necessity renders its relationship with the mission fundamentally different from those of other U.S. Government agencies.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. Per Secretary Rice's requests in 3.B of the cable, I pledge to exercise my chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies." Autonomy and flexibility are essential to the Peace Corps' ability to work effectively at the grassroots level, and the U.S. mission under my leadership, if confirmed, will not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the Peace Corps.

RESPONSES OF PETER W. BODDE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. I have read 04 STATE 258893, as well as STATE 78240 dated June 6, 2007, which both concern relations between Peace Corps and the U.S. Department of State.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 STATE 258893 and 07 STATE 78240.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. Yes, I fully understand that Peace Corps activities must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy. I very much value the important role Peace Corps' volunteers play in helping people around the world better understand and appreciate the United States.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to exercise my chief of mission authorities to provide Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSES OF GILLIAN ARLETTE MILOVANOVIC TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations as well as 07 State 78240, dated June, 6, 2007—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. I fully understand and agree to abide by the principles in this cable that guide the Department's dealings with the Peace Corps.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I fully understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies."

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. Yes. I pledge to do so.

RESPONSES OF HON. DONALD E. BOOTH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. I have read 04 STATE 258893, as well as 07 STATE 78240 dated June 6, 2007, which both concern relations between Peace Corps and the U.S. Department of State.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 STATE 258893 and 07 STATE 78240.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I understand and accept that the Peace Corps can only achieve the purposes for which it was founded if it remains substantially independent from the day-to-day conduct of our foreign policy.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to exercise my chief of mission authorities to provide Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

RESPONSES OF DONALD GENE TEITELBAUM TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. I have read 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations as well as 07 State 78240, dated June 6, 2007—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies."

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise my chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies."

RESPONSES OF MARIANNE MATUZIC MYLES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read that cable on Peace Corps-State relations as well as the later one, 07 STATE 78240, dated June 6, 2007.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and agree to abide by the principles in this cable, which guide the Department's dealings with the Peace Corps.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. Yes. I understand and accept this.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise our chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. Yes, I pledge to do so.

RESPONSES OF PATRICIA MCMAHON HAWKINS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. I have read 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations as well as 07 State 78240, dated June 6, 2007—Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies."

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise my chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies."

RESPONSES OF STEPHEN JAMES NOLAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. I have read 04 STATE 258893, as well as STATE 78240 dated June 6, 2007, which both concern relations between Peace Corps and the U.S. Department of State.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 STATE 258893 and 07 STATE 78240.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. Yes, I fully understand that Peace Corps activities must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy. I also understand that the mission of Peace Corps is not comparable to those of other government agencies.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to exercise my chief of mission authorities to provide Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2008

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

Ayalde, Liliana, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay
Boswell, Eric J., to be Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security
DiCarlo, Rosemary Anne, to be Alternate U.S. Representative to the Sessions of the General Assembly and the Alternate U.S. Representative for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations
Jones, John Melvin, to be Ambassador to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana

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The committee met at 9:36 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bill Nelson, presiding.

Present: Senators Nelson and Corker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator NELSON. Good morning. This hearing on the Committee on Foreign Relations is going to consider the nomination of four individuals for key leadership positions in the administration.

The chairman and Senator Corker are going to forego making opening statements.

Senator NELSON. And the same with each of you. Instead of you sitting there and reading us a statement, your written statements will be entered in the record. What we will do is go straight on to the questions.

[The prepared statements of Mr. Jones, Ms. DiCarlo, Mr. Boswell, and Ms. Ayalde are located at the end of this hearing transcript.]

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker?

Senator CORKER. They might want to introduce their families.

Senator NELSON. Yes, by all means.

I understand you all have your families here. So if you will, Mr. Jones, if you would introduce your family.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today is my wife Aaronia; our daughter Christie Jones-Aden; our son- in-law, Keenan Aden; and a close family friend, Dr. Adam Muhijea who is at the American Defense College, a representative from Honduras.

Senator NELSON. Welcome.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, I understand from the son-in-law that he is a great father-in-law. So that alone ought to be a good endorsement.

Senator NELSON. That is pretty good.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, sir.

Senator NELSON. A pretty good recommendation.

Mrs. DiCarlo?

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you. My family is unable to attend today. My husband, Tom Graham, is in Moscow on business, and my 87-year-old mother is unable to travel, but they are with me in spirit. Thank you.

Senator NELSON. That is great.

Mr. Boswell?

Mr. BOSWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy to introduce my wife, Nancy Boswell, who is behind me in the crowd. Thank you.

Senator NELSON. Good. Welcome, Ms. Boswell.

Ms. Ayalde?

STATEMENT OF LILIANA AYALDE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY

Ms. AYALDE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to acknowledge the presence of my parents, Jaime and Mercedes Ayalde; my sister Gloria; and my nieces, Karina, Alexa, and Bianca. My immediate family is back in Colombia finishing school actually. So they were not able to be here.

Senator NELSON. I see. What does your family in Colombia think about you going to Paraguay?

Ms. AYALDE. They are excited.

Senator NELSON. Well, we are glad to have you all.

Just since we have been talking, why do I not start with you, Mrs. Ayalde?

The recent presidential election in Paraguay—it is always a constant struggle for some democratic reforms in that part of the world and the democratic political development. What do you think is going to be the most significant challenge that is facing the president-elect, Lugo?

Ms. AYALDE. Well, first of all, it is a historic moment for Paraguay after 61 years of rule by the Colorado Party. This is a unique opportunity, I think, for Paraguayans, as well as for us in our bilateral relation.

He has indicated that he has prioritized poverty reduction and eradication of corruption as his two primary objectives of his administration. Those are huge challenges. The fact that he has been elected based on a coalition from the opposition also will make it a challenge in terms of the management.

Senator NELSON. You know, they joke down in Paraguay quite humorously with a spark in their eye that it is part of their genetic makeup—some of the corruption that goes on. So you are going to have a challenge. Of course, that is not just indicative of Paraguay, but many other places across the globe.

What do you think about the new president facing that kind of endemic corruption that has gone on in that part of the world?

Ms. AYALDE. Well, it is a challenge, but the fact that he has prioritized it as one of his administration's main objectives is important. There is some progress that has been made based on some of the initiatives that in fact we have supported. The Millennium Challenge Threshold Program, for instance, has focused precisely on corruption issues, and in their report card, there has been some definite progress. Now, the problem is huge, but the pattern is positive, and I think that that is what we need to look for is the continued progress along that front.

Senator NELSON. What do you think is going to be the new president's relationship with Hugo Chavez?

Ms. AYALDE. At this point, his public statements have been that he would like to maintain good working relations with all his neighbors. He has indicated that he—well, he has accepted invitations to the countries which have invited him. He has indicated to us, I understand, that he would like to come to the United States. He has sent a delegation of five designated ministers up to the United States for a visit. In fact, they are here right now, I understand. So at this point, it is a speculation. I would prefer not to get into that, but the statements that he has publicly made indicate that he would like to be friends with everyone.

Senator NELSON. Give me some of your thoughts about the tri-border area and the potential for terrorist activity in the region.

Ms. AYALDE. It is public knowledge that the tri-border area is a region that lacks law enforcement, a tremendous amount of informality, problems with trafficking of drugs and so forth. Nevertheless, I think that it is an area that the Paraguayan Government so far has tried to focus with some specific programs, some of which the U.S. Government has supported, and we need to focus on that area to try to address some of the issues of the informality and the high level of corruption, of course. So it is a priority, and if confirmed, I certainly will make that a priority of my management team.

Senator NELSON. Have you ever been to Tres Esquinas?

Ms. AYALDE. In Colombia?

Senator NELSON. No, Tres Esquinas in the tri-border area in Paraguay.

Ms. AYALDE. No, have not, sir.

Senator NELSON. Well, it is quite a place. It will be quite interesting for you as you look into that, as well as counternarcotics.

How would you describe our counternarcotics effort with Paraguay?

Ms. AYALDE. As I understand it, we have had very solid, strong collaboration on both the counternarcotics and counterterrorism fronts. It is a good collaboration, and there is no reason to believe at this point that that will not continue under the new administration. But we have to see.

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker?

Senator CORKER. Well, I want to welcome all of you and thank you for your public service. I know we are in some cases at the end of an administration and some important tasks are being taken on. But thank you all for your commitment and for what you are willing to do for our country.

I guess I would like to ask our two ambassadorial nominees here that you, obviously, have been trying to gain an understanding of what you are going to be dealing with going to each of the countries that you are going to. I know that, Ms. Ayalde, I met you in Colombia recently, and I know you have learned a great deal there about counterterrorism. Uribe has been just outstanding in that regard.

But I wonder if each of you could just outline, knowing what you know today, and I know once you get to where you are going, you will know even more. But what is it you think you want to address on the front end going to each of the two countries you are going in? What is sort of your primary objective, if you will, your primary agenda as you move into these two countries? Mr. Jones?

STATEMENT OF JOHN MELVIN JONES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

Mr. JONES. Senator, my primary objective, of course, is to try to work with the Government of Guyana to protect American interest there, also promote democracy and human rights. We understand that there are some small problems, but if confirmed, I will work closely with the Government of Guyana to address these issues. We have some instances where problems have developed, particularly with the growth of things like HIV/AIDS, trafficking, for example, narco activities. These are things that I intend to work, again, closely with the Government of Guyana, to address. That I think will be my main aim.

Strengthening the democratic infrastructure, working towards helping them get elections, local elections. The last election was in 1994. They had municipal elections in 2006 that were relatively safe. And so I am going to try to work with them, extend a hand of friendship and cooperation, and hopefully be able to help them strengthen those institutions that they need help on right now.

Senator CORKER. Have you spent much time looking at our PEPFAR efforts there, and do you have any thoughts at present as to how we might enhance our activities there? Or do you have any assessment of how that is going at present?

Mr. JONES. Our reports are that the PEPFAR program is a very successful program, sir. It is a major effort on the part of our Government, and the Government of Guyana has cooperated fully with us. As you know, it is a program that has had over $100 million since 2004 addressing this whole issue of HIV/AIDS. All of our agencies, the Peace Corps, USAID, Center for Disease Control, Department of Defense, are all working on small projects and efforts towards making this a successful program. Again, our reports are that the Government of Guyana has accepted this. It is a major effort on their part, and it is a major effort on our part and represents a large amount of the good will that we want to show the Guyanese people.

Senator CORKER. Thank you.

Yes, ma'am?

Ms. AYALDE. Yes, Mr. Senator. I, if confirmed, intend to focus on governance issues, as well as poverty reduction. I think those two areas will do a lot to addressing some of the problems in Paraguay as related to terrorism and narcotics trafficking. If you do not have

a strong presence of the state, an ability of the state to deliver its services in a transparent way, then you can invite illegal business of all sorts.

So our bilateral agenda should continue to focus on intellectual property rights protection, trafficking in persons, money laundering, and strengthening the different institutions of the state that will avoid becoming at high risk of increasing the corruption and the informality in the country, as well as addressing some of the roots of poverty which, if you look around the region and there is an increase of social discontent, that puts more pressure on the state and that can drive a country into social turmoil which will complicate things. So I think those two pillars of work would be what I would prioritize, if confirmed.

Senator CORKER. Both of you are going to challenging countries, and again, we are very fortunate to have people of your qualifications going there. And I thank you again for being willing to do so.

Mr. Boswell, we all have been to Iraq a number of times and Afghanistan, and I know one of your duties is going to be to look at the security contractors we are dealing with. You know, you land in Baghdad and Blackwater basically is the escort service, if you will. It takes you throughout the country.

I wonder if you have any editorial comments you want to make about some of the recent events there and just generally anything you think we ought to be doing differently as it relates to our security contractors in general, not necessarily that particular company itself.

STATEMENT OF ERIC J. BOSWELL, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DIPLOMATIC SECURITY

Mr. BOSWELL. Thank you for the question, Senator. I was in Baghdad myself examining this exact issue last fall as part of the Secretary's panel examining protective security operations in Iraq in the wake of the tragedy at Nisoor Square. So we looked at the issue you are talking about in depth, the appropriateness of using contractors, how the contractors were managed, what the oversight was of the contractors, and we made a number of recommendations for improvement and particularly in the area of oversight and training. I am happy to say that the Department has taken those recommendations seriously, that it is complying with all of them. Our recommendations are a matter of public record, and we would be happy to provide them to you, sir.

Senator CORKER. Basically we have operations in 25 U.S. cities that you also oversee, and I was wondering if you might expand a little bit on what those particular efforts are about and the magnitude of those.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security at the State Department has two primary missions. One is the protection of life, property, and information overseas. And the second is it is a very active participant in the global war on terrorism. And the activities of the field offices to which you refer are largely in the second category. They are offices that examine and review cases of passport fraud, visa fraud, all of which are very important elements in securing our borders and overall in identifying terrorists in the global war on terror. That is what they do.

Of course, those offices are also a source of manpower to assist in overseas surge requirements occasionally, and in particular, every year they provide a large number of agents to New York during the UN General Assembly to assist in protection of dignitaries.

Senator CORKER. And what is the order of magnitude right now of visa fraud? If you were going to say to us how much of an issue that is today in our country, give us a little bit of an editorial opinion there, if you would.

Mr. BOSWELL. I could not tell you exactly the numbers, Senator, but I can tell you that it is increasing and it is of increasing concern. That is why the Department dedicates as much effort as it does to that.

Senator CORKER. I know this is not in your area. I know you deal with the area of fraud itself as it relates to visas, but as we just look at general immigration issues in our country, the fact that at many of the motor crossings we check to see if someone has a visa, but we do not record that, and we have, I guess, a huge issue of not ever knowing when people overstay. We have no mechanism in place to be able to do that. And I know that is not in your particular area, but I wonder if you have any comments in regards to that.

Mr. BOSWELL. It is not in my area, Senator, so I will be careful in what I say. But I know that that is a problem, particularly the issue of recording when somebody leaves, and I know that there are significant efforts undertaken by ICE in that regard. But I really do not have anything further to add to that.

Senator CORKER. In the defense authorization bill, it is my understanding—I am just going to read some language—that there is some language that says, "Private security contractors are not authorized to reform inherently government functions in an area of combat operations." If this particular clause were to survive, if you will, in this legislation, what impact would that have on carrying out the private security operations that you would be charged with carrying out?

Mr. BOSWELL. Senator, I am aware of that language, and I am rather troubled by it, I must tell you. The language, as I understand it, would prohibit contractors from performing an inherently governmental function such as use of deadly force in high-risk, high-threat, volatile areas. That may have the effect of preventing the use of contractors for protective security as we use them now in Iraq and Afghanistan. I hope that is not the intention. The effect would be rather severe on our—that is, the State Department's—operations, embassy operations in both countries and would have a rather severe effect on the goals and objectives—the ability of the United States to achieve its goals and objectives.

So I hope that some language or way can be found to address the concerns of the Congress but, at the same time, not to inhibit the use of contractors in protecting our personnel in both war zones.

Senator CORKER. And my guess is that the addition of that language possibly was a signal of someone who feels that maybe we are over-utilizing, if you will, contractors in this area. I wonder if you can give any editorial comments about that, meaning that our reliance today on private contractors, obviously, in Iraq and in other areas, is very, very large at this moment. Are we in proper

balance there? Have we had an over-reliance? Should some of these jobs be really done by Federal employees directly? Any comments there.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir. The panel in which participated certainly looked at exactly that issue in Iraq last fall. I remember talking to Ambassador Crocker in his office and asking him what he thought, and I think I can speak a little bit out of school. He said, I would like to have 700 diplomatic security agents performing this function, but I recognize that that is a practical, close to impossibility. I feel the same way and that was the conclusion of our panel.

There are something on the order of 1,500 security contractors operating in Iraq. There are about 1,500 diplomatic security employees in the world performing a global function. It is simply not possible to ramp up sufficiently to provide the kind of protection that we need for our people exclusively with diplomatic security personnel.

Having said that, I am extremely concerned that there be proper oversight of the contractor personnel in Iraq and elsewhere, and the panel made a number of recommendations to improve the oversight. One of those recommendations was that diplomatic security special agents be given operational control of every motorcade movement and every mission in Iraq, and it is my understanding that the staff of the regional security office has been doubled in response to that recommendation and that every motorcade now has a trained Government employee, diplomatic security officer, in command of that motorcade.

Senator CORKER. Well, thank you for those responses, and I am sure that because of the sensitivity of that issue, there will be a lot of folks talking with you about that as it moves along. But thanks for your responses.

And, Senator Nelson, since I am on a roll, I am just going to finish up here with Ms. DiCarlo, if I could.

Senator NELSON. Sure. Take your time.

Senator CORKER. Ms. DiCarlo, Senator Nelson and I sit at numbers of hearings here talking about the issues of Darfur and Zimbabwe and the things that are occurring there. Obviously, you are going to have a key role. A lot of times our staffs, as you know, here direct us and guide us in major ways. I know that you are going to be very much involved in that as it relates to the Security Council when this nomination process is over.

It is pretty frustrating to hear reports about the collective efforts that are taking place in Darfur. It gives you not a lot of faith sometimes in the UN's ability and the ability of collectively countries together to deal with that kind of issue. I just wonder if you have any thoughts going into this position as to how we might strengthen our efforts in Darfur, actually create concrete results there instead of this continual discussion of what ought to happen but is not happening.

STATEMENT OF ROSEMARY ANNE DiCARLO, NOMINEE TO BE THE ALTERNATE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ALTERNATE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FOR SPECIAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you, Senator.

We are also very disappointed that we have not been able to mobilize the kind of troops and support needed for Darfur, but we are working very hard at it. And I can assure you that, if confirmed, this will be a top priority on my agenda.

Ambassador Williamson, the U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan, was in New York yesterday. Ambassador Williamson, along with his Canadian counterpart, has organized a group called the Friends of UNAMID. The objective of this group is to obtain the kinds of commitments that we will need to have full deployment of that peacekeeping operation by early 2009.

We have been hampered in a number of ways, and the UN certainly has been as well. First of all, the Government of Sudan has put a number of obstructions, refusing to accept troops from certain countries. They preferred a truly African force. They have also not granted visas on time, not granted access to land or water needed. That is one aspect.

We also would like to see greater flexibility and creativity on the part of the United Nations. We are now working with a number of countries who have offered to participate. Their infantrymen would increase the force by another 5,000, but they do need training, they need equipment. We are still seeking the kinds of equipment support and are in fairly detailed discussions with a few countries on that. It is a very high priority and something that we will devote our attention to.

Regarding the political process, we would hope that the Secretary-General would continue to use his good offices to talk to the parties, to the Government of Sudan. His Special Envoy for Darfur, Mr. Eliasson, and of course, Ambassador Williamson will continue his efforts.

Senator CORKER. In Zimbabwe where we have a situation more leaders, in essence, have been defeated, and now we are having another election for some odd reason. And he has basically vowed that there will not be a transition to someone who does not look at the government there the same way that he does, which obviously the opposition, who is the person running against him, does not.

What should the United Nations—what is our role in a situation like that, and what should and could be done?

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you. We have been trying for several weeks now to get Zimbabwe on the Security Council agenda. Secretary Rice will be in New York tomorrow.

Senator CORKER. By the way, when you saying "trying," explain to us what difficulties there are in getting something like that that is pretty important on an agenda.

Ms. DICARLO. First of all, to get an issue on the Security Council agenda, one needs to have the consensus of Security Council members. There are a few countries on the council who believe that

Zimbabwe is an internal problem and not a threat to international peace and security. We, obviously, disagree. A number of us disagree. We have been working to get to bring this to a vote. We need nine votes to get it on the agenda. We think we are very close.

Secretary Rice will be in New York tomorrow. We are the President of the Security Council this month. She will be co-hosting a session with the foreign minister of Burkina Faso—he is also on the council—on Zimbabwe. Invitees will be member states, members of the Security Council. They will raise this issue, raise the visibility of this issue.

The United Nations has sent an envoy to speak to President Mugabe to talk about elections, election support, the need for fair and free elections. The UN will be using a trust fund and the United States is contributing to it for election monitors. The monitors will come from the African Union and the Southern African Development Community. The Government of Zimbabwe has not allowed official monitors coming from Europe or the United States.

But we agree this is an issue that needs to be resolved. First of all, fair and free elections but much more. We read this morning that President Mugabe is now allowing NGO's working in Zimbabwe to deliver aid, needed food and supplies, to citizens, but we have a serious problem and one that does need international attention.

Senator CORKER. My understanding is most of that aid is going to people who support him and not to those who do not. I wonder if you have any comments in that regard.

Ms. DICARLO. Well, we do know that there were some shipments that were confiscated and went to supporters, but still, there are NGO's working there who are getting assistance to the right people.

Senator CORKER. Senator Nelson, thanks for indulging me. I will turn it back over to your great leadership here as chairman.

Senator NELSON. Well, thank you, Senator. I will just pick up where you left off.

What do you think in your position at the UN you can do to try to get the peacekeepers into the Sudan?

Ms. DICARLO. I think, first of all, we will need to get the kind of force that is appropriate for Sudan, and that is what we are working on now. We will then need to have very serious discussions with the Government of Sudan and keeping the pressure on the need for those peacekeepers to be there. We have seen attacks on humanitarian convoys, situations that make it all the more difficult to deliver the kinds of needed assistance to the people. Without those peacekeepers on the ground, we are not going to be able to help those who are in camps, those who are displaced, and the population.

Senator NELSON. Well, how do we, the United States, in the forum of the United Nations, to which you would be going, bring about the world pressure on the Sudanese Government to allow the peacekeepers to come and stay?

Ms. DICARLO. We have tried with sanctions. Our sanctions, as you know, United Nations sanctions, are modest, but our bilateral sanctions are very major. And we are always looking for ways to increase the pressure on Sudan bilaterally. We need, however, to

look at more ways that we can work through the UN—we agree with you—but also with the Europeans in pressuring the government.

We have seen some movement on the part of China in recent weeks. The Chinese have now named an envoy to Sudan. The Chinese are on the ground with a contingent of about 300 engineers building the necessary infrastructure so that we can actually deploy the troops. We need to encourage China and others that have more influence on Sudan to do more.

Senator NELSON. Speaking of China, what can we do to get the UN to put pressure on China to stop the arms sales to Sudan?

Ms. DICARLO. Well, we have raised this a number of times. We have certainly raised it bilaterally. We have raised it within the UN context. The difficulty, obviously, China as a veto-bearing member of the Security Council—we have great difficulty in having any kind of formal UN action.

Senator NELSON. Well, do we need to press for an embargo? Do we need to put sanctions? Do we need to encourage the UN to put sanctions on China to stop the flow of arms? What would you suggest?

Ms. DICARLO. I would say that the most effective means we have is working with our colleagues in Europe and with like-minded countries in putting the pressure on China. It is extremely for us to achieve something in the council, again where they are a permanent member.

Senator NELSON. Do you think this is a particular time that China might be sensitive because of the world attention to them because of the Olympics?

Ms. DICARLO. Indeed.

Senator NELSON. Then what is the kind of world pressure that we can put on that you said working through Europe?

Ms. DICARLO. I think the kinds of things that we have been doing and intensifying them, which is high level discussions with them, various points that are made, obviously everything that we are working on with China in a range of areas. We have to make very, very clear that while they may be a good partner in some areas, we need to have them as a good partner in particular in Sudan.

Senator NELSON. What about the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council. The U.S. now holds that. What do you think we can do there to utilize that position?

Ms. DICARLO. We have made two issues the highlight of our council presidency. One is Africa. As I said, we are trying very hard to get Zimbabwe on the agenda. Sudan is another case. We have had a number of meetings. Ambassador Williamson was there yesterday. And we will continue to work the Sudan issue throughout the month.

The other issue that we had as a priority is a thematic issue and that is women, peace, and security because violence against women in conflict is high and needs much more attention from the international community.

Obviously, when we discuss Sudan, we make very clear our concerns about arms flowing into Sudan. We make very clear our concerns about the government's obstructionism and deployment.

Senator NELSON. Do you intend on having any direct conversations privately with the delegation of China?

Ms. DICARLO. If confirmed, I certainly do. I know that Ambassador Khalilzad does now routinely.

Senator NELSON. How about with the Government of the Sudan?

Ms. DICARLO. We have continued discussions with the Government of the Sudan. I, if confirmed, would continue those discussions, and as I said, Ambassador Williamson has been very active in this area.

Senator NELSON. What do you think we ought to do to get tougher sanctions on Iran?

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you, sir.

Iran is an issue that, obviously, will be a priority in the Security Council in the coming months. We have now three sanctions regimes on Iran, three resolutions calling for sanctions. We need to, first, make sure that these resolutions are implemented. There are a number of countries that have already reported on implementation. There are countries that have asked us for help, asked the UN for help in implementing these provisions. Smaller countries in particular have great difficulty in doing so, and we need to ensure that either the United Nations or some of the countries like us and the Europeans are able to help them do so.

We also need to work bilaterally on our own—we do work on our sanctions, but with the Europeans who are moving in the right direction in increased sanctions on Iran.

When the Security Council adopted the last resolution, 1803, the council made clear that if Iran did not comply with the demands of council resolutions and IAEA recommendations, that the council would consider further action.

Senator NELSON. Do you have the go-ahead from the administration to discuss these matters privately with the Iranian delegation at the United Nations?

Ms. DICARLO. My job is to work within the Security Council. I am not going to be dealing directly on this issue.

Senator NELSON. Does Ambassador Khalilzad have that authority?

Ms. DICARLO. I would have to get back to you on that. I do not know.

Senator NELSON. Well, I sure hope the answer to that is yes. We have a missing FBI agent in Iran, and I have talked directly to the Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations about trying to find this guy for a widow—let us hope it is not a widow—a wife and seven children that are left behind in my State. I would certainly hope that we have the ability to have conversations with the delegates to the United Nations from other countries like that. But you do not know the answer to that?

Ms. DICARLO. You asked whether he was working with them on sanctions issues and other issues. I do not know. Again, I would have to get back to you on it.

I can tell you that, indeed, when we work in a multilateral forum, we work with countries, even countries we do not have relations with, on issues that are before the United Nations.

Senator NELSON. Tell us about the UN peacekeeping effort in Haiti.

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you, Senator.

A very important mission and a mission that we believe has had some success. We were very pleased to see what MINUSTAH has been able to do in the area of elections. The mission is working with the police, helping to develop a police force, making progress there. The mission will also be working on border and maritime security, which we think is an important issue, obviously helping the Haitian police. The Haitian police will be setting up a coast guard, but indeed, the support of the international community is needed there. Patrolling is needed there also by the UN.

Haiti is a work in progress. There is a lot more to be done, but we can say that the UN mission there has certainly made some strides in recent years.

Senator NELSON. Mr. Jones, Guyana has been increasingly a transshipment point for narcotics that are coming to the U.S. and Europe. Why do you not tell us about the U.S. efforts to combat that trend?

Mr. JONES. Yes, Mr. Chairman. We had the reports that Guyana is, in fact, a transshipment point for drugs, as well as illegal immigrants. We have worked closely and will continue to work closely with the Government of Guyana. There are several programs in place right now with training of police and so forth that will continue hopefully if we have that opportunity. And we hope to be able to strengthen both the police infrastructure to weed out corrupt elements and to see that the Guyanese take seriously this whole idea that they need to be securing internally.

As you know, there is a huge interior that is not controlled. There are borders with Venezuela, Brazil, and Suriname. And it is very difficult with the size of their current force to get control over this area. We hope to be able to work with them to strengthen both their police training and that area that requires a lot more policing and control.

Senator NELSON. Tell us about those programs working with the police.

Mr. JONES. These are basic training programs. One of them we are looking forward to implementing is the reestablishment of a Drug Enforcement Administration office in Guyana. This is something that President Jagdeo has asked for and that the leaders of DEA here in Washington have agreed on. I will try to implement that once I get on the ground, if confirmed.

The other is to have our military group bring in trainers. We had approaches from SOUTHCOM and we are looking at trying to implement civil affairs training for those policemen and for the Guyana defense forces hopefully, again, in an effort to strengthen that area of what they actually need to have done.

There is another side and that is to take a look at this whole concept of preventing the use of fraudulent documents, and a lot of the transshipment is done by using these documents. We hope to be able to use our Millennium Challenge Account to strengthen business registration and so forth to have a better way of controlling and accounting for business receipts and so forth. And that includes travel documents.

Senator NELSON. Now, with the rise in crime, when you are helping out their law enforcement about drugs, certainly help them

with the vigilante death squads that they have had. Do you want to comment about that?

Mr. JONES. There has been a rise in crime, sir, and we have had the reports about these death squads. As you know, there is one case in particular that is in the courts in the State of New York. This is a problem. It is going to be something that we will need to address, and hopefully through the use of the cooperative efforts with the police training, the drug enforcement, and military cooperation, we will be able to address it a little bit more properly.

Senator NELSON. By the way, Mrs. Ayalde, I had said Tres Esquinas, which you correctly identified in Colombia. I meant to say Cuidad del Este. That is the one that is like the Wild West there. Anything you want to buy you can probably find it there. And it may not necessarily be authentic. They have got quite a knock-off trade there, and the other things that you are going to be looking at are in such an environment. To what degree have we got to worry about terrorist activity arising from that environment?

Ms. AYALDE. At this point, we have no known operational presence of Al Qaeda or other of these terrorist groups. Nevertheless, it is an issue because of the lack of, like I mentioned earlier, law enforcement, corruption, and all these other factors that lend themselves to attracting these kinds of activities.

Senator NELSON. Mr. Boswell, this committee has had a hearing examining American women, contractor personnel, that have been raped in Iraq and Afghanistan and the lack of help for the rape victim and the lack of follow-up by the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Justice. Now, do you want to bring us up to date on what is happening there?

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. I am aware of some of those cases. I am also aware that the area of jurisdiction and authority is a little bit unclear.

For the record, I am strongly in favor of legislation that would hold contractors to account for criminal violations committed in war zones.

Senator NELSON. Let me just stop you right there. That legislation is now law. It is on the books. And the question is, are those three Departments enforcing the law, providing assistance to the rape victims, as well as referring the evidence and preserving the evidence, and then referring it to the appropriate law enforcement agencies—in the case of the Department of Justice, it is usually the U.S. Attorney—in the prosecution of those crimes? The law is there. So take it from there.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir, I am aware that the law is there. I was referring perhaps to the Department of State and embassy contractors. The law governing them is a little more unclear. So I want to clarify that. But certainly it is clear in the area of the Department of Defense.

The State Department does everything it can to investigate and assist Americans in trouble overseas. It is a particularly difficult thing to do in war zones, as you can imagine, Senator. When the Department becomes aware of a problem, as it did in one of the cases that you referred to, it was in fact the Department that investigated the case that found the individual, that liberated, freed

the individual, and after investigation, turned over the results of its investigation to the Department of Justice.

Senator NELSON. Now, which one are you speaking of?

Mr. BOSWELL. You mean of a specific case?

Senator NELSON. Yes.

Mr. BOSWELL. A specific case involving a woman in Iraq.

Senator NELSON. Do you have a name?

Mr. BOSWELL. I do not have the name in front of me, sir. I think that case is still under review by the Department of Justice, so I would want to be awfully careful about anything I say here.

Senator NELSON. Was it one of the two women who testified to this committee?

Mr. BOSWELL. I do not know who testified to the committee, sir, but I would guess it is.

Senator NELSON. All right. There is another high profile rape case, a lady named Mrs. Jones who did not testify. But you do not know that that is the one? Jamie Lee Jones?

Mr. BOSWELL. I think that is the case that I was talking about, sir.

Senator NELSON. Okay. She did not testify here. But that has been in the newspaper quite a bit.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. And what did you say about that case?

Mr. BOSWELL. In that case, it is my understanding that it was the Department of State that first became aware of the case that investigated the problem, that located the individual who was in trouble, and followed up in investigating the incident and turning over what it found to the Justice Department.

Senator NELSON. That is interesting. She was a Defense Department contractor personnel. She was gang raped by other contractor personnel. She was stuffed in a storage locker and held hostage there until a fellow contractor personnel had pity on her and lent her a cell phone, on which she could make a phone call back to the U.S. And that is eventually how she got out of that storage locker. I mean, it was just an incredible case.

But that was not one of the ones that testified here. Of course, it would raise the hair on the back of your neck to hear the dramatic testimony that came before this subcommittee by two others.

So what would you say is the status of the Department of State in investigating these types of crimes?

Mr. BOSWELL. Senator, I think I can assure you that the Department of State investigates very aggressively the crimes that are committed in its area of jurisdiction.

Senator NELSON. What about the relationship between the Department of State and the military and the Justice Department and their various investigative arms?

Mr. BOSWELL. I think the Department would assist both of those other arms in any way that it can.

Senator NELSON. Do you think it has?

Mr. BOSWELL. I really could not tell you, sir.

Senator NELSON. I can tell you it is has not. And you are up for Assistant Secretary of State of Diplomatic Security.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. You would be shocked to see some of this testimony. Now, most of it has been the problem with the Department of Defense because most of the contractor personnel are DOD contractor personnel, but there is the nexus through contractor personnel for the Department of State and that is what you are seeking to be the Assistant Secretary of, diplomatic security.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. Which would include contractor personnel as well?

Mr. BOSWELL. The State Department does have oversight over contractor personnel that provide a variety of services, including protective services, to our people overseas.

Senator NELSON. Providing security for them?

Mr. BOSWELL. One of the areas in which we provide contractor personnel is that, a very important area, as Senator Corker referred to during his questioning.

Senator NELSON. Well, let me give you a hypothetical on one of these particular cases that we have and tell me how you would respond as the head of diplomatic security.

A woman is raped and she reports this to her superiors and they do not do anything about it. And when she finally gets to see a military doctor that confirms the rape, then there is some question about the evidence from the rape kit having disappeared. What would you do to make sure that that evidence is not lost in your position as the head of diplomatic security?

Mr. BOSWELL. Senator, diplomatic security agents are trained law enforcement officials. Part of their training, I am quite sure, is how to preserve a chain of evidence in a criminal case, and I would expect if a diplomatic security agent was involved in such an investigation, that he or she would carry out their responsibilities in accordance with their training.

Senator NELSON. Did you serve in this position before?

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. When?

Mr. BOSWELL. I served as Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security from 1996 to 1998, the same position for which I am being considered now.

Senator NELSON. 2 years.

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. What was your training then with regard to the preservation of criminal evidence?

Mr. BOSWELL. I myself am not a law enforcement officer, nor is the Assistant Secretary. But the people who work for the Assistant Secretary are all badge-trained law enforcement officers, and the training was exactly as I described, training in, among other things, preserving evidence in a criminal case.

Senator NELSON. One of the big problems that we discovered in this hearing about the rapes was that there was just not coordination between the various agencies. Since you, obviously, have some experience having been in this position before, what do you think that you could do to improve the communication and coordination so that these criminal sexual assaults, number one, get reported and evidence is preserved and that they are reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities?

Mr. BOSWELL. Well, sir, I would say that in a case which came to the attention of the Department of State and which possibly could involve a jurisdiction of another agency, such as you described, it would certainly be a very important part of the Department's investigation of the case to ensure that other agencies with jurisdiction are communicated with, liaised with, and that proper attention be paid to exactly the sort of issues such as preservation of evidence that you were just describing.

Senator NELSON. Will you do what you just said?

Mr. BOSWELL. I certainly will, sir.

Senator NELSON. Now, there was a Blackwater shooting incident, and the Under Secretary of State Kennedy assured us that the diplomatic security agents would be accompanying all the convoys secured by Blackwater and other private security contractor companies. Is that occurring?

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir. That was one of the recommendations that was made by the panel in which I participated, and as I mentioned in earlier testimony, the Department of State responded very positively to those recommendations. Additional personnel, both on a temporary basis and now on a permanent basis, were assigned to the regional security officer's office in Baghdad. The size of the office was, I believe, more than doubled, and there is a diplomatic security special agent in charge, in operational control of every movement involving protected people in Iraq, not just in the Baghdad area, but throughout.

Senator NELSON. In your position, will you oversee the coordination between the uniformed military and those security contractors?

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, sir. The same panel in which I participated made a number of recommendations designed to increase the coordination between the military and State Department convoys. As you can imagine, there is all sorts of room for confusion when you have civilian convoys protecting embassy personnel that are operating in what the military considers its own battle space. There are areas where things can go wrong, and we made a number of recommendations to ensure that nothing did go wrong, including much better coordination between the tactical operation centers of the respective commands, providing radios to the vehicles that had access to military channels, and things of that nature. I think all of the recommendations that the panel made in that regard have been carried out.

Senator NELSON. The Department of State just conveyed to Blackwater an additional 1-year extension on their contract without other bids being solicited. Can you tell me about why there was a decision that there would not be competition?

Mr. BOSWELL. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The contract in question is what is called a task order under the overall worldwide personal protective security contract, which is the blanket contract. That worldwide contract was competed when it went into effect, I think it was 2 years ago, as were the individual task orders, including the one you mention, for protective security in Baghdad. The overall contract or the task orders, I should say, have renewal clauses, options to renew. I think there are four of them following the ini-

tial award. Those renewals are commonly and routinely exercised after a period of review.

In this particular case, the performance of the contractor was reviewed very closely in connection also with the various steps that have been taken to improve the oversight of the contract and the alternatives should the contract not be renewed. And the decision was made at the time to exercise the renewal option.

I have got to specify, Senator, that that contract could be terminated at any time for the convenience of the Government or otherwise.

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker?

Senator CORKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think our ambassadorial nominees are thanking God at this moment they are not dealing with private contractors.

So, anyway, thank you all again for being here.

Mr. Jones, I am curious. In a country like you are going to that basically is a place where narcotics are being transported because of the tremendous demand here in our country—let us face it. I mean, that is why the issue exists. When you get a country like that and we are working with them to counter narcotics, what is in it for them to be focused on this issue?

Mr. JONES. Senator, I think there is a great deal of interconnectivity, as we say. There is a large American population living in Guyana. There is also a very large expatriate Guyanese population living here in the States. I think everyone realizes that this is a question of security, and I think the Government of Guyana and certainly the president and those persons in government realize that this is a question that involves the entire hemisphere. And so I think they will work closely with us, and I intend to extend our efforts to work closely with them to see if we can get a handle on this. But it is interconnected. We believe certainly that just simply because it passes through Guyana and then makes its way northward, that it is not going to stay there, that at some point in time, it is going to have an adverse impact on the local government.

Senator CORKER. Thank you.

Ms. DiCarlo, there has been some discussion about some missions into Somalia, I guess. Could you give us a status of that and why that would be something at this point in time that might be necessary?

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you, Senator. The Security Council adopted a resolution a few months ago asking the Secretary-General to look into the possibility of a UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia and to do contingency planning for it. Various assessments are in the process of taking place now.

The situation in Somali is a dire one. We have an African Union force—it is very small—trying to help protect the transitional government, a government that is quite pro-Western and internationally recognized. The AU force, however, will need support. We have seen traditionally in Africa where the African Union goes in at a time when peacekeepers cannot, but then UN peacekeeping forces come in afterwards as the situation stabilizes somewhat.

We would like the Secretary-General to continue this planning. We think we do have an opportunity now with a transitional gov-

ernment in place to help stabilize the country. We have a very dire humanitarian situation in Somalia. We know that this would not be an easy operation, and obviously, a lot of planning, a lot of thought would have to take place, and should there be such a mission, it would have to be very targeted and have a very specific mandate. We do know, however, that Somalia, without additional international support, is going to have a very tough road ahead.

Senator CORKER. You know and you have a great sense of the culture, if you will, within the United Nations. We have perceptions based upon our visits and interactions, but you are there and know it. What is it about the UNDP program and the lack of transparency that the United Nations continues to want to have there by not allowing member states access to audits? That is something that is difficult for me to understand, and I would like for you to enlighten us a little bit, if you would.

Ms. DICARLO. Thank you, sir. I will try.

First of all, the UN is very large. It has the Secretariat in New York, a number of funds and programs that are under the Secretariat, plus many affiliated agencies. It is quite a vast system. One of the things that we have asked for is system-wide coherence in a range of areas, certainly in the area of ethics, in the area of transparency, accountability.

We have seen within the Secretariat a number of measures that have been adopted in the last few years. We are very pleased to see that the office that deals with oversight has been strengthened. We want to see it strengthened even further and be more independent, have an independent budget.

What we have not seen is a transfer yet to the various funds and programs, and, again, affiliated agencies would not be my responsibility, but certainly the Bureau of International Organizations at the State Department is working with them. We want to see the kinds of measures that have been put in place in the Secretariat also put in place now in the funds and programs. UNDP is one of them, as is UNICEF.

It is a work in progress. We still need a lot more work in the Secretariat as well, particularly in the area of oversight of procurement, better procurement practices. There is an ethics office now, financial disclosure forms for senior members. But we do need to see this system- wide.

Senator CORKER. You mentioned or something was brought up about MINUSTAH in Haiti. And General Santos Cruz is most impressive. He is somebody that just causes you to feel tremendous faith, if you will, in what he is doing, and certainly I think, from what I can tell, he is doing an outstanding job there.

What are the characteristics of that effort that you would take to other places mentality-wise to say these are the things that we ought to be doing other places as it relates to peacekeeping?

Ms. DICARLO. I think one of the successes of MINUSTAH is that there are a number of countries in the region, the Latin American region, in the force. We have strong regional support, very strong both in terms of troops, police. So we have a real regional input and that is something that has helped the force considerably.

Also, I remember I was working on the staff of the National Security Council when MINUSTAH was established and when the

marines first went into Haiti and then a UN force followed. And it was a very bumpy start, but one thing that happened, I would say, within a year into the operation was that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General realized that if he was not going to be coordinating the assistance of donors, the activities of all the many donors to Haiti, that we would not be making progress. And the UN has done a good job in Haiti of assuming that role.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Boswell, I wonder if you would just give me a couple of sentences, if you will, on what transformational diplomacy is and, if you would, its effect on diplomatic security, and then step down one level and give me its effect, if you will, on the stovepiping that generally occurs as it relates to working with other organizations of Government to counter threats that you, in fact, have to deal with.

Mr. BOSWELL. Thank you for the question, Senator. I have been out of State Department for a number of years, so I am going to be a little careful about what I say about transformational diplomacy.

But transformational diplomacy, as the Secretary proposed it, as I understand it, was to shift the effort from certain geographic areas where the State Department was heavily represented such as in western Europe to areas of increasing concern. It was also an effort, as I understand it, to more broadly represent the United States overseas in those areas of concern. That means, for example, diplomatic posts of different types than the standard embassy/consulate construct that we are all familiar with.

That poses issues and problems for protecting U.S. personnel in those kinds of situations, and if I am confirmed, it is going to be a very high priority of mine to look into that issue. We do not want diplomats, obviously, clustered only inside fortress embassies. They cannot do their work properly that way. So we need to find ways to protect them as they are out in the field. A very large percentage of Foreign Service officers have served in Iraq and Afghanistan already, sometimes more than once, and it is likely that service in those kinds of zones will continue.

I expect that the State Department will be asked to operate in zones of conflict in the future where there is no major U.S. military presence, unlike Iraq and Afghanistan now, and we will have to find ways to protect our people in those circumstances. And that will be a very big challenge, but it is a very high priority of the Department to operate that way and I think it is the right priority. And the Bureau of Diplomatic Security has got to find a way to discharge its responsibilities in the face of those obligations.

Senator CORKER. And as to the stovepiping that exists between the State Department and other Departments of Government dealing with threats?

Mr. BOSWELL. I think the Senate had before it for confirmation—the ICUS had before it for confirmation a couple of weeks ago the new Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Mr. Mike Leiter, who is a colleague of mine at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence where I work right now. And eliminating the stovepipes you are talking about is precisely what the National

Counterterrorism Center does. I think it is a very, very good-news story for the U.S. since 9/11.

The State Department and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security is part of that. The bureau has representatives in the National Counterterrorism Center is part of the meetings, three meetings a day, video teleconferences a day, that take place on updating of threat information globally. So I think the stovepipes, while deeply, deeply ingrained in the culture, particularly of the intelligence community in the United States, is—I think the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and, in particular, the National Counterterrorism Center is doing a lot to eliminate those stovepipes and ensure the proper sharing of information for the safety of our citizens.

Senator CORKER. Ms. Ayalde, any thoughts about your hopefully new, very soon future home and their relations with us as it relates to a free trade agreement? Have there been discussions, thoughts?

Mr. BOSWELL. I am afraid, Senator, I am not aware of discussions between—oh, I am sorry.

Senator CORKER. That is all right. That is a good answer, by the way, coming from you. Thank you. [Laughter.]

Senator CORKER. I apologize.

Ms. AYALDE. Thank you, Senator.

I understand that that is a topic of bilateral discussion in the broader sense and certainly is an opportunity that we will need to look at as we move forward with this new administration of President Lugo.

Senator CORKER. So there have been no discussions at all from their side.

Ms. AYALDE. At this point?

Senator CORKER. Yes.

Ms. AYALDE. Well, certainly not with the new administration. They take office on the 15th of August.

Senator CORKER. Well, but even his predecessor, no discussions.

Ms. AYALDE. They are very interested, as I understand it, in increased market access. There are some issues with some of the existing preferences programs, and they are currently under discussion in a very robust way. But beyond that, I would not venture to say at this point.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, I think we have four very highly qualified nominees, and I have no further questions. I hope that when you finish, that they and their families have a wonderful brunch together and celebrate the survival of an hour and 15 minutes. [Laughter.]

Senator NELSON. It will not be brunch. It will be lunch.

Thank you all for your public service. Thank you for offering yourself for public service.

And the meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:40 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LILIANA AYALDE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO PARAGUAY

Mr. Chairman. Members of the Committee.

I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for their confidence and trust in sending my name to the Senate for your consideration. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with this Committee and with your colleagues in the Congress to advance our interests in Paraguay and in the region.

For most of my 27 years as a career member of the Senior Foreign Service of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), I served in Latin America. I hope that you will find that my professional experience in the region has prepared me well for this important assignment as the Chief of Mission in Paraguay. Most recently, I served as USAID Mission Director in Colombia, where I managed one of USAID's largest programs in the world and the largest in the Western Hemisphere. We worked with vulnerable groups, victims, and those displaced by the violence while developing viable and licit economic opportunities for those who had been forced to engage in illegal coca production, trafficking, and at risk of joining illegal armed and criminal groups. We strengthened governance and helped build the capacity to expand state presence in territories with weak institutionality or no state presence. We supported judicial reform and promoted the respect for human rights. Before Colombia, I served in Bolivia during a period of much political and social turmoil. I also served in Nicaragua, re-engaging bilateral relations after a USAID absence of 12 years. This, plus my experience in Guatemala and Bangladesh, prepared me well for defending U.S. interests in challenging environments. I have worked closely with government counterparts, civil society, private sector, and the U.S. interagency community in developing synergies and coming to agreement on common grounds as we promote the fight against poverty, drugs, and corruption.

If confirmed I will arrive in Paraguay at a historic moment. My experience in development and diplomacy will serve the United States well as we engage President-elect Lugo, supporting his efforts to promote a more just and prosperous democracy.

I would certainly draw on my experience administering our foreign assistance programs to ensure that Embassy resources are wisely used, and that security remains a top priority. If confirmed, I will also do everything in my power to ensure the safety of Embassy staff, and of the thousands of Americans who reside in Paraguay and those who visit each year.

The United States has long had close and friendly ties to Paraguay. During the last two years of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold Program, we have seen the Paraguayans implement many important reforms to improve transparency, eradicate corruption, and improve business climate and economic freedom. We look forward to continuing this process with a second Threshold Program with the incoming Lugo administration. President-elect Lugo has made fighting corruption a key part of his platform and our assistance is designed to support his efforts toward that end.

Paraguay has been a good partner on security and counter-narcotics issues. Select Paraguayan law enforcement units are effectively cooperating with us and their neighbors to stem the flow of illicit drugs, arms, pirated goods, and persons through Paraguay's territory.

Our accomplishments thus far are a prelude to what remains to be done - and I look forward, if confirmed, to the challenges ahead, to working with a Paraguayan Government committed to building a more stable and prosperous Paraguay. Promoting U.S. exports will be one of my priorities and I am optimistic that there is much the U.S. private sector can contribute to the development of Paraguayan agricultural potential. And, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and with your colleagues in Congress as we pursue our interests in Paraguay. I would be pleased to welcome many of you to the U.S. Embassy in Asuncion. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIC J. BOSWELL, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DIPLOMATIC SECURITY

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and Director of the Office of Foreign Missions.

I want to thank the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence they have placed in me, and for this opportunity to be of further service to the Department of State and to our nation. I believe I am well qualified for this position.

I served for 27 years as a career Foreign Service Officer in a variety of assignments both in Washington, D.C., and overseas, culminating in my service as Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security from 1996 to 1998, the same position for which you are considering me today. I left the State Department a decade ago, but I did not leave the security world. While working at the United Nations in 2004, I was responsible for developing and implementing the security structure that was put in place for the United Nations system in the aftermath of the tragic bombing of the UN offices in Baghdad in August 2003. And in my current position in the Office of the Director for National Intelligence, I have been serving as the top security policy official for the intelligence community.

But my heart has always been with the State Department and the Foreign Service. I believe a career in the Foreign Service, whether as a Foreign Service Officer, or a Diplomatic Security Special Agent, or any of the other Foreign Service and Civil Service career paths in the Department of State, is an unparalleled opportunity to serve our nation alongside patriotic, dedicated, highly motivated colleagues. That is why I chose to accept this nomination and hope to be confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, our State Department personnel serve in some of the most dangerous locations on earth. The mission of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security is to keep them safe, and to provide a secure environment for the conduct of our nation's foreign policy.

But security for our diplomats is only one of many challenges facing the Bureau. Diplomatic Security is a global organization with expertise in international investigations, threat analysis, cyber security, dignitary protection, security technology, counterterrorism, and so much more. It is the security and law enforcement arm of the U.S. Department of State, committed to protecting our nation's people, property, and information. Diplomatic Security is one of the largest bureaus in the Department with a workforce of more than 2,500 professionals, consisting of special agents, engineers, technicians, diplomatic couriers, and Civil Service specialists. These specialists oversee another 32,000 contract guards and security specialists around the globe.

Diplomatic Security has a broad range of responsibilities including the protection of domestic State Department facilities as well as U.S. embassies and missions overseas. It also plays a key role in combating visa and passport fraud, and has a robust investigations program that is critical to homeland security for the nation. It trains foreign police and security officers to combat terrorism through its Antiterrorism Assistance program. It also protects foreign dignitaries who visit the United States. While it is the responsibility of the U.S. Secret Service to protect visiting heads of state, Diplomatic Security protects the hundreds of foreign ministers and delegations that visit the United States every year. Many of these visitors are from the most politically volatile countries in the world, requiring special protective measures.

The Office of Foreign Missions is another important element of the Bureau. Its primary role is to defend national security by coordinating the activities of U.S. missions abroad and of foreign missions and international organizations in the United States. It develops and implements policies to improve the treatment of U.S. overseas personnel through the application of reciprocal treatment for foreign missions in the U.S. It also protects the interests of the United States and its citizens from foreign diplomats' abuses of privileges and immunities.

The security challenges facing the Foreign Service today are enormous. Drawing on the expertise I have acquired throughout my professional life, including my most recent experience at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, I believe I can provide the leadership necessary to guide the Bureau at this critical time in our nation's history.

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is a critical part of America's security apparatus. I was proud to be the Assistant Secretary a decade ago, and would be honored to have the opportunity to serve in that office once again. If confirmed, I will assume my duties with great enthusiasm and commitment. I pledge to work cooperatively with the Congress, with others in the Executive Branch, and to serve the American people.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROSEMARY DICARLO NOMINEE FOR ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FOR SPECIAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations. I am grateful to President Bush for my nomination and to Secretary Rice for her confidence. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing during a very busy time.

If confirmed, I look forward to advancing America's interests at the United Nations at a time of great flux in the international system, with unprecedented threats to peace and security that go beyond the traditional security challenges, and at a time of historic opportunities for the United States. As a career member of the Foreign Service, I have dealt with many of the issues that come before the United Nations. I served as Director of the Washington office of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in 2001, as the international community grappled with the horrors of the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11. The United Nations Security Council responded immediately to these attacks with the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1373, which criminalized terrorist acts by non-state actors, and obliged governments to take the necessary legal measures to prevent such acts. As Director for United Nations Affairs on the National Security Council staff, I contributed to the development of Resolution 1540, which criminalized proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and worked on a plan for reform of the United Nations that was deliberated at the 2005 World Summit.

If confirmed, I will help represent the United States at the United Nations Security Council. Many challenges face the Council, but none are more serious than preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Iran has ignored calls by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Security Council to suspend fully and verifiably all proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities, including enrichment-related activities. In response, the Security Council has adopted three binding resolutions placing Iran under sanctions unless it ceased uranium enrichment activities and cooperated with the IAEA. The last, Resolution 1803, made clear that the Council would consider adoption of further appropriate measures should Iran fail to comply.

The United Nations has served an important role in combating terrorism, and the Administration is committed to strengthening the organization's ability to address this threat. Our mission to the United Nations is working to strengthen the effectiveness of the 1267 Committee, which imposes targeted sanctions on the Taliban, Usama Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, and to intensify the efforts of the Counter Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate to develop the capacity of Members States to prevent terrorist acts.

Mr. Chairman, the Administration believes United Nations peacekeeping to be in our national interest. Through UN peacekeeping operations, the United States is able to leverage military and financial resources to resolve crises throughout the world. It deserves and receives our political and financial support as well as our close attention and oversight. Should I be confirmed, peacekeeping would be one of my major responsibilities. I would work with partners on the Council to achieve more effective peacekeeping operations that are appropriate for the circumstances in a given country and achievable within available resources. Given the growth of our contributions to peacekeeping, which have almost doubled in the last two years, I would work with others in the Administration to look seriously at possibilities for achieving savings in these operations.

The humanitarian crisis in Darfur remains of utmost concern and the Administration will continue to press for rapid deployment of the United Nations-African Union hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur. When fully deployed, this peacekeeping mission will be the largest of existing missions and will contribute to the protection of civilians in that troubled region. Finding an appropriate means to address the long-running political and humanitarian crisis in Somalia is another high priority.

A serious concern for the United States is sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions. If confirmed, I will continue our efforts to ensure that the United Nations carefully monitors the behavior of UN peacekeepers and enforces its policy of zero tolerance regarding sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers.

There are many issues where the Security Council has played a vital role. The Council helped to stabilize the situation in Lebanon by calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and expanding the mandate of the existing United Nations peacekeeping mission to assist the Government of Lebanon in extending its control throughout Lebanese territory. We must, however, continue to press for full implementation of Council resolutions calling for all countries to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon, and to demand that Syria and Iran refrain from destabilizing the country.

If confirmed, I will seek opportunities to raise matters of great concern to the United States before the Security Council. The Security Council should continue to monitor the political situation and humanitarian crisis in Burma and actively support the Secretary General's efforts to engage the regime in a dialogue with the opposition. The Council should also press for peaceful, fair and free elections in Zimbabwe.

Mr. Chairman, working through the United Nations, the United States can bring the full weight of the international community to our foreign policy objectives. To be truly effective, the United Nations must be able to address the new threats to peace and security and to implement reforms aimed at strengthening this important body. American leadership is essential. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee to advance our interests at the United Nations and to assist the international community in meeting these new challenges.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN MELVIN JONES, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. I sincerely appreciate the trust and confidence placed in me by President Bush and Secretary of State Rice in putting my nomination forward. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with this Committee and with your Congressional colleagues both to advance our nation's interests and to protect our citizens in Guyana and the region.

Before I proceed further, and with the indulgence of the Chair, I would like to introduce two members of my family. With me today are my wife, Aaronia Jones and our daughter Christie Jones-Aden.

Mr. Chairman, for more than 27 years I have served as a career Foreign Service Officer, including at hardship posts in several regions of the world; these experiences have prepared me well to lead the U.S. mission in Georgetown. Guyana is a country striving to strengthen its fragile democracy in the face of daunting problems including an HIV/AIDS epidemic, poverty, racial tensions, drug trafficking, arms and human smuggling, ever rising rates of violent crime, and corruption that plagues many of its law enforcement agencies. To make matters worse, Guyana suffers from a "brain drain," as many of its educated citizens emigrate. I welcome this challenge to use my experience, my creativity, and my leadership abilities to represent U.S. interests in the context of these very serious issues. Guyana's problems affect U.S. security because of our interconnectedness with countries throughout the Caribbean region and because Guyana is part of the family of democracies in the Hemisphere. The United States has a special link with Guyana through the many Guyanese who have immigrated to our nation, many of whom are dual nationals and maintain strong ties to family remaining in Guyana. We are Guyana's largest trading partner, and we share a commitment to fighting the scourge of HIV/AIDs. The President's PEPFAR program and the more than $100 million Congress has appropriated since 2004 continues to make a profound impact in a country where USAID estimates that 2.5% of the adult population is infected with HIV/AIDS. Through the partnership that involves USAID, CDC, Peace Corps, DOD and other donors, PEPFAR has provided AIDS testing for more than 29,000 people, and over 2,000 individuals receive life-saving anti-retroviral drug therapy.

Guyana is becoming an ally in regional security and in the fight against narcotrafficking. In 2007, the government's drug seizures were up, but Guyana needs assistance to professionalize law enforcement personnel and to weed out corrupt elements. If confirmed, I hope to work toward re-establishment of a U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency office at the Embassy, something that President Jagdeo has requested and which DEA's leadership also supports. The two-year $6.7 million Millennium

Challenge Threshold program for Guyana began implementation in fiscal 2008. Under USAID direction, the Threshold program seeks to help the Government improve its fiscal management, including implementation of a new VAT, and to improve the business climate by modernizing the business registration process.

If confirmed, I will work to see that this effort proves successful. As another priority, if confirmed, I will encourage the government to hold local elections, which were last held in 1994 and are long overdue. Local elections, the political dialogue and the empowerment that follows will strengthen democracy and serve the country well. If confirmed, I will also be accredited to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which brings together 15 Caribbean states and a number of regional observers. I would look forward to working with CARICOM members to advance mutual interests in trade, investment, development, security and social policy.

Mr. Chairman, these are some of the opportunities and tests that await the next United States Ambassador to Guyana. I would welcome the opportunity to address them, and if confirmed, I will work diligently to strengthen bilateral cooperation and to advance U.S. interests in Guyana and the broader CARICOM region.

RESPONSES OF ERIC BOSWELL TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. Why do you want this position? What do you hope to achieve?

Answer. I am a retired career Foreign Service officer with over 30 years of service in the U.S. Government. I am honored to have been nominated for the position of Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security and for the opportunity once again to be of service to our Nation alongside the patriotic, dedicated, highly motivated professionals of the Department of State.

Question. What will be your top three priorities?

Answer. My priorities are:

- To ensure the safety and security of our diplomats, with particular attention to the safety and security of those serving in war zones and other high-threat areas.
- To participate actively in the global war on terror by combating passport and visa fraud.
- To do my utmost to obtain the resources necessary for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to operate at maximum effectiveness.

Question. What do you regard as the major strengths and weaknesses of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security? What measures are you considering to address the weaknesses?

Answer. Based on my previous tenure as Assistant Secretary of Diplomatic Security and my familiarity with the organization, I believe that DS's greatest strength lies in the quality of personnel the organization has recruited through the years and their level of training. These agents, engineers, couriers, and other Foreign Service specialists, along with the cadre of Civil Service employees that make up DS, are a dedicated, flexible, and dynamic force willing to serve in dangerous and insecure locations around the globe to create an environment where American diplomatic initiatives can be pursued.

The organization's weakness essentially is that there are many countries with increasing security problems and a finite workforce that is already somewhat stretched. The issue of extremism and the resulting attacks on our diplomatic facilities and other symbols of America overseas, along with growing instability in many nations and rising levels of crime and violence, portend a need for additional security resources and programs if the United States is to maintain its crucial diplomatic presence overseas.

My plans to address this do include doing my utmost to ensure that Diplomatic Security has the resources necessary to fulfill its mission. However, I will also ensure that there is close attention paid to determining priorities within DS, so that the most crucial requirements are fully met, with less important requirements perhaps postponed and moved to a lower priority. Additionally, I fully support the idea that Foreign Service officers and their families must be provided with hard skills based security training—"Foreign Service Security Tradecraft" in essence, so they too can become an important part of the overall security solution when asked to take assignments to increasingly dangerous and unstable posts.

Finally, I believe that the Foreign Service must find ways to operate in dangerous environments, without relying on the U.S. military having "boots on the ground." This will require DS to have the ability to use contracted security services, but we

must have more transparent accountability and better contract oversight, and I intend to make that a priority as well.

Question. You served on the Secretarys Panel on Personal Protective Services in Iraq. That panel recommended the hiring of 100 additional DS agents to offset the impact of increased DS staffing requirements in Iraq. What is the status of the hiring and training of these agents?

Answer. The 100 positions were included in the fiscal year 2008 supplemental and fiscal year 2009 bridge budget request that is currently with Congress for approval. In the interim, DS reprogrammed existing positions to create positions in Iraq. Those positions are now being staffed with current DS Special Agents. Upon approval of the budget request, DS will recruit and train the 100 additional personnel received from the supplemental funding.

Question. How many DS agents were assigned to Iraq under chief of mission authority as of September 30, 2007? How many such agents were there on March 30, 2008?

Answer. As of September 30, 2007, there were 36 Special Agent positions assigned for Iraq. Subsequent to September 2007, an additional 45 positions were authorized.

As of March 30, 2008, 57 Special Agents were actually on the ground. Upon the completion of the required training by September of 2008, the full complement of 81 Special Agents are scheduled to be at Post.

Question. The Panel also recommended that a DS agent accompany every movement of Personal Protective Services in Iraq. On what date was that recommendation implemented? Please provide a copy of any relevant memorandum, cable, or directive implementing this recommendation. Has it been adhered to?

Answer. By early October 2007, the 12 TDY Special Agents (SAs) deployed to Iraq began accompanying the Private Security Contractors (PSCs) on protective motorcade movements. Simultaneously, 45 new FTE positions were established, assignments were made, and the required training courses commenced. All 45 positions are scheduled to be filled by September 2008.

The assignment of a DS Special Agent to accompany the movement of Personal Protective Services in Iraq was a recommendation of the "Report of the Secretary of State's Panel on Personal Protective Services in Iraq." This recommendation was accepted by the Secretary, the United States Embassy in Baghdad, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. The recommendation has been fully implemented in Baghdad and on a prioritized basis in the Provinces as more agents arrive in country.

Question. How many direct hire positions are authorized for the Bureau domestically? Of these, how many positions are vacant (use the most recent date in the last four months for which such information is available, but indicate the date used)?

Answer. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is authorized domestically 715 General Schedule positions and 1,056 Foreign Service positions. The Foreign Service positions not only include special agents, but also security engineering officers, security technicians, and diplomatic couriers. Of the authorized domestic number, there are 132 General Schedule positions vacant and 237 Foreign Service positions vacant. This information is current as of April 30, 2008, and was supplied by the Human Resources Monthly Resource Statistic Report.

The total number of DS Special Agents assigned domestically is approximately 800. Of that, approximately 550 agents are assigned to DS Field Offices, 150 agents are assigned to full-time protection assignments, and the remainder assigned to Headquarters and liaison assignments.

Question. How many direct hire positions are authorized for the Bureau overseas? Of these, how many positions are vacant (use the most recent date in the last four months for which such information is available, but indicate the date used)?

Answer. DS has authorized 698 Special Agent positions overseas. As of June 20, 2008, DS records indicate that 58 of the 698 overseas Special Agent positions are currently vacant, due to summer transfer gaps and a shortfall in the Special Agent manpower pool.

RESPONSES OF ERIC BOSWELL TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. How many DS agents are in Iraq and Afghanistan and where are they located? How many contractors are performing protective duties in those countries that would otherwise be handled by full-time DS employees? Please provide a list

of the number of contractors, by location, function, and company in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Answer. There are 81 DS Special Agent (SA) positions authorized for Iraq: 58 located in Baghdad, 8 in Erbil, 6 in Al Hillah, 5 in Tallil, and 4 in Basrah. The Regional Security Officer (RSO) retains the authority to reassign his personnel resources between any of the five locations as operational requirements dictate. Currently there are 52 permanently assigned SAs and 16 temporarily assigned SAs in Iraq. DS anticipates that all 81 authorized positions in Iraq will be filled by September 2008.

The Afghanistan staffing pattern currently consists of 16 DS SA positions, 4 of which were just recently created in April 2008. Ten of the 12 full-time DS SA positions in Afghanistan are filled with permanently assigned Special Agents, and two temporarily assigned SAs augment the permanent staff. The complement of SAs in Afghanistan will increase to 15 by the end of September 2008 with the 16th position being staffed by the end of the year. All DS positions in Afghanistan are located in Kabul.

As for the number of contractors performing personal protective services in Iraq and Afghanistan, as the table below indicates, 837 contractors are performing protective security duties that otherwise would be handled by DS Agents.

WPPS II IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN STAFFING

Task Order	Location	Contractor	Protective security specialist (PSS)	Support	Static guard	Total
004	Kabul	Blackwater	78	21	20	119
006	Baghdad	Blackwater	474	80	0	554
007	Basrah/Tallil	Triple Canopy	80	33	166 *(45)	279 *(158)
008	Al Hillah	Blackwater	77	17	162	256
009	Kirkuk/Erbil	DynCorp	78	23	52	153
010	Iraq Aviation	Blackwater	50	108	0	158
Iraq and Afghanistan Authorized Staffing			837	282	400	1,519
Actual Staffing to Reflect TO–7 Basrah Transition			837	282	279*	1,398

TO–7 Basrah guard force authorized 166, but currently staffed 45 due to transition to Basrah Air Station.
TO–8 is returning to full staffing, reflected above.
TO–10 continues to transition to full staffing.

Question. In your testimony you noted that the number of DS agents in Baghdad dramatically increased following a report in which you were one of the primary drafters. Please provide before/after DS staffing numbers that would illustrate this.

Answer. Prior to September 2007, there were 36 Special Agent positions authorized for Iraq. Subsequent to September 2007, an additional 45 positions were authorized.

The current staffing for the 45 new positions is as follows: 20 positions have been filled with DS Special Agents on permanent assignment; 16 positions are filled with TDY DS Special Agents, and 25 DS Special Agents are completing High Threat Training scheduled to arrive at Post on or before September of 2008.

Question. Please list the location of the domestic offices of Diplomatic Security and the number of DS employees in each and the primary function of each office.

Answer. To safeguard the nations borders and ensure the integrity of the U.S. passport and visa programs, DS Special Agents assigned to the below field offices investigate criminal attempts to fraudulently obtain U.S. passports and visas, and detect and dismantle identity document vendors operating in the United States.

In 2007, DS's domestic field offices opened 4,725 criminal investigations for passport and visa fraud, arrested 1,550 individuals, and seized nearly $3 million in assets. DS Special Agents are assigned to the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces, ICE's Document and Benefit Fraud Task Forces, and the U.S. Marshals Fugitive Task Forces. DS field office agents also conduct protective security operations, ensuring the safety of the Secretary of State worldwide, annually performing 290 protective operations for foreign dignitaries visiting the United States, and congressional delegations during overseas travel.

Boston Field Office–26; Chicago Field Office–41; St. Louis Resident Office–2; Houston Field Office–34; Dallas Resident Office–5; Los Angeles Field Office–52; Honolulu Resident Office–3; Phoenix Resident Office–3; San Diego Resident Office–7; Miami Field Office–49; Atlanta Resident Office–8; New Orleans Resident Office–4; San Juan Resident Office–3; New York Field Office–126; Philadelphia Resident

Office–7; San Francisco Field Office–39; Denver Resident Office–7; Seattle Resident Office–5; Washington Field Office–121; Greensboro Resident Office–7.

Question. The Department has made recommendations with respect to improving the oversight and performance of PSD movements in Iraq. Are they being fully implemented (please be specific to each recommendation from the Kennedy report)? How many more DS agents are in Iraq now? How has this affected operations in other parts of the world?

Answer. Please see the attached chart for the status of each recommendation from the Kennedy Report.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S REPORT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN IRAQ (REVISED 06/19/08)

Recommendation	Status
1. The State Department should urgently engage with the Department of Justice and the Office of Management and Budget, and then with the Congress, to establish a clear legal basis for holding contractors accountable under U.S. law.	—An interagency working group drafted legislation to clarify and expand the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act (MEJA) to hold private security contractors overseas accountable for offenses —The Department of Justice is taking the lead on further discussions of this issue with Senate staff. —The Department of State's Legal Advisor's Office is involved as needed. —The Department of State's Legal Advisor's Office will stay engaged in this process until legislation is passed.
2. The Department of State should work with the Department of Defense to determine how to commence discussions with the Government of Iraq on a new regulatory framework for PPS contractors.	—U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF–I), and the Iraqi Ministry of Interior continue to negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement and a Strategic Framework Agreement. —This recommendation is complete. (06/06/08)
3. The requirement to expand security oversight requires an overall increase in the Diplomatic Security Service's authorized staffing level. The Department of State should approach the Office of Management and Budget and request in the final appropriations action for fiscal year 2008 an increase of 100 positions and the requisite salary and operating costs in order to provide the needed staffing in Iraq without stripping other missions of their security resources.	—The Department is reviewing options to augment personnel to fulfill this requirement.
4. When the FBI investigation into the September 16, 2007, incident is completed, the Embassy should submit its recommendation as to whether the continued services of the contractor involved is consistent with the accomplishment of the overall United States mission in Iraq.	—The Embassy and the Department are awaiting the results of the FBI's investigation.
5. The Regional Security Office should be provided with additional Department of State Special Agents so that an Assistant Regional Security Officer can accompany PPS movements. The State Department should ensure that each A/RSO should complete an Iraq-specific orientation program.	—Forty-five new full time employee (FTE) DS Special Agents positions were created for Iraq. Currently, 11 of these new positions are staffed at Post. Thirty-four DS Agents are completing High Threat Training and all positions will be filled by Sept. 2008. —Additionally, the RSO staff is currently augmented by 16 temporary duty (TDY) DS personnel. —All DS Special Agents complete Iraq-specific training at the DS Training Center and Foreign Service Institute prior to deployment.
6. The Worldwide Personal Protective Service contract should be amended to require the contractor to provide a limited number of Arabic language staff for use as needed.	—The WPPS contract was modified to require eight Protective Security Specialist/Translators, as requested by the RSO, to serve throughout Iraq. —This recommendation is complete. (04/02/08)

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S REPORT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN IRAQ (REVISED 06/19/08)—Continued

Recommendation	Status
7. Additional training modules should be added under the Worldwide Protective Services contract to enhance the cultural awareness of assigned personnel, acquaint them with diplomatic structures and procedures, and familiarize them with Multi-National Force-I tactics, techniques, and procedures.	—The WPPS contract was modified to require that all WPPS personnel complete the Iraq Cultural Awareness training program developed by the DS Training Center and the on-line ''Working in an Embassy'' course offered by the Foreign Service Institute. —This recommendation is complete. (06/05/08)
8. To tighten the ground rules for the use of deadly force, and to ensure greater parallelism with USCENTCOM rules on the use of force by contracted security in Iraq, the U.S. Mission Firearms Policy should be revised to specify, without limiting the inherent right to take action necessary for self-defense, if an authorized employee must fire his/her weapon, he/she must fire only aimed shots; fire with due regard for the safety of innocent bystanders; and make every effort to avoid civilian causalities.	—The Departments of State and Defense agreed upon common principles for the Rules for the Use of Force. —The updated Mission Firearms Policy incorporating these revised Rules for the Use of Force was signed into effect by the DCM on February 2, 2008. —This recommendation is complete. (02/26/08)
9. The Regional Security Office (RSO) should be provided video and audio recording equipment for each security vehicle, audio recording equipment in the Tactical Operations Center to record all radio transmissions; and computer enhancements to record all Blue Force Tracking Data.	—To date, video recording systems have been installed into 133 mission vehicles throughout Iraq, and installation continues. —The radio recording system in the RSO's Tactical Operations Center is operational, and all Embassy radio transmissions are recorded. —Post implemented long-term recording of all BFT data. BFT data is stored on external hard drives, expanding retention capabilities.
10. The Regional Security Office should place a readable number (like a license plate) on the right rear door of each vehicle utilized, to enable anyone wishing to question its mode of operation to identify the unit of the Regional Security Office, which can then review the matter and take appropriate action.	—For operational security reasons this action is being reviewed. The issue will be discussed with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior during licensing and registration discussions.
11. The Regional Security Office should establish a ''Go Team'' that would proceed as soon as possible to the scene of any weapons discharge to gather information and material and provide an analysis of what happened and why, and prepare a report. The Team would work with representatives of the appropriate Government of Iraq offices and the U.S. military unit responsible for the location.	—The RSO established a dedicated Force Investigation Unit (FIU) and reached an agreement with MNF–I for military security support for investigators. —DS awarded a contract to provide 8 investigators, 2 translators, and 1 Senior Police Advisor/Liaison contractor personnel to support the FIU. —The vendor (USIS) is currently recruiting personnel, making arrangements for training, and submitting personnel for required security clearances. The FIU support contractors are expected to deploy to Iraq in July 2008. —This recommendation is complete.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S REPORT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN IRAQ (REVISED 06/19/08)—Continued

Recommendation	Status
12. An Embassy Joint Incident Review Board should be established to review all incidents involving the use of deadly force which are known or asserted to have caused injury or death or other serious consequences. The Board should be chaired by the Deputy Chief of Mission and other members should be the Regional Security Officer, another civilian embassy officer with a law enforcement background from an agency other than State or Justice, and a military officer designated by MNF–I. The Board would hear from the Assistant Regional Security Officer (A/RSO) who was in the motorcade, review the statements provided by the security personnel involved, as well as any protectee(s), plus the Go Team report, and then make a recommendation to the Ambassador on whether or not the use of force appears justified. If it does not feel that it was justified, the Department should be informed to notify the Department of Justice.	—The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) approved an Action Memo establishing the framework and process for convening an Embassy Joint Incident Review Board. The Board has not yet had cause to meet. —This recommendation is complete. (06/06/08)
13. The Regional Security Office and MNF–I should establish a permanent working group to develop commonly agreed operational procedures; establish a robust liaison element; exchange information; ensure optimal situational awareness; and ensure that any issues are discussed and quickly resolved.	—A permanent working group was established in November 2007. —In December 2007, the Deputy Secretaries of State and Defense signed a Memorandum of Agreement to define the authority and responsibility for the accountability and operations of private security contractors in Iraq. —This recommendation is complete. (11/16/07)
14. In addition to the above, three specific items should be on the agenda for the first meeting.. —Ensuring that the planning, coordinating and routing information which currently flows from the Regional Security Office's Tactical Operations Center (TOC) to Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF–1) liaison elements located in the TOC and posted to the U.S. Military's Command Post of the Future (CPOF) system, is available electronically to all operating elements under MNF–I;. —Providing TOC Spot Reporting electronically to any subordinate military element that wishes to receive it directly;. —Coordinating the provision of frequencies for the military radios and the RSO has ordered to enhance coordination..	—Electronic tracking issues were addressed to everyone's satisfaction by Command Post of the Future, Blue Force Tracker, and TAPESTRY. (11/16/07) —The RSO and MNC–I exchanged liaison officers in their respective Tactical Operations Centers. —This recommendation is complete. (05/08/08) —RSO Spot Report language entered into MNF–I Combined Information Data Network Exchange (CIDNE) database by the MNF–I liaison officer. This recommendation is complete. (11/16/07) —The RSO received 142 PRC–152 radios, which have been loaded and configured with DOD-compatible channels. This recommendation is complete. (04/10/08)
15. Coordination with MNF–I elements could be further enhanced if the pending order for Harris Corporation Model PRC–110 radios were received. The Department of State should intervene, including with DOD as necessary, to obtain these units.	—Post received 142 PRC–152 radios. —All radios have been loaded and configured with DOD-compatible channels and were distributed to RSO protective security teams. —This recommendation is complete. (04/10/08)
16. When the "Go Team" is not involved in investigating incidents, it should be employed in pattern analysis. The Diplomatic Security service in Washington should provide the RSO with a relational database to be used to review incidents and determine potential patterns. Such a database would include the following. 1. Date and Time of incident. 2. Destination and GPS coordinates. 3. GPS coordinates of incident. 4. Mission identifier. 5. Vehicle identification numbers. 6. Incident type. 7. Names of all security personnel involved and their assignments in the motorcade. 8. Such other details as would be useful.	—Pattern analysis software was identified, tested, modified, and Beta tested. —DS/SI/IS received and evaluated final version of revised software. —Final version of pattern analysis software should be installed at Post during June 2008. —This recommendation is complete.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S REPORT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN IRAQ (REVISED 06/19/08)—Continued

Recommendation	Status
Data on each event would be input promptly after it occurs. Weekly reports should be generated to look for potential patterns that would call for systemic or individual changes.	
17. The Embassy should use the venue afforded by the Iraqi-U.S. Joint Commission to establish a working group to determine ways to move the licensing process forward in an open and transparent way.	—The DCM, Embassy Legal Advisor, RSO, and MNF–I are involved in discussions with Iraqi officials concerning private security company licensing and registration processes. —This recommendation is complete. (05/08/08)
18. The Regional Security Officer should establish direct channels to senior Iraqi police and security officials in Baghdad and in any other city where Provincial Reconstruction Teams are located. This should be a major step towards providing information on incidents in a timely way so that they can be appropriately investigated. —The RSO had multiple meetings with senior Iraqi officials at the National Police, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Defense and developed working agreements on coordination, liaison, and mutually supportive engagement.. —RSO personnel serving at Regional Embassy Offices (REOs) and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have also established relations with local Iraqi police and security officials.. —This recommendation is complete. (11/16/07).	
19. In order to be more responsive to Iraqi customs, the Embassy must actively seek out the families of those innocent Iraqi civilians killed or seriously injured, or those whose property has been damaged by Personal Protective Services personnel. The Regional Security Office ''Go Team'', assisted by the U.S. military unit responsible for the area in which an incident has occurred, should work with counterparts designated by the Government of Iraq to promptly offer appropriate condolences and compensation.	—As part of the investigative process, the RSO coordinates with MNF–I and the Government of Iraq to facilitate victim access to the Embassy Claims Program. —This recommendation is complete. (11/16/07)

The high number of Special Agent positions required in Iraq and Afghanistan, now 97 total, plus those agents in predeployment training impacts our domestic operation. The 1-year tours, training requirement, and transfers impact our ability to keep qualified agents and continuity in our programs from which the positions were drawn—passport, visa, and identity fraud; internal investigations; protective intelligence investigations; special programs; mobile security training; and field offices. In addition, TDY support to Iraq has drained our Office of Mobile Security Deployments by up to 40 percent of the staff (30 of 72) being deployed to Iraq at the same time. This impacts our ability to meet critical mission-support requirements in other areas of the world, such as Afghanistan, Beirut, Sudan, etc. We have increased the number and sizes of our instruction classes to accommodate the special hard-skills training that is required in the high threat environment of Iraq. This has placed additional demands on our training staff and we have begun to set up an interim training facility to meet these requirements. With no training float, a Special Agent who is in training leaves an operational position vacant.

Question. From your perspective, can you comment as to whether DOD (nonmilitary) motorcades are operating under the same requirements; specifically are they putting the equivalent of a Federal agent (or a uniformed officer) in each motorcade? Have (nonmilitary) DOD motorcades installed cameras in its vehicles? Etc?

Answer. The Secretary of State's Panel on Personal Protective Service in Iraq did not focus on Department of Defense (DOD) operations nor did the recommendations. Specific questions regarding DOD operations and equipment are appropriately answered by the Department of Defense. However, I do not believe that DOD motor-

cades have a Federal agent or uniformed officer in each motorcade, nor do I have confirmation they have installed cameras or recording equipment in all DOD vehicles.

Question. Iraqis say civilian motorcades and civilian contract security are one of their biggest grievances. Please provide a breakdown of all PSD contractors in Iraq including: (a) How many operate under the auspices of the Department of State, DoD, USAID, other agencies? (b) About how many work for other governments? (c) Others? (d) Are those who protect NGO, aid workers and others reconstruction contractors covered by any sort of U.S. law or regulation? How many would that be? (e) What percentage of movements in Iraq are State Department motorcades compared to OSD motorcades?

Answer. The Department of State only maintains data on Department of State contractors and, regrettably, cannot answer many of these specific questions. The Department of State provides protective security for USAID direct-hire employees and other employees under chief of mission authority but not for other government, NGOs, or other reconstruction efforts. The first table attached below provides staffing information. The second table provides WPPS movement data for 2007 and 2008.

WPPS II IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN STAFFING

Task Order	Location	Contractor	Protective security specialist (PSS)	Support	Static guard	Total
004	Kabul	Blackwater	78	21	20	119
006	Baghdad	Blackwater	474	80	0	554
007	Basrah/Tallil	Triple Canopy	80	33	166 *(45)	279 *(158)
008	Al Hillah	Blackwater	77	17	162	256
009	Kirkuk/Erbil	DynCorp	78	23	52	153
010	Iraq Aviation	Blackwater	50	108	0	158
Iraq and Afghanistan Authorized Staffing			837	282	400	1,519
Actual Staffing to Reflect TO–7 Basrah Transition			837	282	279*	1,398

JAN 2008—CURRENT MONTH WPPS MOVEMENT DATA

Task order	Location	Contractor	Total ground missions	Average per month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	Baghdad	Blackwater	4,257	851	964	814	632	686	1,161							
7	Basrah/Tallil	Triple Canopy	1,034	207	181	197	259	156	241							
8	Al Hillah	Blackwater	140	28	17	17	28	25	53							
9	Kirkuk/Erbil	DynCorp	646	129	119	129	128	149	121							
2008 Total Iraq Missions (all WPPS contractors)			6,077													
2007–2008 Total Iraq Missions (all WPPS contractors)			18,664													

2007 WPPS MOVEMENT DATA

Task order	Location	Contractor	Total ground missions	Average per month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	Baghdad	Blackwater	9,574	798	708	1,102	943	726	721	784	804	1,104	579	558	881	664
7	Basrah/Tallil	Triple Canopy	930	78	3	7	12	3	7	9	87	100	111	202	166	223
8	Al Hillah	Blackwater	364	30	31	32	36	38	43	39	29	26	23	26	26	15
9	Kirkuk/Erbil	DynCorp	1,719	143	132	118	104	97	173	168	164	203	150	114	143	153
2007 Total Iraq Missions (all WPPS contractors)			12,587													
2007–2008 Total Iraq Missions (all WPPS contractors)			18,664													

The above numbers include missions with protectees, as well as support and administrative missions.

Question. How are non-WPPS PSD's contracted and licensed by the GOI? Are WPPS contractor so licensed? Are the Iraqis capable of overseeing and enforcing this process? Are we helping them build that capacity?

Answer. First part of question: The Department of State does not contract for other PSD services outside of WPPS.

Second part of question: The Iraqi licensing process involves the Ministries of Interior and Trade, and security company licenses must be renewed every 6 months. WPPS contractors Triple Canopy and DynCorp are currently licensed by the central Government in Baghdad. Blackwater's application for a license is currently pending. The Government of Kurdistan has recently imposed a licensing requirement on security companies, separate from the Iraqi Government requirement. DynCorp, which provides services in Kurdistan, is applying for its Kurdistan license.

[NEA must provide the answers to the rest of this question.]

Question. Do you feel we have adequate feedback on the performance of PSD movements—in Iraq and elsewhere? Have you considered having a "report card" filed by the principal passenger after each movement to provide feedback on how procedures and interactions with locals were handled? Would this be a useful tool?

Answer. The office of the Regional Security Officer (RSO) feels that they do receive adequate feedback, both positive and negative, from the embassy community on the performance of the PSD teams. On May 11, 2008, the RSO office distributed an updated security notice, regarding the Personal Security Detail (PSD) policy for chief of mission personnel. In the notice it states "The Regional Security Office is committed to working collegially and professionally with Mission personnel in accomplishing their objectives. Should you have any questions regarding this policy, or wish to provide feedback regarding our services . . ." The notice then lists the Deputy RSO for the High Threat Protection program as the point of contact.

With the addition of a Special Agent in the protective motorcades, the RSO also receives daily summaries detailing trip movements that note any areas of concern. This may be viewed as a "report card." The RSO office is also in the process of surveying the embassy community regarding their views on PSD operations. The survey asks respondents to comment on such questions as, "Do RSO personnel act professionally on the venue site? Do RSO personnel treat Iraqi citizens with respect? Do RSO personnel treat passengers with respect?" The RSO office will use this important feedback mechanism to monitor performance and make management decisions regarding PSD operations.

Question. Discuss the procedures used to ensure that weapons that are shipped/carried into Iraq for use by PSD's and other nonmilitary forces do not fall into the wrong hands? In doing so, please provide the "blanket" diplomatic note agreed between the United States Government and Government of Iraq (signed by the GOI on 14 August 2004), which addresses end-use, retransfer, and security assurances, now accepted in lieu of normal license conditions as would be reflected in standard DSP–83s, for direct commercial arms sales to the Government of Iraq. Does this "blanket" diplomatic note also apply to any sales done under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program?

Answer. Every Department of State Protective Security Detail weapon in Iraq is U.S. Government-procured and shipped via secure means. All weapons used by WPPS contractors are government furnished equipment. The WPPS contract requires quarterly inventories of all government furnished equipment, including weapons. The WPPS Program Office validates these inventories during periodic visits to the field. In addition, the Regional Security Office is required to do an annual sight inventory of all Diplomatic Security weapons, which includes every weapon used by WPPS contractors. Diplomatic Security's Defensive Equipment and Armored Vehicle Division (DEAV) Branch validates the RSO inventory against a master inventory of all DS weapons.

The agreement regarding grants under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, or successor legislation, and such items as the Government of the United States of America may otherwise furnish, or authorize under the furnishing of, from time to time, under other authority, to the Government of Iraq, effected by an exchange of notes at Baghdad, July 24 and August 14, 2004, does not apply to defense articles or defense services provided pursuant to the Foreign Military Sales Program. Such defense articles and defense services are subject to the requirements of the relevant Letters of Offer and Acceptance. It is my understanding that a copy of the diplomatic note has been provided to your staff.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2008

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

Beyrle, John R., to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation
Chaudhry, Asif, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova
Culbertson, James, nominated to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Girard-diCarlo , David F., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria
Kaidanow, Tina S., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo
Reeker, Phillip Thomas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia
Silverberg, Kristen, to be the U.S. Representative to the European Union
Yovanovitch, Maria L., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Benjamin Cardin presiding.

Present: Senators Cardin, Lugar, Menendez, and DeMint.

Also present: Senators Levin, Specter, Burr, Elizabeth Dole, Cornyn, and Robert Dole.

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

Senator CARDIN. The Committee on Foreign Relations will come to order. I want to thank Chairman Biden for giving me the opportunity to chair today's hearing.

This is a very important hearing. We are considering eight nominees for very important positions representing our country in Europe. I want to thank all of the nominees for their public service and thank their families for the sacrifices that they have made and particularly the nominees' willingness to come forward to serve our country.

Europe is very important to the United States. Historically, it's important to this country. We have had a strong tie between the United States and Europe. I have had the opportunity to personally visit Normandy where valiant American soldiers, together with our allies, mounted an invasion that would change the course of European history. One hundred eighty-three Marylanders are among

those interred in the nearby cemetery, the final resting place for thousands of Americans.

I would like to point out that since 1975 and the Helsinki Accords that were entered into that year, institutionalized regional organization where the United States played a critical role in developing strategies with our European allies dealing with security, economics, and human rights. So this has been a relationship that has grown over the years. Some of our top priorities have been to deal with combating corruption, human trafficking, sexual exploitation of children, as well as fighting anti-Semitism and forms of intolerance and promoting fundamental freedoms in democratic governance.

Today's hearing, we will have an opportunity to hear from eight individuals in two panels. The first panel will be Mr. James Culbertson, nominated to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Mr. David F. Girard-diCarlo to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria, Ms. Kristen Silverberg to be the U.S. Representative to the European Union with the rank and status of Ambassador.

In the second panel, we'll hear from Mr. John R. Beyrle to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Mr. Asif Chaudhry to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Ms. Tina S. Kaidanow to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo, Mr. Phillip Thomas Reeker to be Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia, and Ms. Maria L. Yovanovitch to be Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia.

We are very honored to have many of our colleagues here today. I'm going to ask Senator Dole to lead off. Senator Dole, of course, a very distinguished Member of the United States Senate, a long history of leadership in this country, but one role that really I want to just bring out was his leadership on the Helsinki Commission when he was in the United States Senate, and I think really elevated the Commission to a very important part here in the United States and Europe.

Senator Dole, it's always a pleasure to have you back before our committee.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT DOLE, U.S. SENATOR FROM KANSAS

Senator ROBERT DOLE. There's another Dole's name up here, a real Senator, but I need to go first so I can go home and get dinner ready. [Laughter.]

I have the great privilege today to introduce a woman to this panel who's highly qualified to be Ambassador of Armenia. Maria Yovanovitch is someone I've known and someone I've worked with and someone I know that will do an outstanding job. She's been the Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan and I've been there and I've seen how she's worked with American Manas Base and which is very important when it comes to Afghanistan and I met with the President of Kyrgyzstan and he told me what a great job she'd been doing and how she had worked out some of the problems that they had with America and so this is a country of particular interest to me, Armenia, and somebody may wonder why. So I'll tell you in about one minute.

My history with Armenia goes back more than 60 years. As I recovered from World War II wounds—I was wounded late in the war and all the good doctors were leaving the Army hospitals—and so I was running around the country looking for a miracle to put me back to where I was before and I met a doctor in Chicago, then Wesley Hospital. An Armenian American named Dr. Kalikian who has written books on orthopedic surgery and his son, Arman, is now a great orthopedic surgeon in Chicago.

But to make a long story short, I spent a great deal of time with him. He became almost a second father and operated on me at least a half a dozen times and wouldn't let me pay him one cent because he had lost a brother in World War II and so I've had contact with—oh, uh-oh. I better get back to my original text.[Laughter.]

But I think his treatment, just to show his gratitude to this great country of ours and it's been, as I said, a blessing for me and I've been a strong supporter of the Armenian community and the people of Armenia. I've been there a few times. I planted a tree in honor of Dr. Kalikian and I've seen, you know, the country's got some very serious problems. They need an ambassador. They've been without one for almost 2 years.

If it weren't for Kirk Kerkorian, I'm not certain what would be happening in that country and he's a very modest man, but I can tell you if you add up what he's been doing as far as housing and streets and highways and hotels, libraries and schools and businesses, I've got to believe it adds up to hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars that this one Armenian American has spent trying to help his fellow Armenians and I think he's been there but once.

But in any event, the country's per capita GDP is less than $2,000 and it's politically weak and they need help and they're listed now as only partly free and so they can't get enough money from remittances from Armenians who live in America.

So the point is, is they need an ambassador and it just happens that we have an outstanding person who I think will do an outstanding job. As I said, I got to know Marie in her work in Kyrgyzstan and I met with the President of Kyrgyzstan. We've talked about her stewardship there. She's made a very serious contribution to our national interests in securing our airport's base and establishing a constructive relationship with the government after what they call the Tulip Revolution in 2005.

So she knows all about the Stans countries which is another one of her best friends is former Ambassador Beth Jones of Kazakhstan and they worked closely together when Beth was in the State Department.

So for all those reasons, Marie reminds me a little of the children of Dr. Kalikian. She is the daughter of immigrants who escaped the horrors of the homelands and gained a second chance in the United States and like them, she worked hard. Nobody gave her anything. She worked for everything that's happened to her. She attended Princeton, one of our Nation's greatest universities, and she's sort of a tribute or a symbol of America, "the land of opportunity," and she's career Foreign Service, and I recommend her to this committee and I say God Bless America and God Bless Armenia.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Senator ROBERT DOLE. I'll have dinner ready by 6:30. [Laughter.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR ROBERT DOLE

Mr. Chairman and distinguished committee members, it's my privilege to introduce Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch to this committee. Marie was previously confirmed to serve as our Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan and has now been nominated to serve in Armenia.

As many of you are aware, my history with Armenia goes back more than 60 years. As I recovered from grave wounds in World War II, Dr. Hampar Kelikian, an Armenian immigrant surgeon, helped to restore my health and operated on me repeatedly—for free, in selfless gratitude for the opportunity and success he enjoyed in his new homeland.

Since then, I've been a friend and supporter of the Armenian-American community, the people of Armenia, and the country itself—including its independence and political and free-market development.

It is vital that Armenia and it's American benefactors concentrate on this development. Armenia's post-independence brain-drain represents a serious crisis. The country's per capita GDP is less than $2,000. It's political class is insular and weak.

Seventeen years after independence, Freedom House ranks it as only a "partly free" country—and it is one that needs more than remittances from Armenian-Americans to make it in today's global economy.

Armenia has needed an American ambassador for the past couple of years. Today, it especially needs Ambassador Yovanovitch. I had the privilege of getting to know Marie and her work during her tenure in Kyrgyzstan. I met there last year with President Bakiyev, who spoke highly of the Ambassador and her work.

In her time in Kyrgyzstan, Marie made a serious contribution to our national interests in securing our air force base and establishing a constructive relationship with the government after the 2005 "Tulip Revolution."

Marie's expertise in the "Stans" and the former Soviet Union is particularly strong, as is her appreciation of Armenia and it's diaspora.

Marie reminds me of the children of Dr. Kelikian. Like them, she is the daughter of immigrants who escaped the horrors of their homelands and gained a second chance in the United States.

Like them, she worked hard. She attended Princeton, one of out Nation's finest universities. Marie is a tribute to our "land of opportunity" and to our Foreign Service. I wholeheartedly recommend her to you.

Thank you. God Bless America, and God Bless Armenia.

Senator CARDIN. We will now recognize the Senator Dole that has a vote.

STATEMENT OF HON. ELIZABETH DOLE, U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH CAROLINA

Senator ELIZABETH DOLE. Well, Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Lugar, certainly it's a great privilege to introduce Mr. James Culbertson of North Carolina who's been nominated by the President to serve as our 64th Ambassador to the Kingdom of The Netherlands.

It's also important at this time to express gratitude to the late Ambassador Roland Arnald who previously held the post until just 10 days before his death last March. He served our country with great distinction and the post of ambassador has since remained vacant.

Today, I'm honored to come before the committee to express my strong support for Jim Culbertson's nomination. My husband, Bob Dole, and I have known Jim and his supportive, very supportive and talented wife, Germaine, for many years and I submit to you today that Jim is amply qualified to join the ranks of our diplomatic corps.

Indeed, the United States is blessed to have leaders like Jim willing to serve in our embassies overseas, and I'm confident he will serve at The Hague with great distinction as our ambassador.

Jim is an American patriot and military veteran. He graduated from The Citadel with honors, meaning the top 8 percent of his class, and afterward served our country as an intelligence officer in the United States Army.

He currently serves as Commissioner on the American Battle Monuments Commission, guarding America's overseas cemeteries and memorials which honor the service, achievements, and sacrifice of the United States Armed Forces at 24 sites around the world.

Jim is also a successful innovator, entrepreneur, and business leader. He founded and then served 26 years as president of Financial Computing, Incorporated, which provides financial application software and hardware to automobile dealers and community banks.

As a business leader, he has also served as a member of the North Carolina Economic Development Board which oversees North Carolina's economic development research and planning and makes policy recommendations.

As a member of the board, Jim works side-by-side with State Government officials, elected officials, nonprofits, economic development organizations, and private industry in developing a comprehensive economic development plan and then advocating and holding entities accountable for the implementation of the plan.

Jim also served as a member of the North Carolina Banking Commission, responsible for regulating almost all of the financial institutions operating in the State, banks, trust companies, brokers, and other consumer finance companies. As a business owner, himself, Jim also served on the National Federation of Independent Business National Board, promoting the priorities and growth of small and independent businesses in the marketplace and around the country.

In keeping with his civic responsibilities, Jim has served on the board of the American Council for Young Political Leaders, as well as the Board of the Fund for American Studies, and let me just add here that I can recall when Bob Dole and I were dating and he was——

Senator ROBERT DOLE. He was in high school at the time.

Senator ELIZABETH DOLE. Yeah. I went off on a trip with the American Council for Young Political Leaders. There were 11 Republicans and 11 Democrats, 22 of us, and Bob said, "What? Where are you going?" I said, "I'm off to Japan for three weeks," and I want you to know, since he happens to be sitting beside me today, that when I got back, he met me with an engagement ring and a dozen roses. So that trip was very productive, Jim. I think he missed me.

But both of these organizations, focusing on the youth of our country, promote international exchange and dialog. Through his work in this effort, students from across the country, like myself in those days, and around the world have the benefit of knowing the value of freedom and democracy. Future foreign leaders now know future American leaders and those relationships are fostered through the years.

This is the type of endeavor that uses the full force of U.S. diplomacy and the type of effort the 9/11 Commission recommended to us. Jim Culbertson had the foresight to already be personally involved in this type of activity. He's exhibited strong leadership in the past and I have every confidence that he will continue to show that strong leadership and good judgment as our Ambassador to the Netherlands.

If confirmed, Jim will be responsible for promoting and protecting United States interests in the Netherlands, a country with which the United States has long shared a beneficial relationship. The partnership between the United States and the Netherlands dates back to the American Revolution and it's one of our country's oldest continuous relationships.

The United States and the Netherlands share common ideals, a common dedication to individual freedom and human rights. Our two countries also have strong economic ties where Jim's economic background will serve us well.

The Netherlands is the third largest direct foreign investor in the United States and the United States is the third largest direct foreign investor in The Netherlands. Dutch, like us, believe in a market-led economy and in Jim, we will have an ambassador who embodies a market-driven economy.

From our economic, commercial, and trade relationship to our partnerships in foreign aid and global security, Jim Culbertson will continue strong United States-Dutch relations. With his vast experience and numerous talents, Jim Culbertson is the right person to be our chief representative to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, possessing the critical diplomatic and leadership skills needed to succeed in this important position.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, you have a wonderful nominee before you today, and I thank you for the privilege of expressing my views.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Burr, you're here also on the same nominee?

Senator BURR. I am, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Why don't you proceed at this point.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BURR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH CAROLINA

Senator BURR. Mr. Chairman, thank you. Senator Lugar, I thank you, and Senator Menendez.

I looked down the list of nominees and I'd like to speak for all of them. I'm not sure all of them would have me do it but I feel like I know most of them and this is an unbelievable group.

Mr. Chairman, I'm honored to be here to make an introduction for Jim Culbertson. In the fashion that she always displays, Senator Dole has mentioned everything that I could possibly talk about, but let me pick a few things that I think are important for the members here to know.

One, he has a beautiful wife and Germaine's here, and she's joined by her daughter, their son-in-law, and two grandsons, and I say that so Jim won't forget to introduce them as he makes his remarks.

The United States and the Netherlands have shared strong relationships since the earliest days of our Nation. This relationship grew into a deep friendship following the Second World War when Allied Forces, including two American Airborne Divisions, helped liberate the people of the Netherlands from Nazi occupation.

Following World War II, most American servicemen returned to their homes and their families but many did not. In the Village of Margratten in the Netherlands, there is today an American cemetery that's the final resting place for over 8,000 American soldiers. As the commissioner of the Battle of the American Battle Monuments Commission and as a veteran himself, Jim knows this place well, and I'm confident that he is the right man to continue and enhance the already strong relationship between our two countries.

If confirmed, I have no doubt he will be the best person that has served this country there. A successful businessman, a wonderful husband, a father, Jim has in fact been serving the United States for many years and we in North Carolina are proud to call him our own.

Following graduation at The Citadel, he was in the Army and the intelligence arena. As an accomplished small business owner, Jim initiated his foresight to start his own business in the early 1970s in my hometown of Winston-Salem. Today, Financial Computing, Inc., the business he founded and ran for almost 30 years, continues to be one of the most successful financial computing companies in the Southeast.

Jim has also been a leader in his community, my community, and throughout North Carolina, serving on the Banking Commission and on the North Carolina Board of Economic Development where he contributed his talents and his time to enhance life for his fellow North Carolinians.

He's been active on the national level. A 20-year member of the Board of Trustees of the Fund for American Studies, as mentioned, and has taken a leading role for over two decades in educating the next generation of young Americans on the values of freedom and democracy, the ideals he champions and embodies, and will continue to promote as United States Ambassador to The Netherlands.

The United States relations, Mr. Chairman, in Europe are more important today than they've ever been since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Once again, we see a familiar Russia seeking to exert its influence throughout Eastern Europe and the Baltics. The Netherlands has been a committed friend in the war on terror and in combating the scourge of the international narcotics trade.

This crucial time is why we need a man like Jim Culbertson with his deep understanding of business and foreign relations to cement the United States-Dutch relationship and reassert the United States support for a free and democratic Europe.

Mr. Chairman, let me say out of all the qualities, out of all the experience that Jim brings to this nomination, let me say he's a good man. He's the type of person we would be proud to look at and refer to as our ambassador.

I thank the chair.

Senator CARDIN. I thank our Senators for the introduction.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, could I just put my statement, the full statement in the record?

enator CARDIN. Oh, absolutely. Without objection, your full statement will be made part of the record.

STATEMENT OF HON. CARL LEVIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MICHIGAN

Senator LEVIN. Before Senator Dole leaves, the old Senator Dole, the ancient Senator Dole, no, the ancient one, I'm going to send this to you, this introduction of our new Ambassador to Russia because of the reference that it makes to a World War II hero whose story is one of the most extraordinary stories I've ever heard. I know you have to leave, but I want to send this to you.

John Beyrle, who's the nominee's father, had an experience which is truly unique and this is kind of an emotional sentimental moment when kind of history's coming full circle for reasons you'll understand when you get my introduction, but I do want to, just before you leave, alert you to it and I'll send it out to you.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar, Senator Menendez, it's a pleasure here to be with you to lend my support to John Beyrle's nomination to be our Ambassador to Russia. It's an outstanding nomination, first and foremost, because of his distinguished career in the diplomatic service of this country, but it's also a wonderful nomination because of his family's history.

I think that destiny had a hand in John Beyrle's appointment to be United States Ambassador to Russia. I'm going to take just a few minutes longer than I do customarily for reasons which you will shortly understand and, I think, appreciate.

Usually I talk about the nominee first when introducing a nominee, but today I'm going to begin with the story of his dad, Joe Beyrle, truly one of the great members of the greatest generation and one of my personal heroes.

Joe Beyrle was born in Muskegon, MI, and in 1944, John's dad, Joe Beyrle, now no longer alive, was called Jumping Joe Beyrle because he was an expert paratrooper who was selected for clandestine drops in Occupied France to supply the French Resistance with gold.

He was captured on D-Day by the Germans. He was put into a prison camp, was repeatedly tortured, made a number of escapes, was recaptured, was tortured again. Finally, he showed such a dogged determination that he finally did escape in an effort to rejoin his unit.

However, he didn't rejoin his unit, he wasn't able to get to it and instead hooked up with the Russian Army, and this was a very courageous decision, as you can imagine. He decided to join the Russian Army Tank Unit. It was commanded by a woman, by the way, and Joe actually helped the Russians to liberate the very same prisoner of war camp from which he had escaped.

He was then wounded. He was sent to a Polish convent for treatment. He made a remarkable journey then to the American Embassy in Moscow and that's where the wheel comes full circle, where American officials had kept him under house arrest for a week because they thought he was a spy. The reason for that was that his dog tags had been somehow or other lost during this entire

process and ended up on a dead soldier. His family was notified in 1944 that he had died and they held a memorial service in his church back in Muskegon.

But it took about a week for the Americans in Moscow to finally determine that not only wasn't he a spy, he was a hero, and that he was who he said he was. He returned to a hero's welcome in Muskegon, MI, in May of 1945, and a little over a year later married his wife, JoAnne, and the service was officiated by the same priest in the same church where the funeral mass had been held for him in 1944. He is the only soldier that we know of that fought both with the American and Russian Armies against Nazi Germany and he was honored by Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin on the 50th Anniversary of D-Day.

Now his devotion to his country and his commitment to service live on in his son, John. John was born and raised in Muskegon. He graduated with honors from Grand Valley State University in Allendale, MI, received a Master's degree as a distinguished graduate from the National War College. His distinguished career in the Foreign Service has spanned more than two decades.

During that time, he's held numerous policy positions in overseas assignments with an emphasis on United States relations with Russia and Central and Eastern Europe. Prior to his current appointment as the United States Ambassador to Bulgaria, John served as the deputy chief of mission at the United States Embassy in Moscow.

In an editorial in his hometown paper, Muskegon Chronicle said that "Beyrle's choice honors family and Nation and that the President has chosen well and our Nation will be well served by another Beyrle in Russia." We certainly will.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, John Beyrle will do an outstanding job as our Ambassador to Russia. He will direct the work at the U.S. Embassy where a wounded and determined young paratrooper named Joe Beyrle sought refuge 68 years ago. We're proud to support his nomination, Senator Stabenow and I both, obviously. Hess ready to continue that distinguished career of service to our country, and I only could wish that his mom and dad were still with us to experience this day.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

Senator CARDIN. Well, Senator Levin, thank you for sharing that story with the committee. We need to record the best that we can of what was done during World War II, and I think your introduction here honored World War II in our record. So we thank you for that.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Specter.

STATEMENT OF HON. ARLEN SPECTER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Senator SPECTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, and Senator Menendez.

I congratulate the President on the nomination of David Girard-diCarlo to be Ambassador to Austria and I congratulate Mr. Gi-

rard-diCarlo for accepting this assignment at this stage of the administration.

I'm honored to appear here with a man I've known really intimately for more than 30 years. We are fellow Philadelphia lawyers, but more broadly than that, we have both participated very, very extensively in the life of the city on community matters, on cultural matters, on civic matters, on governmental matters, on political matters, and very frequently I seek his counseling. Occasionally he seeks mine. So the President has an outstanding individual here.

I will submit his resume which is too long to go into detail here, considering the number of witnesses which the committee has to hear, but just a couple of items.

He took the helm of a law firm in Philadelphia, Blank, Rome, some 25 years ago, and it was a moderate size firm and it now has 1,200 professionals and is extraordinarily active and has many offices—eight in the United States—stretches all the way to Hong Kong, and he has been the driving force.

In a move of his customary insights and sagacity, he recently decided to step down on an interval of a couple of years to give an opportunity for grooming and was heralded with his tide of managerial experience. He's been very active in so many corporations that I won't list them, but he took on the job of board chairman of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce and served there with great distinction. He was on the disciplinary board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and his managerial experience, I think, suits him very well for being in Vienna which has so many different missions—mission to the United Nations and the mission on Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

At a time when the United States is in urgent need of its best and brightest, we have one here today. So I'm delighted to give him my unqualified recommendation which isn't based on hearsay, it's based on firsthand experience.

Thank you. Senator CARDIN. Senator Specter, thank you for your testimony.

Senator Cornyn.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN CORNYN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Senator Lugar, Senator Menendez.

It's a pleasure to be here before you today to introduce to you an outstanding public servant and fellow Texan, Kristen Silverberg.

I was just telling Kristen, she's come a long way from Alpine, TX, where she was born, and you'll see what I mean in just a minute.

Ms. Silverberg's been nominated by President Bush to serve in the capacity of U.S. Representative to the European Union, a role I have no doubt she will fill with the same sort of commitment and dedication to excellence that she has demonstrated through her career up to this point.

Ms. Silverberg currently served as the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, a position she's held since 2005. She's led her Bureau of the State Department in the advancement of U.S. foreign policy, strategic goals, and U.S. interests through multilateral diplomacy while ensuring that inter-

national organizations through which we work remain viable and effective.

She's consistently demonstrated the experience, political acumen, and leadership ability required to represent the United States to the European Union.

Before her appointment as Assistant Secretary, she served as Deputy Assistant to the President and Advisor to the Chief of Staff in the White House, a position in which she assisted in the coordination and development of White House policy.

She's also served in the capacity of Deputy Assistant to President Bush for Domestic Policy, Special Assistant to the President in the White House Office of the Chief of Staff, and Senior Advisor to Ambassador Paul Bremer in the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Ms. Silverberg holds a Bachelor's Degree from Harvard and a Doctor of Juris Prudence from the University of Texas where she graduated with high honors. She's served on the DC. Circuit Court of Appeals as a law clerk there and also for Justice Thomas on the Supreme Court.

She's been recognized for her commitment to public service by the University of Texas and she's received a Secretary of Defense Outstanding Public Service Award for her service in Iraq and so it's with great pride that I recommend and present to the committee a great Texan, Kristen L. Silverberg.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much, Senator Cornyn.

Senator CORNYN. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. At this time, I would turn to Senator Lugar for any comments that you would like to make.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, we can proceed to hear the witnesses.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a lot of questions for the second panel, so I will wait to ask my questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. We will start with Panel 1. We will start with Mr. James Culbertson, nominated to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

We would ask that if you have your family, that you please introduce your family to our committee, and again we very much appreciate your willingness to serve our Nation and the positions that you have been nominated for.

STATEMENT OF JAMES CULBERTSON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Mr. CULBERTSON. Thank you, Senator Cardin. Yes, I do have my wife, Germaine. Would you stand, please? Next is the grandson, William, my daughter. Blair, grandson George, and son-in-law, James Robbins, and we're very happy to have all of them here today, I am anyway.

Senator CARDIN. We know this is a family effort, so we want to make sure the family gets acknowledged.

Mr. CULBERTSON. Thank you. And would you like for me to proceed?

Senator CARDIN. Yes.

Mr. CULBERTSON. Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the

President's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

I am grateful for the trust President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me to represent our country to one of the oldest and strongest allies of the United States.

Since graduating from The Citadel in 1960 and serving in the Army as an officer in military intelligence, I have maintained a keen interest in the politics and foreign policy interests of our country.

If confirmed, I will bring my professional experiences and lifelong interests in community service to bear as chief of mission for our embassy in The Hague, and I must say Senator Dole and Senator Burr included many more things that I was going to say about my personal private life.

I'm going to skip a lot of that and keep you from the boredom of hearing it again.

I would like to say as a member of the Council of Young Political Leaders, I made three trips to Europe. We visited with our counterparts, Young European Leaders, and their government and on one of the trips, I did visit The Hague and Amsterdam.

I'll skip the Economic Development Board. I would like to say a little more about the Fund for American Studies.

We sponsored summer courses for college students from across America and the world at Georgetown since 1970 and we teach free markets, free government, and free and open journalism. We initiated similar arrangements with universities in Prague around 1991, in Greece in 1996, and in Hong Kong in 2000, and we're getting ready to do one for South America.

One word about our Greek institute. It's the most unique and held in Crete. It's comprised primarily of Israeli and Arab students with a sprinkling of American students and a few other Europeans, but I'd say at least 80 percent of them are from either Israelis or Arab and when they come there, they literally hate each other and by the closing week, we had our 10th Anniversary over there in 2006, I believe, and which I attended, and they are literally dancing and partying together on closing week and in all of these institutes with our young people, we hope that these are the young leaders, whether it be politics or industry or whatever capacity, academic, that will be make it a little easier to live together peacefully.

One quick word about the American Battle Monuments Commission I've served on Margratten in the Netherlands. You know, there are 8,301 of our veterans, war casualties buried there. It's rather unique. The Dutch people have adopted each grave—each one of those 8,301 graves—and they personally come out and bring flowers and paid appropriate moments, like Memorial Day, come out and visit and we even have a waiting list of Dutch citizens who want to service those graves—help us maintain those graves there.

I'll skip everything about my business background and would like to offer a few words on how I would like to build upon our strong and enduring relationship with the Netherlands.

The Dutch share our commitment to uphold freedom and alleviate poverty around the world. Leaders of a major military contingent in the dangerous Southern region of Afghanistan, the Dutch

are also significant development partners in Afghanistan, Iraq, Latin America, and Africa. I will strive to enhance our military and development cooperation and expand Dutch support for peace, security, and democracy around the globe.

The Netherlands, a nation of fewer than 17 million residents, is a key trading partner of the United States, and Senator Dole touched on that and I'll skip the next few sentences there.

Our embassy has a goal to promote a greater and more favorable understanding of the United States and its policies. I would like to expand on a program of dialog and exchange that has won rave reviews from leaders in the Dutch Muslim community and contributed to enhanced mutual understanding.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you. With your consent, I pledge to serve our country to the best of my abilities.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Culbertson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES CULBERTSON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. I am grateful for the trust President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me to represent our country to one of the oldest and strongest allies of the United States.

Please allow me to introduce my wife, Germaine. She will be an enormous asset to me, if I am confirmed, a most gracious representative of our country to the people of the Netherlands. Also, we have with us today our daughter, Blair, our son-in-law James, and our two grandsons, William and George Robbins.

Since graduating from The Citadel in 1960, and serving in the Army as an officer in the military intelligence branch, I have maintained a keen interest in the politics and foreign policy interests of our country. If confirmed, I will bring my professional experiences and lifelong interest in community service to bear as chief of mission for our embassy in The Hague.

As a 6-year board member of the American Council of Young Political Leaders, which was composed of an equal number of young Democrats and young Republicans, I was a member of three State Department-sponsored delegations to Europe. In 1967, I first saw the Berlin Wall and went through Checkpoint Charlie for a brief visit to East Berlin. The stark image of communism, supposedly at its best, contrasted sharply with the freedom we enjoy, and remains vivid with me to this day. In 1970, our visit included stops in The Hague and Amsterdam. We were at NATO Headquarters in Brussels in 1974, and also visited to London and Paris. During all of these trips we were hosted by young European leaders and their governments.

For 8 years, from 1985–1992, I served on the Governor's Economic Development Board in North Carolina. We undertook trade missions to other countries, as well as receiving trade missions to our State.

For the last 20 years, I have been on the Board of Trustees for The Fund for American Studies. We have sponsored summer courses for college students from across America and the world since 1970 at Georgetown University, which teach free markets, democratic government, and journalism. We initiated similar arrangements with universities in Prague in 1991, in Greece in 1996, and in Hong Kong in 2000. Our Greek institute, which is held on the island of Crete, is our most unique. It is comprised primarily of Israeli and Arab students. Many arrive literally hating their counterparts from the other confession, but by the closing week, they are dancing and partying together. It is our fervent hope that one day they will be leaders in their countries and that this experience will hasten their living together peacefully.

For the last 3 years, I have served on the American Battle Monuments Commission and have visited several cemeteries in France and Italy. Each is a moving reminder of our dedication to freedom and the sacrifices we have made to keep it secure.

For 28 years, I owned a company which I started in 1972. We primarily sold financial software, but also sold the computers, printers, networks, etc., which the customer needed. Being a "one stop shop" gave us an advantage over our large, na-

tional, competitors who sold software only. My experience as the owner of a medium-size firm provided insight into the challenges of management and successful client relations.

I would now like to offer a few words on how I would like to build upon our strong and enduring relationship with the Netherlands.

The Dutch share our commitment to uphold freedom and alleviate poverty around the world. Leaders of a major military contingent in the dangerous southern region of Afghanistan, the Dutch are also significant development partners in Afghanistan, Iraq, Latin America, and Africa. I will strive to enhance our military and development cooperation and expand Dutch support for peace, security, and democracy around the globe.

Since the tragic events of 9/11 and subsequent terrorist attacks in Europe, the Dutch have devoted increasing resources to counterterrorism and law enforcement. Six U.S. law enforcement agencies are represented at our mission, and I will work with these professionals to deepen law enforcement ties to combat terrorism, narcotics trafficking, human trafficking, and financial crimes.

The Netherlands, a nation of fewer than 17 million residents, it is a key trading partner of the United States. As centers of global finance and innovation, we have invested billions of dollars in each other's economies and created hundreds of thousands of jobs. I intend to facilitate continued trade expansion and will explore new investment opportunities for U.S. firms.

Our embassy has a goal to promote a greater and more favorable understanding of the United States and its policies. I would like to expand on a program of dialog and exchange that has won rave reviews from leaders in the Dutch Muslim community and contributed to enhanced mutual understanding.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you. With your consent, I pledge to serve our country and nurture our valued relationship with the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the best of my abilities.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony.

I will now turn to Mr. David Girard-diCarlo to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria.

STATEMENT OF DAVID GIRARD-diCARLO, AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO AUSTRIA

Mr. GIRARD-DICARLO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator Lugar and Senator Menendez.

I would like to introduce my wife of more than 35 years, who's been my closest friend and advisor and confidante over that period of time, my wife, Connie.

Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that my full remarks will be provided for the record, so I will try to summarize those remarks in the interest of time.

I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Austria.

I am grateful for the confidence and trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me to serve, if confirmed, as chief of mission. I certainly thank Senator Specter for his very gracious introduction.

As you heard from Senator Specter, if confirmed, I would bring to this position more than 35 years of experience as a lawyer, an advocate, a leader, and a manager.

Over the past 25 of those years, I've had the honor and privilege of leading Blank, Rome, LLP, a professional service firm. It is today comprised of over 1,200 individuals.

As you heard, we have eight offices in the United States and one office in Hong Kong. I believe my management and leadership background will provide me the experience that is necessary not

only to advance the United States interests with Austria but to help Embassy Vienna fulfill its multioffice location operations and I can, I think, ably help provide the joint management support that is necessary for the trimission that is in Vienna as well as some joint management responsibilities we have with the nearby embassy in Bratislava.

As you heard from Senator Specter, in addition to my professional responsibilities, my experience over the past three decades has given me the opportunity to actively participate in the business and cultural organizations within the communities in which I have lived and worked.

This participation has given me a very keen appreciation for the interconnections between the public and private sectors, and I have learned that when these two sectors work in concert with one another, the whole becomes much greater than the sum of the parts, thereby enriching the lives and spirit of the entire community.

The public diplomacy programs that are so important for our country, such as the Fulbright Program, and other academic, cultural, professional exchanges, work on those same interconnections. To increase the understanding and knowledge of the United States, not just government-to-government but people-to-people, and if confirmed as ambassador, I would most heartily support those programs so that the people of Austria understand the many values and goals that we share.

Mr. Chairman, as you know and we all know, Austria has a proud history and its capital, Vienna, is a world-renowned cultural center. It serves as an exemplar of democracy, freedom, stability, and prosperity and even though a small country, it has contributed to peacekeeping missions around the world. In Southeastern Europe, it has contributed troops and assistance that are vital to the success of the United Nation missions in Kosovo and Bosnia. It has a contingent of peacekeepers in Chad which was its first foray into Africa as part of the European Union mission there, and it has assisted in aiding victims of civil unrest in Darfur, and in this time of global insecurity, no issue is of more immediate importance than our collaboration in the fight against international terrorism and transnational crime.

As an active partner in this fight, Austria has sent police instructors to the Iraqi Police Academy in Jordan. It has provided advisors in Afghanistan. It has deployed peacekeepers to the Golan Heights as part of the U.N. mission there, and together with the United States and the European Union, it operated two counterterrorism-related training programs for countries in Central Asia.

If confirmed as ambassador, I would continue to press Austria for its active participation in the Partnership for Peace and would urge Austria to work more vigilantly with NATO when our interests converge.

Mr. Chairman, as we know, this is a time of change in Austria. The European Union's enlargement eastward has shifted Austria to the center of Europe. Austria has strong historical and cultural ties with countries to its south and east and sees a role for itself in helping countries of these regions integrate more successfully into an enlarged European Union. The United States encourages that

integration which is important to the stability of Europe as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee, Austria is a solid friend of Europe. If I am confirmed as ambassador, I pledge to use my experience as a leader and manager to build on the strong relations our two countries have and to lead our U.S. mission team in advancing the United States interests and forging even closer ties.

I look forward to this challenge and opportunity. I thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today and I would welcome the opportunity, if confirmed, to serve my country. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Girard-diCarlo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID F. GIRARD-DICARLO, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be United States Ambassador to the Republic of Austria. I am grateful for the confidence and trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me to serve, if confirmed, as chief of mission. I also thank Senator Specter for his very generous introduction.

If confirmed, I would bring to this position more than 35 years' experience as a lawyer, an advocate, a leader, and a manager. For the past 25 years, I have had the honor and privilege of leading and managing Blank Rome LLP. Currently, Blank Rome is comprised of approximately 1,200 professionals and nonprofessionals in eight offices within the United States and one office in Hong Kong. I am proud to report that during my tenure as the firm's leader, the firm grew more than sixfold and is, today, one of the top 100 law firms in the United States.

I believe that my management and leadership experience will enable me to advance the United States interests with Austria and help Embassy Vienna fulfill its bilateral mission. My experiences managing multilocation operations will enable me to assist Embassy Vienna as it provides joint management support to the United States Mission to the United Nations and the United States Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Vienna, and it also provides management and resource support for the nearby mission in Bratislava.

I believe it is noteworthy to comment that relatively early in my career, I was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) by the then-Governor of Pennsylvania, Richard Thornburgh. Immediately after joining the board, I was elected chairman and chief executive officer. During my 3½ year-tenure there, SEPTA employed approximately 7,000 people, had an operating budget of about $500 million dollars, and had capital facilities worth several billion dollars.

As the only noncareer professional among a cadre of career transportation professionals, I learned firsthand the importance of valuing the commitment, talent, and dedication that those professionals brought to their jobs. I committed myself to making SEPTA a better place when I left than it had been when I joined. I believe I accomplished that goal. If confirmed, I believe my responsibility to the President, to the American people and to Embassy Vienna should be, and will be, to do everything in my power to leave Embassy Vienna a better place at the conclusion of my assignment.

In addition to my professional responsibilities, my experience over the past three decades has included my active participation in the business and cultural organizations within the communities in which I have lived and worked. I have served in leadership positions at the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the Philadelphia Orchestra and Academy of Music, the Walnut Street Theatre, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts here in Washington, and the Arizona Heart Foundation in Phoenix—to name only a few.

Furthermore, I have always been committed to and actively involved with educational institutions in my community. At the request of Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, for 5 years, I chaired Business Leaders Organized for Catholic Schools, a Philadelphia-based organization which raised money for scholarships for children attending Catholic schools. I have also served on the boards of St. Joseph's University, Drexel University, Harcum Junior College and Villanova University School of Law.

I believe my civic activities and community involvement have given me a keen appreciation for the interconnections between the public sector and the private sector. I have learned that the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts and, when these two sectors work in concert with one another, together they enrich the lives and the spirit of the people in the community.

I would bring this experience and understanding to my new position if I am confirmed as Ambassador to Austria. Public diplomacy programs such as the Fulbright program and other academic, cultural, and professional exchanges work on those same interconnections to increase understanding and knowledge of the United States, not just government-to-government, but people-to-people, across a variety of sectors.

I look forward to assuring a distinguished beginning to Ambassador McCaw's initiative for a scholarship exchange program. This 10-year program would use funds from the Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation for Austrian and American exchange students to study at universities and technical colleges in each other's country. If confirmed as ambassador, I would support these programs so that the younger generation of Austria would better understand the many values and goals we have in common.

Mr. Chairman, Austria has a proud history and its capital, Vienna, is a world-renowned cultural center. Today, Austria serves as an exemplar of democracy, freedom, stability, and prosperity. Though a small country, Austria has contributed to peacekeeping missions around the world. For example, in southeastern Europe it has contributed troops and assistance that are vital to the success of U.N. missions in Kosovo and Bosnia. Austria has a contingent of peacekeepers in Chad as part of the European Union mission there and it has assisted in aiding victims of civil unrest in Darfur.

In this time of global insecurity, no issue is of more immediate importance than our collaboration in the fight against international terrorism and transnational crime. Austria is an active partner in this fight. Austria has sent police instructors to the Iraqi Police Academy in Jordan; has provided advisors in Afghanistan; and has deployed peacekeepers to the Golan Heights as part of the U.N. mission there. Together with the United States and the European Union, Austria operated two counterterrorism-related training programs for countries in Central Asia. If confirmed as ambassador, I would continue to press for Austria's active participation in the Partnership for Peace and would urge Austria to work with NATO whenever our interests converge.

Austria faces terrorist threats just as we do in the United States and other democracies do. This is why we must work to forge strong ties and fight this threat together. Austria has provided extensive cooperation to United States law enforcement agencies and has supported regional antiterrorism initiatives. If confirmed as ambassador, I would work to strengthen information exchange and cooperation on counterterrorism, and I would work to expand outreach to populations vulnerable to radicalization and terrorist recruitment.

Mr. Chairman, this is a time of change in Austria. The European Union's enlargement eastward has shifted Austria to the center of Europe. Austria has strong historical and cultural ties with countries to its south and east and sees a role for itself in helping countries of these regions integrate successfully into an enlarged European Union. The United States encourages that integration, which is important to the stability of Europe as a whole.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, Austria is a solid friend in Europe. If I am confirmed as ambassador, I pledge to use my experience as a leader and manager to build on the strong relations our two countries have and to lead our United States mission team in advancing America's interests and forging even closer ties between the people of the United States and the people of Austria. I look forward to this challenge and thank you for both this opportunity to appear before you and the opportunity to serve my country.

In closing, I want to thank my wife, Connie, my best friend for more than 35 years, for her continuing support and counsel and for her enthusiasm with regard to this possible new venture in our lives.

I would be happy to answer any questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your comments.

Ms. Kristen Silverberg to be the United States Representative to the European Union with the rank and status of ambassador.

STATEMENT OF KRISTEN SILVERBERG, NOMINEE TO BE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Dr. SILVERBERG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

I would like to introduce my mother, Rhoda Silverberg, my father-in-law and mother-in-law, Judge Charles Ledow and Sue Ledow, and my sisters-in-law, Renee Lerner Ledow and Alexandra Ledow. Thank you for being here.

Mr. Chairman, I'm deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as United States Representative to the European Union. I would like to begin by thanking President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust and confidence in nominating me for this important position.

It has been my great privilege to serve for the last 3 years as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs and for the previous 4 years as a policy advisor to the President.

For the last 60 years, our agenda with Europe has been principally about Europe. From the passage of the Marshall Plan, to the defeat of communism, to our support for new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, the United States has worked to support a Europe that is free, prosperous, and united, and while that work continues even today, Europe has made tremendous strides.

Today, the 27 countries of the European Union form a single market with, collectively, the largest economy in the world and Europe's leaders are working to ensure that the European Union has the will and the capacity to fulfill its responsibilities as a global leader.

Indeed, today Europe is our leading partner in advancing democracy and freedom around the globe. As we work to promote democracy, confront terrorism, prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and defend human rights, we depend on what President Bush has called a powerful and purposeful Europe that advances the values of liberty within its borders and beyond.

With respect to countless global issues, the strength of our partnership with the European Union will help determine success or failure in the months and years ahead. Continued United States-European Union cooperation will be necessary to convince Iran to comply with four U.N. Security Council resolutions. Cooperation will be necessary to lower regulatory barriers and unleash our full economic potential with more trade investment and innovation.

We must work together to negotiate an ambitious market opening agreement in the DOHA Trade Round. We must together encourage Russia to play a constructive role in the international stage, improve human rights within its borders and bring energy resources to market within a free and competitive framework.

We must work to bring all major economies into a global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We must work together to support Israeli and Palestinian peace efforts. We must strengthen Governments in Iraq and Afghanistan and support a democracy in Lebanon as it resists foreign interference.

We must defeat HIV/AIDS and malaria and help developing countries support their own development by promoting good governance and responsible free market practices, and we must join

forces to defend human rights and promote democratic reform in countries, like Burma and Zimbabwe and Cuba.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the members and the staff of this committee to strengthen our relationship with the leadership and the people of the European Union for the benefit of both sides of the Atlantic and the global community.

Thank you again for granting me the honor of appearing before you today. I look forward to answering any questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Silverberg follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KRISTEN SILVERBERG, NOMINEE TO BE THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as United States Representative to the European Union. I would like to begin by thanking President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust and confidence in nominating me for this important position. It has been my great privilege to represent the United States for the last 3 years as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs and for the previous 4 years as a policy advisor to the President.

For the last 60 years, our agenda with Europe has been principally about Europe. From the passage of the Marshall Plan, to the defeat of communism, to our support for new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, the United States has worked to support a Europe that is free, united, and prosperous. And while that work continues even today, especially as we support Kosovo's independence, Europe has made tremendous strides. Today, the 27 countries of the European Union form a single market with, collectively, the largest economy in the world, and Europe's leaders are working to ensure that the European Union has the will and capacity to fulfill its responsibilities as a global leader.

Indeed, today, Europe is our leading partner in advancing freedom and prosperity around the globe. As we work closely with Europe to promote democracy and the rule of law, confront international terrorism, prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and defend international human rights, we depend on what President Bush has called "a powerful and purposeful Europe that advances the values of liberty within its borders, and beyond."

With respect to countless global issues, the strength of our partnership with the European Union will help determine success or failure in the months and years ahead.

- To prevent nuclear proliferation, continued United States-European Union cooperation will be necessary to convince Iran to suspend its enrichment and reprocessing activities as demanded by four U.N. Security Council resolutions;
- To strengthen our economies, we must work together to lower regulatory barriers and unleash our full economic potential with more trade, investment, and innovation; we must work to negotiate an ambitious, market-opening agreement in the Doha trade round;
- We must together encourage Russia to play a constructive role on the international stage, improve human rights within its borders, and bring its energy resources to markets within a free and competitive framework;
- To address climate change, we must work to bring all major economies into a global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- To advance peace in the Middle East, we should work together to support Israeli and Palestinian peace efforts;
- Standing together, we can strengthen Governments in Iraq and Afghanistan against terrorist threats and support a democracy in Lebanon as it resists foreign interference;
- Working together, we must defeat HIV/AIDS and malaria, and help developing countries support their own development by promoting good governance and responsible free market practices;
- And, we must join forces to defend human rights and promote democratic reform in countries like Burma, Zimbabwe, and Cuba.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, on these and many issues, our relationship with the European Union will continue to be vital to our ability to support peace, stability, and prosperity.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members and staff of this committee to strengthen our relationship with the leadership and people of the European Union for the benefit of both sides of the Atlantic and the global community.

Thank you again for granting me the honor of appearing before you today. I look forward to answering any questions.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you for your testimony. Again, I thank all three of our nominees for their testimony here today.

Ms. Silverberg, let me start with you, if I might. There's a lot of issues concerning the United States and Europe, so you have a very broad agenda. I think about the decision yesterday on the appeal of the Boeing decision and, of course, there's a longstanding dispute between the United States and Europe on subsidies for the aircraft industry.

Both have filed claims with the WTO and there is, at least in Congress, a concern as to whether the WTO is the forum in which we can adequately present our claims. Our batting average there has not been very strong. Add to that the DOHA Round that you mentioned in which Europe basically underminded our ability to move forward because of their policies on agriculture.

So I guess my question to you is how do you see your role in trying to deal with the growing problems between Europe and the United States on trade where we really seem to be at odds in using adversarial procedures rather than trying to work out our problems in a more amicable way?

Dr. SILVERBERG. Mr. Chairman, I think one thing that distinguishes this DOHA Round from previous trade rounds is that in fact the United States and Europe are much closer together. In previous rounds the real heavy lifting was done between the United States and Europe and once that agreement was in place, the rest of the negotiations fell into place. In this round, United States and Europe are actually relatively close together and the real heavy lift is whether we'll be able to persuade the major developing economies to come on board.

Now that's not to say that we don't have persistent disagreements—we do—and as you point out in this DOHA Round, we have Ag disagreements on level of subsidies and market access issues on expert credits, but what we're finding in our trading relationship with Europe is that the major obstacles aren't the traditional high tariffs, it's regulatory barriers. So it's things, regulation in Europe that prevents market access because it's designed to protect health and safety or to protect consumers.

That's the kind of thing we've seen with respect to GMOs where, of course, we have an outstanding WTO favorable decision. It's the kind of thing we've seen with respect to poultry where we have a very serious pending disagreement with the Europeans.

I think on all of these issues, our response is going to require a number of different tools. Sometimes that will be a negotiated settlement which is usually the preferable situation. Sometimes that's going to be a WTO case. In most cases, I don't think that WTO case indicates that our relationship is broken down. It really more indicates that our trading relationship is enormously complex.

If confirmed, I would work to press market access issues in the strongest possible way.

Senator CARDIN. Let me just observe, and I'm sure you are aware of it, the negotiations between Europe and the United States in trade has gotten more difficult in recent years.

I agree with you, historically,—well, we've had a lot of battle with developing countries, but the agriculture issues are only getting more complicated, considering the world circumstances on food.

So I would just urge you to really place this as a high priority area in trying to work out a better working relationship between Europe and the United States.

Let me move to one other question, if I might, for you and that is, the future of NATO as it relates to the efforts within Europe to develop their own security system under the European Union. Is this compatible or do you see that we may be in conflict with our strategic needs?

Dr. SILVERBERG. I think it may be too early to tell. We've said that we welcome a Europe that's ready and willing to assume its greater role for international peace and security and that there's a role for the European Union in that and so we see European Union missions that we support in Chad which is critical to help resolve the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. We have a European Union mission in Afghanistan we strongly support, but what we've said is that the ESDP should result in more European resources for international peace and security. We don't want to see the European Union in competition with NATO over scarce resources, so we don't want to see an overlapping bureaucracy in Brussels. We don't want to see the kind of overlapping conflict between the two organizations.

We've called for what our current Ambassador to NATO, Troy M. Newland, has called seamless cooperation. This is thankfully an issue for the French presidency. President Sarkozy has taken this seamless cooperation on as part of his agenda and so the French will be hosting a conference this next month but that's our general approach to the issue.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Mr. Girard-diCarlo, Austria has been a close ally of the United States. We've had a very strong relationship.

The popular view in Austria is against Turkey's admission to the European Union. Our position has been that we want to see the integration of Turkey within Europe.

How do you see your role as our ambassador to deal with promoting the United States goal of further integration, particularly of Turkey, in Europe?

Mr. GIRARD-DICARLO. Senator, I think that's a very important issue. It is incumbent upon Embassy Vienna and, if confirmed, I would use whatever energies I have to be applied to this issue.

It is in part an educational issue. It is in part perhaps a commercial issue. It's in part perhaps a religious issue. It's complex. As I'm sure you know, Austria now has a significant Muslim population which is not, from what I understand, being integrated very successfully into its society and that causes some problems.

So I think it would be incumbent on me as ambassador, if I'm confirmed, to aggressively pursue educational informational views so that I can help promote the interests of the United States and

the interests of a global and stable Europe and without Turkey's participation in that, I think we would be encumbered somewhat and Europe would be encumbered somewhat.

So I would look forward to every opportunity that I have to not only inform and maybe influence but certainly engage the Austrians on this issue.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Let me ask Mr. Culbertson. Let me—the Netherlands is one of our strongest trading partners, significant investment back and forth between our countries. We share a lot of common goals.

There are some concerns developing within the Netherlands in regard to its policies related to minorities. There seems like there is a growing intolerance within—concerning the minority community, and I would just like to get your observations as to how high a priority that's going to be, if you're confirmed, in dealing with the respect for the minority population.

There's a Muslim population in the Netherlands that's having difficulties, Jewish population. There's been a rise in anti-Semitism within the Netherlands, and how this will be on your radar screen.

Mr. CULBERTSON. Mr. Chairman, that would certainly be one of the top three priorities. They have had a—we've had a minority immigration problem, I guess, for several hundred years. They've had this problem for around 30 years.

I understand they have the second largest Muslim minority in Europe percentagewise. They're 60 percent now. There's a lot of hostility there. They haven't, as of this point, done a great job in integrating that society, assimilating that society.

We have, on the other hand, developed an outstanding outreach program to the Muslim community from our embassy. I think the prior ambassador has done a good job in a good outreach start. I certainly want to continue that, continue a dialog with the leaders of the Muslim community, the young folks, just the key leaders.

By the way, the latest polls, I think, show that 62 percent of the Muslims have a very unfavorable view of the United States. Perhaps if we can find out the common interests and correct some of the incorrect viewpoints and try to deal with some issues that are more irreconcilable, it will help the Muslims and the Dutch even come to better terms.

We can talk about our long struggle with civil rights in this country as well as our immigration problems and the ways we've dealt with it and sometimes the ways we haven't properly dealt with it, but it's an ongoing thing and I would—I understand public diplomacy has made the Netherlands a pilot country for even more outreach in the Muslim community and I'm looking forward to doing everything I can to be part of that program and lead it and see that it's successful.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. In the interest of time, I'm not going to ask questions of each of the three because I know we have pressures of potential Roll Call votes and other witnesses to hear.

I would like to second the chairman's thought that the intersection of the world food crisis and the world energy crisis has a dra-

matic impact on the United States and our European allies. It is clear we must work together to solve these crises.

Certainly our farm subsidies are controversial, the Europeans likewise. Frequently in our Agriculture Committee meetings, Senators say we're not going to unilaterally disarm and discontinue subsidies here in the United States. The United States and European subsidies are disastrous for the world in light of dangers of food shortages.

Exacerbating this problem is a specific European problem and that is genetically modified seed. It will be virtually impossible, despite all the brave talk about increasing production in the world, for the world to increase production without the use of technology. We have found in American agriculture that we are able to triple and quadruple yields in our lifetimes in corn and soybeans and wheat and other crops, largely through these breakthroughs.

Europeans in most cases have resisted this. I think this is a protectionist device against our exports, but this influences many countries in Africa and in Asia as almost a theological resistance to genetically modified seeds.

Now, the net result is even in Switzerland, the Financial Times says in the last couple of days, that people raided a facility in which experiments on genetically modified organisms were occurring just to exemplify their antipathy to this.

Now normally we talk about relationships with Russia, with China, with the European Union and so forth. This is a gut issue with regard to the possibilities that a lot of people are going to starve if we are not successful in convincing Europeans to work with us in this area. It will be a very tough one because emotion is running against us, both on subsidy as well as the genetically modified seeds.

But I wish each of you well and you're all well qualified in my judgment. I appreciate your willingness to serve our country in these capacities. I wanted to take this opportunity to say if we're serious and we must be about the world food crisis, it will not be solved without European and United States cooperation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate you all on your nominations and your willingness to serve the country. I appreciate it and I think everyone spoke very highly about you.

I do have one question for Ms. Silverberg, two actually. One is I appreciate your statement. At the end of a long list, you talked about human rights and promoting democracy and you mentioned several countries.

As we speak, the European Union is thinking about what it will do as it relates to Cuba. I certainly hope that if you are successful in being confirmed by the Senate, that you will put that high on the agenda. It's a challenge. The Europeans don't necessarily have the same views as us. They espouse that they believe in democracy and human rights for the people of Cuba but they have a much different way of approaching it and so I hope that you will put that not only on your radar screen but that you'll use the power of your

office in a significant way to promote both the administration's and to this point, the majority of the Congress's views in that regard.

I do have a question and that is, with reference to the Middle East: It seems to us, many of us, that we don't quite understand why United States policy choices seem to differ often with the Europeans, even though we have largely the same goals, and yet we seem to come out in very different ways on how to pursue those goals.

I'm wondering how is it that you assess the United States-European Union cooperation toward the Middle East, where are our differences, and how do we narrow those differences to pursue a common goal?

Dr. SILVERBERG. Thank you, Senator. First, I can assure you that if confirmed, Cuba and pressing human rights in Cuba would be a fundamental priority for my mission. It's been a priority in my current post and we agree strongly that this is the wrong time to send that kind of message to the Cuban Government, that it has somehow removed itself from the list of concerns of the international community.

President Bush pressed this issue very strongly in his visit to Europe last week, and so we hope that the European Union will not take that position and we've been glad to see some European countries and particularly former Soviet bloc countries, the ones with the most recent experience with a repressive government, taking the most responsible line on that.

On the Middle East, there are disagreements, of course, between us and the European Union and there may be a lot of reasons for that. They've had a different approach with respect to engagement with the Syrian Government than we have had. We have a closer bilateral relationship with Israel, I think it's fair to say, but we do cooperate, I think, constructively across the board on the Middle East peace process. We both agree on the importance of the bilateral negotiations. We agree on the importance of building Palestinian institutions. We agree on building regional support for the process, and I think the European Union was strongly supportive of the Annapolis process.

We support—we've cooperated on Iran, very successfully producing four Security Council resolutions, working with the Europeans as part of this P5+1 exchange. We've worked very closely with the French in particular on Lebanon which isn't to say we've agreed on every tactical issue but on the whole, we've had very good cooperation, and I think even on Iraq where I think we had the greatest amount of disagreement, we've moved closer together in terms of encouraging the European Union to take on some of the important rule of law activities and other things.

So generally, I am reasonably optimistic. There will be disagreements, but I think we can work within a broader framework.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator DeMint.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES DEMINT,
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Senator DEMINT. Thank you, Senator Cardin, and I want to thank all three of you for your willingness to serve as well, and I'll

just maybe make just a quick challenge to Ms. Silverberg and let you have a quick response.

The tie between the United States and Europe is much stronger on the economic level and more positive than political and I really think that's the long-term bond that's going to keep us as strong trading partners and allies.

My hope is, is that, you will use every opportunity to promote free trade zone between the United States and Europe, overcome barriers, such as Senator Lugar was talking about, but I do believe we can set a model for the world since Europe and the United States are closest on a lot of their just humanitarian interests and environmental interests and I just think that's real important for our country.

I know from having a number of European companies in our State, that even when we're squabbling with the French or the Germans on the political side, we're great friends and business partners when it comes to doing business around the world.

So I just see that as the tie that binds long term and I hope you see that as a priority going forward.

Dr. SILVERBERG. Senator, I do, and if confirmed, it would be essential to continue to break down trade barriers, especially on Ag, but really across the board, and I know that the administration has taken this on as part of the TransAtlantic Economic Council discussions and it will continue to be a high priority.

Senator DEMINT. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Let me thank our three nominees for their response to our questions. We will now turn to the second panel. Thank you all very much.

While we're setting up for the second panel, let me announce that there's anticipated votes on the Senate floor starting in about 10 minutes. Senator Menendez and I will attempt to keep the committee in session during that period of time by us rotating voting, if that is possible, in order not to inconvenience the witnesses and those who are in the committee room.

Senator DEMINT. Senator Cardin——

Senator CARDIN. Yes?

Senator DEMINT [continuing]. Could I ask consent to submit my formal statement for the record?

Senator CARDIN. Absolutely. Without objection, your statement will be made part of the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator DeMint follows:]

Senator CARDIN. On this panel, we do have five nominees for ambassadorships with European countries. The first nominee that we will hear from will be Mr. John R. Beyrle to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation.

Mr. Beyrle has already been introduced by Senator Levin.

Let me just tell you that I was humbled and impressed by the story of your father, a true hero, and I thank Senator Levin for sharing that with us, and thank you for your public service, all of you.

STATEMENT OF JOHN R. BEYRLE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. BEYRLE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

I'd like to recognize, if I could, members of my family. My father- and mother-in-law, Kenneth and Ann Greene, and my daughter, Allison, who are here with me today. And I'd also like to thank Senator Levin for honoring the memory of my father and mother with his kind words. Thanks to him, I feel like they're here with us today, as well.

Mr. Chairman, I have a longer statement that I'd request be entered into the record.

Senator CARDIN. Without objection, all of your statements will be entered into the record.

Mr. BEYRLE. I'm honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation. I, too, am grateful for the confidence and trust expressed in me by the President and Secretary Rice through this nomination and, if confirmed, I will do my utmost to advance and defend American interests in Russia and I look forward to consulting and cooperating closely with the committee, with its staff, in pursuit of the goals of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I have to say it's a special pleasure for me to be back in Dirksen 419 where I spent so many hours as a Pearson Fellow on the staff of Senator Paul Simon in the 101st Congress. When I see Bertie on the job here, I know that we're in very good hands, indeed.

I've now spent over three decades of my life studying, working, and living in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and in Russia, and I believe, thanks to that, that I've gained a broad range of experience that relates directly to the challenges and the opportunities that I would face if confirmed.

I made my first trip to Russia as a somewhat younger university student in Leningrad in 1976, after 4 years of studying Russia at college in Michigan. I spent 2002 to 2005 as deputy chief of mission at our mission in Russia, but my first posting to the U.S. Embassy was 25 years ago. Obviously the world has been transformed since then. No longer are the United States and the Soviet Union pitted in that ideological and military confrontation of the cold war.

Our bilateral relationship has experienced great changes over these years and I would say the world is a safer place in large part for those changes. Today, our relationship is much more complex, including elements of strategic cooperation and areas where we have sharp differences.

As much as things have changed, however, I think important elements remain the same. Russia remains a great power. The largest country in the world, Russia's attitudes and influence matter in almost every issue of importance to America, whether we're talking about the fight against global terrorism, nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, or strategic and regional issues involving North Korea, Iran, or the Middle East.

The United States recognizes the shared challenges that our two countries face and we will seek to cooperate with the Government of Russia whenever and wherever possible because we will always

achieve much more with Russia's cooperation than we will without it.

This principle was spelled out in the Strategic Framework Declaration announced by Presidents Bush and Putin in Sochi in April. A roadmap for the way forward in United States-Russian relations, the Declaration states that the two countries will work together to promote security, prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, combat terrorism, and advance economic cooperation.

In less than two decades, we built a strong record of concrete cooperative achievements in these areas. For example, under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, the United States has helped Russia improve physical security at chemical, biological, and nuclear research production and storage facilities. The United States has helped Russia dispose of fissile materials through the agreement. Material from dismantled warheads is being downblended into nuclear fuel used in the United States.

Senator Lugar, thank you for your leadership in that from the very start.

United States-Russia trade is growing. It totals now nearly $27 billion. There are many other examples and I think the United States and Russia can point to those examples and should point to these achievements with pride.

At the same time, our desire to strengthen our relations with Russia and our desire to see a democratic and a strong Russia as a constructive influence in world affairs means that we must be honest and open about the areas in which we have disagreements or in which we have concerns about Russia's development.

The President and Secretary Rice have been forthright about these issues in their public statements and their discussions with Russian leaders. They include concerns about trends that are moving Russia away from a stronger democratic future, weakening the institutions of civil society and endangering the sustainability of economic growth.

We've seen opposition political parties and supporters facing increased restrictions. Nongovernmental organizations and the media have been subject to pressure, harassment, and sometimes violence. Problems with corruption and the rule of law persist in ways that hinder the operation of foreign businesses and dampen the investment climate.

We are also very concerned about Russia's relations with its closest neighbors. While we appreciate the great influence that Russia has in the world, we would like to see Russian leaders exercise that influence in a way that does not increase regional tensions but contributes to peace and stability.

Russia's long-term interests are best served by having strong sovereign and prospering neighbors and by energy dealings in which the terms are transparent, market-driven, and mutually beneficial.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has a strong stake in Russia's success. However, that success, as Russian President Dmitry Medvedev recently acknowledged, can be built only upon a foundation of democratic and free market reforms. These reforms are in Russia's own interests and we remain committed to working with the Russian people and their leaders to implement them.

If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I plan to build on the excellent work of my distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Bill Burns, to expand the cooperation we've already undertaken with the Government of Russia and to speak honestly and constructively with Russian leaders when we encounter areas of disagreement.

If confirmed, I believe that my experience in and knowledge of Russia, its history, culture, people, and language, will enable me to be an effective advocate for United States foreign policy interests.

I thank you for the honor of appearing before this committee and look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Beyrle follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN R. BEYRLE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to Russia. I am grateful for the confidence and trust expressed in me by the President and Secretary Rice through this nomination. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to advance and defend American interests in Russia, and look forward to consulting and cooperating closely with the committee and its staff, and with your colleagues in Congress, in pursuit of those goals.

It's a special pleasure to be back here in Dirksen 419, where I spent so many hours during the 101st Congress as a Pearson fellow on the staff of the late Senator Paul Simon.

've now spent over three decades studying, working, and living in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and in Russia. I believe I have gained a broad range of experience related directly to the challenges and opportunities I would face if confirmed for this position.

I made my first trip to Russia as a university student in Leningrad in 1976, after 4 years of studying Russian in college. In the late 1970s, I spent almost 3 years traveling to dozens of cities across the USSR on American cultural exhibitions organized by the U.S. Information Agency. I spent 2002 to 2005 as deputy chief of our mission in Russia, but my first tour at the United States Embassy in Moscow was 25 years ago. The world has been transformed since then. Most importantly, no longer are the United States and the Soviet Union pitted in the ideological and military confrontation of the cold war. Our bilateral relationship has experienced great change in these years, and the world is a safer place for those changes. Today our relationship is much more complex, including elements of strategic cooperation, and areas where we have sharp differences.

As much as things have changed, however, important elements remain the same. Russia remains a great power. The largest country in the world, the Russian Federation enjoys enormous global influence. It is the only nuclear power comparable to the United States, and the world's largest producer of hydrocarbons. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Russia's attitudes and influence matter in almost every issue of importance to America, whether the fight against global terrorism, nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, or strategic and regional issues involving North Korea, Iran, or the Middle East.

The United States recognizes the shared challenges that our countries face. We seek to cooperate with the Government of Russia wherever possible, because we will always achieve much more with Russia's cooperation than without it. This principle was spelled out in the Strategic Framework Declaration announced by Presidents Bush and Putin at Sochi in April. A roadmap for the way forward in United States-Russian relations, the declaration states that the two countries will work together to promote security, prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, combat terrorism, and advance economic cooperation. In less than two decades, we have built a strong record of concrete, cooperative achievements in these areas. For example, under the 20-year-old Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, together we have eliminated an entire category of our nuclear weapons. Under the Cooperative Threat Reduction program, the United States has helped Russia improve physical security at chemical, biological, and nuclear research, production, and storage facilities. The United States has helped Russia dispose of fissile material through the agreement—material from dismantled warheads is being down-blended into nuclear fuel used in the United States. Two Russian plutonium-production reactors have recently been shut down and will be replaced by fossil fuel plants with United States assistance.

United States-Russia trade is growing, totaling nearly $27 billion last year. United States companies and their foreign subsidiaries have invested more than $16 billion in Russia, and Russian companies have invested more than $5 billion in the United States since 2000. Both Russia and the United States can and should point to such achievements with pride—and use them as benchmarks for future progress.

At the same time, our desire to strengthen our relations with Russia—and to see a democratic and strong Russia as a constructive influence in world affairs—means that we must be open and honest about the areas in which we have disagreements, or concerns about Russia's development. Both the President and Secretary Rice have been forthright about these issues in their public statements and their discussions with Russian leaders. They include concerns about trends that are moving Russia away from a stronger democratic future, weakening the institutions of civil society, and endangering the sustainability of economic growth. We have seen opposition political parties and supporters facing increased restrictions. Nongovernmental organizations and the media have been subject to pressure, harassment, and sometimes violence. Problems with corruption and the rule of law persist in ways that hinder the operation of foreign businesses and dampen the investment climate. Freedom for civil society to operate and for citizens to express their political will is vital to the democratic development of any country, but especially a country as influential as Russia.

We are also very concerned about Russia's relations with its closest neighbors. While we appreciate the great influence Russia has in the world, we would like to see Russian leaders exercise that influence in a way that does not increase regional tensions, but contributes to peace and stability. Russia's long-term interests are best served by having strong, sovereign, prospering neighbors, and by energy dealings in which the terms are transparent, market-driven, and mutually beneficial.

The United States has a strong stake in Russia's success. However, that success, as Russian President Dmitry Medvedev recently acknowledged, can be built only upon a foundation of democratic and free market reforms. These reforms are in Russia's own interest, and we remain committed to working with the Russian people and their leaders to implement them.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed I will build upon the excellent work of my predecessor, Ambassador William Burns, to expand the cooperation we have already undertaken with the Government of the Russian Federation, and to speak plainly with Russian leaders when we encounter areas of disagreement. We will work to implement the roadmap of the Strategic Framework Declaration, including cooperation in the field of nuclear energy and nonproliferation; the expansion of Russian-American commercial ties and the integration of Russia into global economic institutions; the struggle against terrorism and transnational crime; and the encouragement of the development of democratic institutions, rule of law, and a vibrant civil society in Russia.

Mr. Chairman, these are but a few of the many challenges and opportunities that define the relationship between the United States and Russia today. If confirmed, I believe that my experience in and knowledge of Russia, its history, culture, people, and language will enable me to be an effective advocate for the United States foreign policy interests. Thank you for the honor of appearing before you today, and for considering my nomination.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much. We'll now turn to Mr. Asif Chaudhry to be Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova.

STATEMENT OF ASIF J. CHAUDHRY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Mr. CHAUDHRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I may, I would like to introduce my family. My wife, Charla Chaudhry, my daughter, Brianna Chaudhry, and my son, Rishan Chaudhry. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova. I deeply appreciate the confidence and trust President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to promote United States interests in Moldova.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is a strong partner with Moldova as it continues along the path of building viable demo-

cratic institutions and a free market economic system. While Moldova has made tremendous strides toward achieving these objectives, the country has faced serious challenges along this path.

I would like to take a moment today to focus on four United States priority interests with Moldova that are directly linked with these challenges.

First and foremost, the United States objective in Moldova is to help strengthen its democratic institutions, such that the citizens of that country can have faith in its political system. I believe that a democratic system supported by a free media is an essential element in facilitating Moldova's integration with the EuroAtlantic community.

The second priority area is keeping Moldova on the path of economic reform and development and making sure that the government consistently implements the laws on economic reform that are being passed by the country's Parliament.

Since corruption remains a major obstacle to sustained economic growth and development, the Millennium Challenge Corporation has implemented a $24.7 million threshold program to support Moldova's fight against corruption and is reviewing a $518 million Compact proposal that will focus on positive economic growth.

The issue that presents the most serious challenge to achieving the first two objectives is the unresolved conflict in Transnistria. The United States is committed to a resolution of this issue that guarantees Moldova's territorial integrity and includes the withdrawal of Russian soldiers. This is a key to establishing Moldova's sovereignty over all its territory.

If confirmed, I will make this a major part of my mission as Ambassador to Moldova.

The fourth area of priority interest for the United States is the issue of transporter crime and the tragic prevalence of trafficking in persons. Better controls over its border and economic prosperity within the country, along with a more concerted effort to fight domestic corruption, will do much to assist Moldova's struggle to protect its citizens, especially women and young girls, from being exploited.

If confirmed, I will urge the recently-appointed Prime Minister Greceanii to fulfill her commitment to fight crime, especially discourage of trafficking persons.

Mr. Chairman, as Moldova is strategically located at the border of the European Union, it is important for us to engage its leadership on these key areas of interest. It is worth mentioning that in spite of these serious issues, Moldova has made noticeable strides in economic and political development. It is a friendly country where the United States enjoys considerable influence. It deserves our support and encouragement.

Before concluding, I would like to once again take the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to thank my wife and children for all the sacrifices they make as we move from country to country as a result of my commitment to serve our country around the globe.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to share my thoughts. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you closely to advance the interests of the United States in Moldova.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Chaudhry follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ASIF J. CHAUDHRY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova. I deeply appreciate the confidence and trust that President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to promote United States interests in Moldova.

I am a career Foreign Service officer with the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the United States Department of Agriculture. I am currently assigned as the Deputy Administrator of FAS, in charge of the Office of Global Analysis. I have spent most of my career working on issues dealing with international trade, market reforms, and developing economic infrastructure in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union countries. As the Agricultural Attache at the United States Embassy in Warsaw, Poland, in the early 1990s, I was fortunate to have been a part of United States Government efforts to establish rural infrastructure that was key to the successful transition of its economy to a new direction.

As the Agricultural Counselor in Moscow Russia during 1996–1999, I was involved in implementing one of the largest ever United States Government commodity assistance programs that helped protect a $1 billion dollar market for U.S. agricultural products. During this time, I also had the opportunity to support United States efforts to reform parts of the Ukrainian agriculture sector. During my most recent overseas assignment as the Minister Counselor for Agricultural Affairs in Cairo, Egypt (2002–2006), I was fortunate to have negotiated the removal of several trade barriers and restrictions on United States exports in a number of countries in the Middle East including Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel. If confirmed, I hope that my extensive leadership experience in working in economies in transition toward a free market system, especially in the former Soviet Union countries, and my commitment to the United States values of freedom and democracy will make me an effective representative of the United States and Ambassador to Moldova.

The United States is a strong partner with Moldova as it attempts to deepen its democratic reforms at home and integrate with Europe. The United States has an excellent relationship with President Voronin, Prime Minister Greceanii, and other senior officials in the Moldovan Government. We support those in Moldova who are firmly committed to democratic principles and to sound economic policies. I would like to take a moment today to focus on the four United States priority interests with Moldova: first, democracy; second, economic development; third, the frozen conflict in Transnistria; and fourth, transborder crime and, in particular, trafficking in persons.

FIRST: DEMOCRACY

Moldova will hold parliamentary elections in the spring of 2009 and the new parliament will elect the next President. The previous parliamentary elections in 2005, as well as June 2007 local elections, were judged by independent observers to be generally free and well administered. Both elections, however, fell short of meeting all standards central to a genuinely competitive election. The United States will be closely monitoring the 2009 campaign and election to encourage Moldova to meet all international election commitments. If confirmed, I will be personally involved in trying to ensure free and fair elections. Moldovan Government influence over and restrictions on the media remain a key concern as we look ahead to the elections. It is regrettable that overall media freedom has deteriorated in Moldova, according to international NGOs that monitor media practices. Freedom House, for example, rated the country's media as "not free" for the past 4 years. Corruption is another serious obstacle to good governance in Moldova. It undermines Moldovan citizens' faith in their democratic institutions and impedes Moldova's modernization.

SECOND: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Despite sustained economic growth, Moldova remains one of Europe's poorest countries, with many of its citizens working abroad, not being able to find adequate opportunities at home. Moldova still lacks an adequate investment climate and needs to take a more concerted approach to economic reform. If confirmed, I plan on working with Moldova on these pressing issues. Additionally, Moldova remains dependent on Russia for its energy supplies and as the primary market for its exports, both of which Russia has disrupted in recent years. It is important that

Moldova employ sound policies to diversify its economic base and also take advantage of help and cooperation from other countries to sustain growth and find new markets.

Cooperation with Moldova on the Millennium Challenge Corporation's (MCC) Threshold Country Program has been very good. Corruption is a principal constraint to economic growth and saps confidence in the government. The $24.7 million Threshold Program administered by USAID is designed to help Moldova combat corruption in government institutions and improve transparency and accountability. As of the latest quarterly report in March 2008, the program met all performance targets. Moldova submitted its MCC Compact Program proposal in February 2008. The proposal requests $518 million in assistance for road and irrigation system rehabilitation, a transition to high-value agriculture, energy sector rehabilitation, and support for the development of rural primary health care. It is now under review by MCC, which is examining the proposed components to ensure they will have positive rates of return as well as the size of the funding request.

THIRD: TRANSNISTRIA

The United States is committed to a resolution of the Transnistria conflict that guarantees Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity. I am convinced that this long-standing conflict can and should be resolved. The United States remains committed to the 5+2 process, involving the Moldovan and Transnistrian sides, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Russia, and Ukraine, with the European Union and the United States serving as active observers. Despite the best efforts of many, including the Finnish Chairmanship of the OSCE, the 5+2 talks have not made progress on core settlement issues, like the future status of the Transnistrian region or the withdrawal of the Russian peacekeeping presence. Recent, informal discussions among the 5+2 parties have focused on confidence-building initiatives that seek to create favorable conditions for resumption of formal settlement talks, and have shown some progress. I am encouraged by the Finnish OSCE Chairman in Office's commitment to resolving the conflict and intend to do what I can to move an acceptable solution forward. In this vein, if confirmed, I intend to follow the example set by Ambassador Kirby and reach out actively to all parts of Moldova, including the Transnistria region, to show the interest and support of the United States in Moldova's future as a united country.

The United States and NATO allies have for more than 8 years urged Russia to fulfill its 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit commitments relating to withdrawal of Russian military forces and facilities from Moldova and Georgia. NATO allies have made clear that fulfillment of those commitments is essential for us to complete ratification of the Adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (the Adapted CFE Treaty). In fall 2007, the United States developed, and NATO allies endorsed, a creative package proposal for parallel actions on fulfillment of remaining Istanbul commitments by Russia, and ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty by NATO Allies. That package, which has the support of the Government of Moldova, is still under discussion. The ideas set out in the package concerning Russian withdrawal from Moldova are among the most contentious with Moscow. We will remain in close contact with Moldovan authorities as those talks go forward. The United States regards the presence of Russian forces on Moldovan soil, without Moldova's consent, as a violation of the basic principle—contained in the CFE Treaty—that countries should be able to choose whether or not to allow foreign forces on their territory.

FOURTH: TRANSBORDER CRIME AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Criminal networks that illicitly transport contraband goods, drugs, counterfeit currency, and people are active in Eastern Europe. The United States Government provides considerable training to Moldovan law enforcement agencies or officials to help combat transborder crime. We are particularly worried about trafficking in persons. Moldova is a major source country for trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Labor trafficking of men to work in Russia is increasingly a problem, as well. The government's lack of visible follow-up to allegations of government officials complicit in trafficking in persons is a serious concern. The State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons downgraded Moldova to Tier 3 on June 4, finding that the government does not fully comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so. Prime Minister Greceanii, who recently took office as Prime Minister, has stated that she is serious about combating trafficking in all forms. If confirmed as ambassador, I will urge the Prime Minister to make good on

these intentions, particularly in addressing the alleged complicity of some government officials in trafficking.

IN CONCLUSION

Moldova is a country that continues to make strides in its economic and political development. It is a friendly country where the United States enjoys considerable influence. It deserves our support and encouragement.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you again for the opportunity to share my thoughts about the relationship with Moldova. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you closely, and would welcome the opportunity to host you and other members of Congress in Chisinau.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you very much for your testimony, and we'll now turn to Ms. Tina Kaidanow to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo.

STATEMENT OF TINA KAIDANOW, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO KOSOVO

Ms. aidanow. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I might, I'd like to introduce my parents, Howard and Esther Kaidanow, who are here today and residents of the great State of Maryland.

Senator CARDIN. Take as much time as you want. [Laughter.]

Ms. aidanow. That's what I was aiming for. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it's a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the first United States Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo. I'm honored by the trust placed in me by President Bush and Secretary Rice, but success in achieving our goals in Kosovo and the region will depend on close consultation with this committee and with others in Congress.

As you recall, Mr. Chairman, it took a NATO military intervention in 1999 to compel the Serbian Dictator Slobodan Milosevic to withdraw his security forces from Kosovo and end the systematic violence of his regime against Kosovo's civilian population.

In the aftermath of that conflict, the U.N. Security Council decided to remove Kosovo from Belgrade's governance and the U.N. mission in Kosovo was established to help Kosovo recover from war and build its own institutions of democratic self-government.

The United States supported U.N.-facilitated efforts beginning in 2005 to determine the ultimate political status of Kosovo. After months of negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina, U.N. Special Envoy Maarti Ahtisaari produced a set of detailed provisions designed to facilitate Kosovo's development into a stable multiethnic society.

Ahtisaari also recommended that Kosovo become independent, subject to a period of international supervision.

The United States supported these recommendations which offered Kosovo and its neighbors the best opportunity to move beyond the conflicts of the past.

In its first 4 months of independence, Kosovo has made significant progress in implementing the Ahtisaari protections for its minorities. The Kosovo Assembly has adopted 40 new laws needed to implement the Ahtisaari plan and has approved a new constitution that meets the highest democratic standards.

There are still, of course, many, many challenges ahead. In particular, Belgrade's opposition to independence as well as its overt policy of promoting ethnic separation in Kosovo, has created a serious threat to stability.

Nevertheless, we believe strongly that the resolution of Kosovo's status has opened the door for Kosovo to assume responsibility for its future and for the well-being of its people.

To do this, Kosovo will need help. The European Union has rightly stepped up to provide the bulk of assistance to the new state and we will encourage Europe to continue to play this leading role. Active U.S. engagement, however, will remain essential.

The United States is helping to strengthen Kosovo's economy, promote democratic governance, and bolster civil society with a special emphasis on programs that benefit Kosovo's ethnic minorities.

Perhaps the single greatest United States priority in Kosovo is to foster a multiethnic society in which the rights, security, and culture of Kosovo's ethnic minorities and particularly the Serb minority are firmly protected.

In the last 2 years, the United States Government has built infrastructure in Serb communities, advocated on behalf of Serb concerns, and encouraged Kosovo's Government to provide political and financial backing for sustainable Serb returns to Kosovo.

Protecting the holy sites of the Serbian Orthodox Church has also been a major goal for us.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the success of Kosovo is in the United States interests. A strong and focused United States approach in tandem with our European partners remains absolutely fundamental to progress in Kosovo and the region. We and the people of Kosovo have everything to gain from this kind of active collaboration.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before the committee, and I look forward to answering any questions that you have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Kaidanow follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TINA S. KAIDANOW, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the first United States Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo. I am honored by the trust placed in me by President Bush and Secretary Rice at this decisive moment for the people of Kosovo. Success in achieving our goals in Kosovo and the region will depend on close consultation with this committee and with others in Congress. If I may, I would like to say a special thanks to my parents, who are here today. Both of them came to the United States many years ago as immigrants, and they could not be prouder to see their daughter serve the country they love so much.

Kosovo's historic declaration of independence on February 17 marked the end of Yugoslavia's nonconsensual collapse, one of the most tragic chapters of European history since World War II. During this period, United States policy in southeast Europe has been consistent. President George H.W. Bush, President Clinton and President George W. Bush have had a single vision for Europe since the fall of communism in 1989: a continent whole, free, and at peace. To implement this vision in Southeast Europe, we have acted to end wars, build multiethnic tolerance and bring the entire region closer to the Euro-Atlantic family of democracies.

For the last 14 years, many of my assignments in the Foreign Service have dealt with the conflicts and problems caused by the break up of the former Yugoslavia. In Serbia, Bosnia, and now in Kosovo as Charge d'Affaires ad interim, I have wit-

nessed the trauma of war and the power of U.S. involvement in bringing peace to the region and sustaining that peace. I traveled to Kosovo repeatedly during the conflict years of the late 1990s, and I later participated in the 1999 Rambouillet peace conference, as the international community tried to find a way out of the crisis and obtain Belgrade's agreement to end its destructive and abusive policies in Kosovo. Kosovo's recent history—and the key United States role in it—is in many ways personal for me.

As you recall, Mr. Chairman, it took a NATO military intervention in 1999 to compel the Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic to withdraw his security forces from Kosovo. In the aftermath, the U.N. Security Council decided to remove Kosovo from Belgrade's governance and the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo was established to help govern and develop it. Under U.N. guidance, Kosovo gradually recovered from war and built its own institutions of democratic self-government.

The United States supported U.N.-facilitated efforts that began in 2005 to determine the political status of Kosovo. After months of negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina, U.N. Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari produced a set of recommendations for Kosovo's future. These proposals—the "Ahtisaari Plan"—provided a comprehensive blueprint for Kosovo's development into a stable, multiethnic society on its way to integration in the Euro-Atlantic community. Special Envoy Ahtisaari also recommended that Kosovo become independent, subject to a period of international supervision. The United States supported these recommendations, which offered Kosovo and its Southeast European neighbors the best opportunity to move beyond the conflicts of the past. As chief of mission of the United States Office in Pristina, I helped explain to the Kosovo leadership the benefits this package could offer their people, but also urged them to pronounce clearly their commitment to the substantial rights afforded by the plan to the Serb community and other minority communities in Kosovo.

On the day after Kosovo declared its independence in line with the Ahtisaari Plan, President Bush recognized Kosovo as an independent state and agreed to establish diplomatic relations. Since February, 43 countries have recognized Kosovo, including more than ⅔ of European Union and NATO members and several significant countries from every region of the world. Beyond the question of recognition of Kosovo's independence, the new state enjoys broad international support. Many countries that have yet to recognize Pristina formally are nevertheless providing personnel, technical assistance, and political backing for efforts in-country to build up Kosovo society.

Although independence marked a significant step forward, Kosovo has serious problems. Economic development is slow, political institutions are weak, and interethnic tensions remain. I believe, however, it is a good sign that Kosovo's minority Serbs have stayed in Kosovo after independence and that the atmosphere between the two communities has remained calm and peaceful overall despite serious provocations from Belgrade and hardline Serbs in Kosovo's north.

In its first 4 months of independence, Kosovo has made significant progress in implementing the Ahtisaari protections for its minorities. Prime Minister Thaci, President Sejdiu, and other key institutional leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to all aspects of the Ahtisaari Plan and have sent consistent messages of inclusion to Kosovo's ethnic minorities. The Kosovo Assembly has already adopted 40 new laws needed to implement the Ahtisaari Plan, including legislation on the decentralization of local government, protection of minority rights, and cultural heritage safeguards. The Assembly also approved a new constitution that meets the highest democratic standards. Kosovo is working to deepen relations with its neighbors and has moved forward collaboratively with Macedonia to demarcate their mutual border in accordance with the Ahtisaari Plan.

There are still, of course, many challenges ahead. Belgrade's opposition to independence, as well as its overt policy of promoting ethnic separation in Kosovo, has created threats to stability, and it appears that Russia will act to block Kosovo's entry into those international organizations where Russia or its supporters have a veto. There is much work ahead in managing Kosovo's transition from U.N. administration to supervised independence, a journey unique to Kosovo given the unusual circumstances of its recent history. Nevertheless, we believe strongly that the resolution of Kosovo's status has opened the door for Kosovo to assume responsibility for its future and for the well-being of its people.

To do this, Kosovo needs help. The European Union has rightly stepped up to provide the bulk of assistance and guidance to the new state. The European Union will head up two new international presences in Kosovo, one responsible for rule of law and one responsible for supervising full implementation of the Ahtisaari plan. We will encourage Europe to continue to play this leading role. Active United States en-

gagement, however, will remain essential to the stabilization of Kosovo and the region.

Nearly 1,500 United States Army National Guardsmen of a total force numbering approximately 16,000 currently serve in KFOR, the NATO-led stabilization force in Kosovo. Although United States troops can and have operated throughout Kosovo, they primarily help maintain a safe and secure environment in eastern Kosovo, where a majority of Kosovo Serbs live. They are universally respected by Albanians and Serbs alike for their professionalism and effectiveness in dealing with a mixed-ethnic civilian population. The United States supports ongoing NATO efforts to carry out certain Ahtisaari tasks, such as the establishment of a small Kosovo Security Force, which will allow Kosovo—over time—to contribute to its own security and permit the drawdown of international forces.

For many years, over 200 United States civilian police officers have participated in the current U.N. mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). As UNMIK hands over justice functions to local authorities and to the European Union, the United States will provide a reduced number of police, prosecutors, and judges to the European Union's new rule of law mission, known as EULEX. The United States is also helping to strengthen Kosovo's economy, promote democratic governance, and bolster civil society, with a special emphasis on programs that benefit Kosovo's ethnic minorities. While Europe remains firmly in the lead in material assistance and provides the ultimate incentive of closer association with the European Union, our resources will help Kosovo pay off its share of debt from the former Yugoslavia and accomplish a host of other important goals.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps the single greatest United States priority in Kosovo is to foster a stable, multiethnic society in which the rights, security, and culture of Kosovo's ethnic minorities are firmly protected. The United States Embassy in Pristina has been and will continue to be engaged on a daily basis with the Kosovo Government and with Kosovo's ethnic communities to promote this objective.

Although Kosovo Serbs opposed United States recognition of Kosovo's independence, many of them recognize that the United States is actively committed to their community's welfare. Our efforts to reach out directly to the Serb community and support its needs have had a tangible payoff in enhancing communication and trust. In the last few years, the United States Government has supplemented Kosovo's inadequate resources by building schools, roads and other infrastructure in Serb communities; we have advocated on behalf of Serb concerns directly to the Kosovo central government and to local authorities; we have helped resolve property disputes for Serbs who wish to return to Kosovo; and we have supported the growth of a nascent Serb media in Kosovo that can articulate the ideas of that community without filtering from Belgrade. We have encouraged Kosovo's government—which has already spent more than $77 million to build homes and provide support for returning Serbs—to expand those resources even further and provide political backing for sustainable returns.

Protecting the holy sites of the Serbian Orthodox Church, as well as its rights as an institution, has also been a major goal for us. In addition to possessing churches and monasteries of global architectural and historic significance, the Serbian Orthodox Church plays an important role in the everyday lives of Kosovo Serbs. Kosovo's Government has spent close to $10 million to reconstruct and preserve those churches that were damaged in the tragic March 2004 riots. This is an effort we have supported vigorously over the past 2 years. We have also worked successfully with local governments to modify development plans that might affect the Church's holy sites, and we have facilitated understanding between religious leaders and local populations when Orthodox authorities have sought permission for construction that affects the wider community.

Mr. Chairman, the success of Kosovo is in the United States interest. The circumstances of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia posed—and in some ways continue to pose—a fundamental challenge to stability in southeast Europe, and history has shown that broken societies attract the great scourges of our age, including transnational crime, ethnic conflict, trafficking in persons, and terrorism.

To counter the impact of these forces, a strong and focused U.S. approach, in tandem with our European partners, remains absolutely essential. I believe our efforts in Kosovo and the region make a meaningful difference each and every day, and our continued involvement will promote long-term stability in this part of Europe. If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and with you to help Kosovo take those steps necessary to become a productive member of the Euro-Atlantic family of democratic nations. We and the people of Kosovo have everything to gain from this collaboration.

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

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for your testimony. We'll now turn to Mr. Philip Thomas Reeker to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia.

STATEMENT OF PHILIP REEKER, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Mr. REEKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Menendez, Senator DeMint.

I'm privileged to appear before you today and I'll be pleased to submit my full statement for the record.

I'm also very privileged to be joined at this dais by such a distinguished panel of colleagues. It's a great honor for me to join the people I've known in the Foreign Service for many years.

If I may, I would like to begin by introducing my adorable wife and partner in service to our Nation, Solveig Johnson Reeker, herself a career member of the United States Foreign Service, and I'd also like to recognize my father, Larry Reeker, and the two youngest of my four siblings, my brothers, Greg and Seth. Today happens to be Greg's 28th birthday and we wish him all the best. Seth, in fact, spent the summer of 1998 with me in Macedonia, when he was just 8 years old, while I was serving at our embassy in Skopje as the public affairs officer under Ambassador Christopher Hill.

Should the members of this committee and the full Senate confirm my nomination, I will do my utmost as ambassador to validate the trust placed in me to advance our Nation's goals in Macedonia and in Southeast Europe and to represent our country to the best of my abilities.

I am certainly struck by how far Macedonia, as a country, has come since I last served in Skopje. Indeed, no period since its independence in 1991 has been an easy one for Macedonia and the last 9 years have been no exception.

The country has suffered setbacks and challenges to its stability but has overcome each to regain its bearings and press forward again in pursuit of a better future.

Today, Macedonia is a stable unitary model of multiethnic democracy in the Balkans, still in transition, but with much stronger democratic and entrepreneurial traditions of vibrant inclusive political process and steadily maturing institutions of government and civil society.

Mr. Chairman, our relations with Macedonia have never been closer. Pro United States sentiment among Macedonians of all ethnicities is extremely strong. Americans and Macedonians share an affinity of values and we are partners in the major endeavors and challenges of our time.

I just returned last week from service in Iraq and just last month in my previous capacity as counselor at our United States Embassy in Baghdad, I had the opportunity and honor to meet with the Macedonian Ranger and Infantry Platoons deployed with American forces at Tajik. They are brave and professional soldiers serving with distinction and high morale alongside United States troops since 2003 in Iraq.

Macedonian troops in Iraq receive the highest praise and respect from the United States commanders. Macedonia is a small country but punching above its weight in United States-led coalitions. Once

a net security consumer, Macedonia is today a net security producer, keen on bringing its unique capability into NATO as a full-fledged member.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed as ambassador, I would strive to uphold and continue on the distinguished record of the men and woman who have held this position before me, promoting United States goals in Macedonia while maintaining a solid partnership with the host country.

If confirmed, I and the mission I would lead will continue to help the leaders and people of Macedonia build on their successes and achieve through continued reform the multiethnic democracy and free market economy they desire, including integration into NATO and into the European Union.

I know I cannot succeed in these endeavors without your support. If you confirm me, you can count on my close cooperation with you, the full committee, the entire legislative branch, as we work together to serve the American people and for the advancement of U.S. interests.

I look forward very much to answering any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Reeker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PHILIP THOMAS REEKER, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am privileged to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be our country's next Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia. I am deeply honored by the confidence expressed by the President and Secretary Rice in selecting me for this important assignment. It has been my privilege to meet committee members and staff during my years in the Foreign Service, and I pledge continued commitment and candor as you consider confirming me for this new position. Should the members of this committee and the full Senate confirm my nomination, I will do my utmost as ambassador to validate the trust placed in me, to advance our Nation's goals in Macedonia and in Southeast Europe, and to represent our country to the best of my abilities. That would include maintaining a close working relationship with this committee, its staff, and your congressional colleagues in furthering the security and interests of the American people.

Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to be accompanied today by my wife and best friend, Solveig Johnson Reeker, herself a career member of the Foreign Service. I would also like to recognize my father, Larry Reeker, and two of my four siblings, my brothers, Greg and Seth. Seth, in fact, spent the summer of 1998 with me in Macedonia when he was 8 years old, while I was serving at our embassy in Skopje as the Public Affairs Officer, under Ambassador Christopher Hill. If confirmed, I will return to a Macedonia very different than the one I left in 1999. I am struck by how far Macedonia, as a country, has come since I last served in Skopje. Indeed, no period since its independence in 1991 has been an easy one for Macedonia, and the last 9 years have been no exception. The country has suffered setbacks and challenges to its stability, but has overcome each to regain its bearings and press forward again in pursuit of a better future. In 1999, Macedonia rose to the challenge of the influx of Kosovar refugees from Milosevic's ethnic cleansing campaign. It was profoundly tested again by an insurgency in 2001. With the help of the international community, Macedonia's leaders lifted their country out of the clutches of interethnic conflict with a model political accord: the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

With the Ohrid Agreement, Macedonia took a bold step, breaking the previous mold for the Balkans by ending conflict through a political agreement that addressed ethnic grievances through principles of equal rights for all citizens irrespective of ethnicity. The Ohrid Agreement, concluded with United States and European Union help, remains the foundation and roadmap for Macedonian peace and development. Successive multiethnic governments have reaffirmed the agreement by committing themselves to its implementation, a process the United States monitors closely. All of the constitutional and legal provisions mandated by the agreement have been adopted. Their implementation has progressed, including the key pillars

of equitable representation of minorities across state structures and of decentralization to make local governance more responsive to the people. In the spirit of Ohrid, interparty and interethnic dialog continues to be critical. While not immune from political gamesmanship, this dialog over the years has resulted in compromises and reforms that have strengthened Macedonia's multiethnic democratic institutions and remain integral to securing for all Macedonia's citizens a future in Europe, whole, free, and at peace.

Today, 7 years on from Ohrid and after 17 years of independence, Macedonia is a stable, unitary, multiethnic democracy—still in transition, but with much stronger democratic and entrepreneurial institutions. Today, a still evolving Macedonia is a model of multiethnic democracy in the Balkans, working to address its internal social and ethnic challenges within a vibrant, inclusive, political process and steadily maturing institutions of government and civil society.

Steps like ethnic rebalancing of the police, put in place by Macedonia in the wake of the 2001 insurgency, and the adoption of a police law in line with international standards and other key legal reforms have reinforced the independence of the judiciary and strengthened rule of law. Making strides economically, Macedonia is making up for its relative lack of development in the former Yugoslavia, for the economic downturns that accompanied Yugoslavia's breakup, and for the investment-chilling effects of the 2001 insurgency. Unemployment, a strain on social stability, remains high, but real wages have gradually increased, inflation and deficits are manageable, and GDP has risen. The government has taken bold steps to improve the investment and business climate, leading the World Bank to cite Macedonia as a top 10 global reformer in its 2008 report on "Doing Business." Macedonia also stepped up the fight against corruption, reflected by a significant jump in Transparency International's 2007 ratings. And strong governmental efforts have brought Macedonia back into full compliance with the minimum standards to combat trafficking in persons.

Macedonia has more work to do, but its progress is driven by values that we Americans recognize and share. These include recognition that the livelihoods of its communities and the success of the whole country and region depends on cooperation eclipsing confrontation, understanding supplanting mistrust, and healthy political competition and compromise becoming the tools to resolve differences. Macedonia also identifies with the Euro-Atlantic family of nations, with responsibilities—indeed a calling—to contribute to peace and stability for peoples beyond its borders.

Mr. Chairman, this affinity of values explains, I believe, the depth of our partnership with Macedonia today. Our relations with Macedonia have never been closer; pro-United States sentiment among Macedonians of all ethnicities is strong. Today, we are partners in the major endeavors and challenges of our time. Just last month, in my previous capacity as Counselor for Public Affairs at the United States Embassy in Baghdad, I had the opportunity and honor to meet with the Macedonian special forces and infantry platoons deployed with American forces at Taji. They are brave and professional, serving with high morale alongside U.S. troops. Several Macedonian soldiers who served in Iraq were awarded medals of bravery by the United States. In Afghanistan, Macedonian forces are guarding NATO headquarters and displaying such proficiency that the United Kingdom placed a platoon of British troops under Macedonian command.

Macedonia's capable troop commitments reflect the substantial efforts of recent years to meet NATO defense standards. Macedonia also has proven itself as a strong contributor to regional stability. It has troops in the European Union Force in Bosnia and provides needed helicopter lift—in fact it lost 11 soldiers in a crash this year, but that tragedy did not deter its continued participation. For years Macedonia has provided critical logistical support for the NATO mission in Kosovo. And in an issue of utmost importance for Balkan stability—the fate of Kosovo—Macedonia "paid forward" by fully backing United States efforts to resolve Kosovo status peacefully via U.N. Secretary General Special Envoy Ahtisaari's plan for supervised independence. As a close neighbor, Macedonia recognized that ending Kosovo's limbo was important to the stability of the region.

The unwavering support of Macedonia's political leaders and parliament for Macedonia's contributions to regional and global stability, and the overwhelming backing of Macedonia's citizenry for NATO and European Union membership—over 90 percent in each case—are reflections of the country's self-identification with Euro-Atlantic values and a mandate for Macedonia's continued reform. Its hard work of building a multiethnic society based on equal rights and opportunities is not complete. As in our country, the process has not been perfect and the way forward has not been easy. At times, Macedonia has asked for the support of the United States, and we have given it, standing by the citizens of Macedonia, helping as we could

with counsel and assistance, and working with their political leaders to move beyond a zero-sum mentality. Macedonia's track record in avoiding the terrible pitfalls witnessed in other parts of the region has shown the world that multiethnic democracy in the Balkans can, must and will succeed.

Macedonia's progress has been slow at times, but its way forward has never been in doubt. It is still a poor country, but rich with tradition and culture, with a capable and entrepreneurial citizenry, with multitalented and multilingual youth, and with a growing economy full of potential. It is a small country, but punching above its weight in U.S.-led coalitions. Once a net security consumer, today Macedonia is a net security producer, keen on bringing its unique capabilities into NATO as a full-fledged member. It is also an official candidate for the European Union, working to fulfill benchmarks and receive an invitation for membership talks.

Macedonia's success is critical to the region. Its achievement of NATO and European Union membership will be an important affirmation that political and economic reform is worth the hard work and that NATO and European Union doors remain open for countries that share Western standards and values. The fact that Allies at the NATO summit in Bucharest in April did not issue a membership invitation for Macedonia was a disappointment for Macedonia and also for the United States. The United States through several administrations has strongly supported Macedonia's NATO aspirations. We do not consider that the dispute between Athens and Skopje over Macedonia's name should have prevented Macedonia from receiving an invitation. We made a great push in the lead-up to Bucharest to work with Governments in Greece and Macedonia and with U.N. negotiator Ambassador Matthew Nimetz to help the parties find a mutually acceptable solution. This did not prove possible. At Bucharest, allies determined that Macedonia meets NATO's performance-based standards and will receive an invitation as soon as the dispute with Greece over the name is resolved. As President Bush noted, "America's position is clear: Macedonia should take its place in NATO as soon as possible." We will continue to support the U.N. process to help Macedonia and Greece find a mutually acceptable solution to the name dispute as quickly as possible.

Mr. Chairman, in May, Secretary Rice and Macedonian Foreign Minister Milososki signed a joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership and Cooperation as a sign of friendship and shared values between our two countries. This was an important signal to the people of Macedonia after the disappointment of the NATO Summit. As Secretary Rice said upon signing the declaration, the United States is proud to have been a part of the significant reforms that Macedonia has made. We believe a strong, stable, unitary, multiethnic Macedonia within its existing borders will enhance NATO's strength, security and prosperity and democracy. We have encouraged and will continue encouraging Macedonia to work hard to strengthen what it will bring to the alliance.

Macedonia's parliamentary elections on June 1 underscored the challenges that remain for Macedonia in consolidating its progress. Frankly, they were a disappointment, with numerous instances of violence, intimidation, fraud, and irregularities predominantly in ethnic Albanian areas. We were encouraged by the authorities' steps taken to address the problems, including the decision by the State Electoral Commission to hold broad reruns in affected areas and actions by law enforcement authorities to arrest and bring to trial the suspected perpetrators of those incidents. The June 15 reruns showed significant improvements, including effective and professional police conduct which created a much better security environment. Nevertheless, despite these improvements and good administration overall, the problems on June 1 and continuing irregularities in some polling stations led the OSCE international observation mission to conclude that the elections overall failed to meet some key commitments. The United States will continue to urge follow-through from the government, including holding accountable those responsible for the problems, to ensure in the future a fair electoral process that protects the rights of all citizens and fully repairs Macedonia's credibility. This is a top priority, and the United States looks forward to working with the next Macedonian Government and all Macedonians to support them on this path.

Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed, my foremost priority as ambassador will be promoting United States interests in Macedonia while maintaining a solid partnership with the host country. The security of all United States citizens living and working in Macedonia is of course paramount. I would be committed to helping Macedonia achieve the multiethnic democracy and free market economy its citizens desire, advancing its integration into NATO and the European Union. As ambassador, I would continue to help Macedonia's leaders and people build on their successes and achieve these goals. If confirmed to this position, I would encourage the Macedonian Government and people to continue contributing wherever possible to peace and stability in the region and globally. And I would if confirmed promote further matura-

tion of Macedonia's own democratic institutions. I would also hope, if given the opportunity by the Senate, to facilitate greater United States business engagement in Macedonia, taking advantage of the Macedonian Government's steps to improve the business climate, and enlisting United States companies to bring their talents to bear in support of Macedonia's transformative efforts. No less importantly, I promise to manage our mission and its resources responsibly and to provide our embassy's talented workforce and their families the safe and secure working conditions that allow them to contribute to our mission. Consistent with that goal, we would hope to take occupancy of a new embassy compound next year.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, should my appointment be confirmed, I would strive to uphold and build on the distinguished record of the men and women who have held this position before me and who have contributed to the excellent relations between the United States and Macedonia and who thus have made such vital contributions to peace, stability, and prosperity in this important region of the world. I know that I cannot succeed in these endeavors without your support. If you confirm me, you can expect my close cooperation with you, your committee, its staff, and the entire legislative branch as we work together for the advancement of U.S. interests. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for your testimony. We'll now turn to Ms. Maria Yovanovitch to be Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia.

STATEMENT OF MARIA L. YOVANOVITCH, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Thank you, sir. Before I start, I'd like to acknowledge my mother, Nadia, who just turned 80 this week, and my brother, Andre. And I'd also like to thank Senator Dole for his kind introduction, and I'm pleased to submit my full remarks for the record. This is a truncated version.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it's an honor for me to appear before you today. I'm honored also by the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in me by nominating me for the post of United States Ambassador to Armenia.

Only in the United States would it be possible for a first generation immigrant like me to appear before you as an ambassadorial nominee. My father, who is no longer with us, fled the Soviets and then the Nazis. My maternal grandfather escaped from Russia after the Revolution and raised his family in wartime Germany where my mother grew up stateless.

My parents brought me to this country in search of a safe harbor, a harbor that provides freedom and opportunity, dignity and respect. The United States offered our family a second chance, just as so many Armenian Americans received a second chance in our country after they were driven out of the Ottoman Empire.

I cannot equate my own family history with that of Americans of Armenian heritage, but I do wish to convey that I understand from personal experience that the events of the past can haunt the present and that individuals born a generation or more after apocalyptic events seek recognition of the injustices of the past.

The United States Government recognizes and deplores the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the Great Calamity or "Medz Yeghern," as many Armenians call it.

The administration understands that many Americans and many Armenians refer to the atrocities of 1915 as genocide. It has been

President Bush's policy, as well as that of previous Presidents of both parties, not to use that term. The President's focus, the administration's focus, is not only to remember the past so that it is never repeated, it is also to focus on the future, to create an environment that encourages Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and also with the Armenians.

It's important to end Armenian isolation in the region by working toward normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey and the opening of their land border. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to support regional stability by facilitating Armenian-Turkish relations as well as a peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan.

The status quo in both situations is unacceptable and not in regional interests or in U.S. interests. Some progress has been made in both areas recently which we welcome.

Finally, but very importantly, restoring democratic momentum in Armenia after the flawed presidential elections and their violent aftermath is also a key United States goal as is assisting Armenia's transition to a market economy.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I would build on my 22 years of service to our country to ensure that United States interests are promoted and protected, that the bilateral relationship flourishes and that Armenias isolation ends and regional stability is enhanced.

Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Yovanovitch follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARIE L. YOVANOVITCH, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored by the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Rice have shown in me by nominating me for the post of United States Ambassador to Armenia. If confirmed, I pledge to build on my 22 years of service to our country to protect and defend American interests in the increasingly vital region of the South Caucasus.

Only in the United States would it be possible for someone like me—a first generation immigrant to the United States—to appear before you as an ambassadorial nominee. My father fled the Soviets and then the Nazis. My maternal grandfather escaped from Russia after the revolution and raised his family in wartime Germany, where my mother grew up stateless. My parents brought me to this country in search of a safe harbor, a harbor that provided freedom and opportunity, dignity, and respect.

The United States offered our family a second chance, just as so many Armenian-Americans received a second chance in our country after they were driven out of the Ottoman Empire. In no way do I want to equate my own family history with that of Americans of Armenian heritage here in the United States. But I do wish to convey that I understand from personal experience that the events of the past can haunt the present and that individuals, born a generation or more after apocalyptic events, seek recognition of the injustices of the past.

The United States Government—and certainly I—acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern" or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day.

The administration understands that many Americans and many Armenians believe that the events of the past that I have referred to should be called "genocide." It has been President Bush's policy, as well as that of previous presidents of both

parties, not to use that term. The President's focus is on encouraging Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and with the Armenians. He seeks to support the painstaking progress achieved to date.

President Bush believes that the best way to honor the victims is to remember the past, so it is never repeated, and to look to the future to promote understanding and reconciliation between the peoples and governments of Armenia and Turkey. A key part of that effort is to end Armenia's isolation in the region by encouraging normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey and the opening of their land border. The Armenian Government has requested that we facilitate this process. It will not be easy nor will it likely be quick, but there are some hopeful signs. President Bush believes that normalization can and should be achieved. The result would be an improvement in the life of every Armenian.

If I am confirmed, my priority would be to support the efforts of the United States in working towards regional stability by facilitating Armenian-Turkish relations and a peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan. Armenia is isolated from its second largest neighbor, Turkey, and every year scores of soldiers die along the line of contact with Azeri forces in Nagorno-Karabakh. The status quo in both situations is unacceptable, a deterioration unthinkable and clearly not in U.S. or regional interests.

Some progress has been made in both areas recently. Success would bring security to Armenia and great economic opportunities. This is a goal worth pursuing, and, if confirmed, I would give it my utmost attention—not only by supporting government-to-government discussions—but by promoting people-to-people contacts and partnerships, and other cross-border and regional initiatives. Contact begins to build trust, and trust is the necessary first step to reconciliation and conflict resolution.

Promoting good governance in Armenia is also a key United States goal. The conduct of the recent Presidential elections and their violent aftermath in which 10 individuals died were deeply disturbing. The path towards democracy is rarely fast or smooth. Our aim is to help the Armenian Government and the Armenian people restore democratic momentum and to renew their own stated mission of moving forward to become a country where government institutions are fully transparent and accountable and where rule of law is accepted by all.

It is important that the Armenian Government support an independent, objective, and inclusive investigation into the fateful events of March 1 and release those who have been held on politically-motivated charges. It is important that the judiciary becomes truly independent. It is important that freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, and freedom of expression are fully protected. It is important that the Armenian authorities show the will to move forward with a reform program that is responsive to the legitimate desires of the people and that inspires public confidence in the country's political and economic processes.

We are looking at how our democracy programs can be more targeted—better supporting civil society, watchdog organizations, the independent media, and development of the Internet. Our programs will continue to focus on anticorruption efforts and strengthening the rule of law.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Agreement in 2006 demonstrated our belief that Armenia was fulfilling MCC's required criteria in the three broad areas of ruling justly, investing in people, and economic freedom. MCC is a performance-based program for governments that demonstrate commitment in these areas. In Armenia, the MCC Compact is a poverty-reduction program that focuses on building roads, improving the irrigation infrastructure, and training farmers. The program will eventually benefit 750,000 people, 75 percent of whom live in rural areas.

This is an important program, and we have urged the new Armenian Government to act quickly to improve its standing in the 9 of 17 indicators that it currently fails. The United States Government is committed to assisting Armenia in this process, but it is up to the Armenian Government to take the necessary steps, so that the Compact program could continue.

The Armenian economy has seen great success and double digit growth over the last 6 years. Our assistance programs—through technical assistance to improve the regulatory and legislative framework, through strengthening of the private sector, and through training in many sectors of the economy—have contributed at least in part to this success.

Over the last 4 years, Armenia has contributed to global security by providing peacekeepers in both Kosovo and Iraq. In fact, the size of Armenia's contingent in Kosovo was doubled just last week. By supporting Armenia's defense sector reform and greater cooperation with NATO, we enhance Armenia's ability to assist in peacekeeping operations and to work with coalition forces to combat global terrorism and make the world a safer place.

Armenia remains committed to overflight and landing rights for United States military aircraft and has worked to improve its capacity to combat both money laundering and terrorism financing. These are efforts we have strongly supported. Our assistance for Armenia's work to strengthen its borders and combat illegal trade in arms, weapons of mass destruction, drugs, and people is important to regional stability.

Our relationship with Armenia is broad and deep, both on a bilateral level and between our peoples. The United States was among the first to recognize Armenia's independence, and the first to establish an embassy in Yerevan. Over the past 17 years, the United States has provided close to $2 billion in assistance and materially improved the lives of millions of Armenians. While challenges remain, we expect our partnership will continue to strengthen, and that we will continue to cooperate in all areas.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, if confirmed, I will do everything in my power to ensure that United States interests are promoted and protected, that the bilateral relationship flourishes, and that Armenia's isolation ends and regional stability is enhanced.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Well, let me thank you and thank all of our witnesses for their testimony.

As pointed out at the beginning of the hearing, you are seeking to continue your public service in countries that are critically important to U.S. interests and each of these countries have their own set of challenges. They're not going to be easy and we thank you very much for being willing to assume this challenge and service to your country.

So let me start with the Russian Federation because the Russian Federation is clearly a country that has increasing importance. Their economy has improved dramatically. They've been able to use their oil to improve their influence and yet the real challenge for us is whether Russia will become a democratic country, whether it will develop the type of democratic institutions and promote divergent views or whether it will continue a recent trend which we find very disturbing, and that is preventing dissent in a way in which a democratic country would promote those types of activities.

So Mr. Beyrle, let me get your assessment as to at this moment, if you're confirmed being the United States Ambassador to Russia, where Russia is gaining influence because of its economic strength and yet it seems to be discouraging independent press, discouraging minority views, in a government that's pretty popular, doesn't need to do all this but it does. How do you see your mission here?

Mr. BEYRLE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. As I said in my opening statement, we need Russia as a partner in the 21st century.

The challenges that we're facing in this century that I enumerated are almost impossible for us to achieve on our own. We need partners, friends, and allies in the European Union, in other parts of the world, but especially in Russia, because Russia is such a large and consequential country, and I think in our dealings with Russia, and I would certainly pursue this if confirmed, we need to make clear to Russia that we value that partnership but that our ability to build the kind of strong partnership, to have the joint projects that require a lot of trust between our two countries, the nonproliferation, counterterrorism dialog that we have with Russia, gets more difficult as we see trends in the country moving away from the democratic values that we both, I think, need to stand be-

hind, that the United States sees as so important in its most important relationships, for instance, with its European allies.

I would try to make the point to our Russian partners, potential partners, that we need them to be a constructive force in the world, that we need their help, for instance, in convincing Iran to forswear its nuclear ambitions. We've had some success with Russia. We could have more.

But divorcing those questions from Russia's democratic development, it seems to me, is a mistake because a democratic Russia which is accountable to its people, which has a robust civil society, is simply a country that we understand better as Americans and will thus have more trust in.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that answer, particularly in relationship to Iran. We've had real difficulty. Russia did help us with the resolution through the Security Council, but its enforcements of effective sanctions leave a lot to be desired and it seems to me this is—if we're going to be successful in diplomatic efforts and preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear weapon power, that we're going to need more cooperation from Russia which is going to be one of the highest priorities on your agenda if you're confirmed as ambassador.

How do you see an effective strategy with Russia so that we can isolate Iran?

Mr. BEYRLE. Mr. Chairman, I think that we need to continue along the road that we traveled with Russia until now. Russia has supported us now on four U.N. Security Council resolutions, three of which included sanctions, making the point to Iran that we reject its nuclear ambitions.

I think with Russia, the challenges, that really are our strategic aims coincide. The Russian Government—Russian leaders have said very clearly that they have no interest and do not want Iran to become a nuclear power. We agree with that at the strategic level.

The difference we have with them is in the tactics, the tactics that we implement to put pressure on Iran to convince Iran to move away from this, from what is very clearly a nuclear weapons program, and I think together with our European allies, we need to devise ways, perhaps not through, as much through the United Nations but through closer dialog that would simply make the point to Iranian leaders that they are isolating themselves from the world and denying their own people the chance at a better future by pursuing this program.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that. I want to at least put on the record a couple issues that have been pending for a long time in our relationship with Russia that's been of interest to this committee.

We have the North Caucuses and we don't want to lose sight of the responsibilities of the Russian Federation to exercise leadership in dealing with the human rights of the people of that region and there's still concern that they're overreacting to a serious situation but violating human rights issues.

I also want to mention an issue that was brought up during Secretary Rice's confirmation in our committee in which we had hearings on the Schneerson Collection, that Secretary Rice, during the

confirmation, said, and I quote, "The State Department would press the Russian Federation to return the Schneerson Collection of rare and irreplaceable religious text to the Chabet Community of the United States."

The last time I checked, the collection is still in Moscow. That's still of interest and we would hope that you would use your good offices, if you are confirmed as ambassador, to bring this chapter to a successful conclusion by return of the—it looks like we're losing our light. Oh, somebody—okay. Well, we'll get that place back on. I thought that somebody from the Russian Federation didn't like my question. [Laughter.]

Mr. BEYRLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me respond very briefly on both of those issues.

With regard to Georgia, Abkhazia, the states of the former Soviet Union, we have made it very clear that we're committed to the sovereignty and independence of all the states of the ex-USSR and we've worked very hard to resolve the frozen conflicts, some of which we discussed here at this table just now, and to avoid new ones, and if confirmed, this will be one of my priorities, highest priorities, especially with regard to Georgia and Abkhazia, where we right now are actively trying to promote a settlement and direct talks. We need Russia's assistance on that.

The Schneerson Collection, I'm familiar with from the time I worked on the National Security Council staff in the mid 1990s, and I know very well that the promises that were made with regard to that collection still need to be fulfilled and I'll be up to speed on that issue very, very quickly, if confirmed, when I arrive in Moscow.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate all of the nominees on their nominations and your willingness to serve and we appreciate that.

Ambassador Yovanovitch, let me start at the outset by acknowledging and thanking you for your 22 years of very distinguished service to our country. I appreciate your service.

In your opening statement, you acknowledge the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced detentions that devastated over 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire, is that correct?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, sir, that's correct. It's the administration's policy to acknowledge these historical facts.

Senator MENENDEZ. Would you agree with the characterization—and if I may, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to be referring to a series of documents. If I could give the ambassador a copy of them so she could have them in front of her, that would be helpful, and I'd ask unanimous consent that these documents be included in the record.

Senator CARDIN. Without objection, the documents will be included in the record.

[The referenced documents have been reproduced and are included in the "Additional Material Submitted for the Record" section at the end of this hearing.]

Senator MENENDEZ. I would ask you, would you agree with the characterization by President Bush on April 24 of 2004, which is

the first referenced item before you, where he says, and I quote, "On this day, we pause in remembrance of one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1.5 million Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire?" Would you agree? I just need a yes or no.

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. Thank you. Would you agree that the use of the words "ethnic cleansing," which you used in your opening statement, would include the deliberate inflicting on a group of conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part? Would you agree that that's what generally ethnic cleansing would be defined as?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. There's no question——

Senator MENENDEZ. The deliberate—let me read it—say it again to you so that you've got it before you answer.

"The deliberate inflicting on a group of individuals of conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. The question that you're asking, and I hope you understand my answer, the determination of that is a policy decision that I'm not authorized to make right now. It's a decision for the administration, for the President and the Secretary.

Senator MENENDEZ. I respect your answer. I'm not asking you what is the policy or a policy. I'm simply asking you. You used the words in your opening statement "ethnic cleansing," and I'm asking you a simple question.

Would you describe ethnic cleansing as a deliberate inflicting on a group of individuals conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part? If the answer is no, then tell me what you mean by ethnic cleansing.

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. There's no question that at the end of the Ottoman Empire, there was mass murder, there was starvation, there were deliberate rapes, there was forced exile of 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Senator MENENDEZ. And is that what you describe as your definition of ethnic cleansing, those facts?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. Would you look at the document that is referenced as Number 2 there which says—these are documents that I'm going to be referring to by American officials at the time of history, and I would ask you whether the statement by then U.S. Ambassador Morganthau, who wrote on July 16, 1915, "It appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion."

Is that a fact that you would agree with as reported as a historical fact that Ambassador Morganthau reported?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, it's certainly a fact here as I'm reading off of this hand-out that you gave me that Ambassador Morganthau reported this.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you. Would you look at Number 3 where it says, "Where U.S. Counsel Aleppo Jesse Jackson reported to Ambassador Morganthau on June 5, 1915, that it's without doubt a carefully planned scheme to thoroughly extinguish the Armenian race."

Is that what Counsel Jackson said in his statement to Ambassador Morganthau?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, according to this document that you've given me, that's correct.

Senator MENENDEZ. In Number 4, where U.S. Counsel in Harput Leslie Davis reported to Ambassador Morganthau on July 24, 1915, "It has been no secret that the plan was to destroy the Armenian race as a race, but the methods used have been more cold blooded and barbaric, if not more effective, than I had first supposed."

Is that the statement issued then by the counsel?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, as I'm reading this from what you've given me, yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And finally, on Number 5, where the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1916 to 1917, Abraham Elkus telegraphed the Secretary of State on October 17, 1916, and said, "In order to avoid a program of a civilized world, which the continuation of massacres would arouse, Turkish officials have now adopted and are executing the unchecked policy of extermination through starvation, exhaustion and the brutality of treatment hardly surpassed even in Turkish history."

Is that the statement that is issued at that time by the U.S. ambassador?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, as I'm reading it here now.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you. Now the final reference I want you to look at is Number 6, and would you agree that Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of which the United States is a signatory party to and ratified, a copy of which I have before you, states under Article 2, "In the present convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national ethnic, racial or religious group, as such killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."

Is that a fair statement of the reading of Article 2 of the Convention?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Is that a yes? I'm sorry.

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes. I'm sorry. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. Therefore, and Mr. Chairman, if you'll indulge me, therefore, would not the facts that you acknowledge, and please listen to my question, would not the—intently. Would not the facts that you acknowledge in your opening statement and those facts that you have recognized as historical facts during the period of 1915 to 1923 meet the definition of Article 2 that you just—I just had you read?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Thank you. The—it's certainly true that this is the definition of genocide here and I'm familiar enough with the record to have read some of the accounts from our embassy and our consulate at the end of the Ottoman Empire which are truly shocking in terms of scale and the individual stories of individual families and the things that happened.

It's the responsibility and the duty of embassies and consulates to inform and represent honestly, faithfully, objectively to the de-

partment, to Washington, to the President, and it is the President, it is the Secretary of State that makes the policy, that makes the determination of how to characterize such events.

Senator MENENDEZ. And I am not asking you for a declaration of policy. I have not even asked you about a maybe more ultimate question.

What I'm asking you as a career Foreign Service officer, well educated, with a lot of experience, would the facts as recognized by President Bush in public statements, as recognized by you in your opening statement, and in terms of the historical documents that I presented to you, would those facts fall in line—clearly, you mentioned the killing members of the group. You mentioned murder in your opening statement.

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. I did.

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, it is.

Senator MENENDEZ. Would it not be fair to say in furtherance of some of the questions I asked you, and I think you very appropriately answered, some of the acts that took place, not only the murders, rapes and forced deportation of people, forced exile of people, would that not clearly be causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And clearly it would also be deliberately inflicting on a group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part. Obviously those that were murdered in mass numbers, 1.5 million, obviously those who were exiled, obviously those who through other actions were taken place, that would fall into that category, would it not?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. It's a policy decision, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. I want to thank you for your honest answers.

Mr. Chairman, if I may, and I appreciate your indulgence, I will have a series of other questions for the record. I don't want to belabor it.

But what is going on here, it is a shame that career Foreign Service officers have to be brought before the committee and find difficulty in acknowledging historical facts and find difficulty in acknowledging the realities of what has been internationally recognized, Mr. Chairman, not because I say it. I don't hold myself out to be that type of a scholar, but the fact is, is that the International Association of Genocide Scholars, the preeminent authority on genocide, has unanimously, not equivocated, unanimously declared the Armenian genocide a genocide, and it is amazing to me that we can talk about millions, you know, a million and a half human beings who were slaughtered, we can talk about those who were raped, we can talk about those who were forcibly pushed out of their country, and we can have presidential acknowledgements of that, but then we cannot call it what it is.

It is a ridiculous dance what the administration is doing over the use of the term "genocide." It is an attempt to suggest that we don't want to strain our relationships with Turkey, but I have to say the fact that we are sending off our diplomats in such a manner, that they're not able to recognize a historical event that is clearly documented by credible, objective historians, an event that

is so tragic, an event that the recognition of which is so personal for millions of Armenians and descendants of Armenians, many of whom are Americans, is also something that I think is detrimental to our foreign policy.

Mr. Chairman, we have actually had the United States Ambassador, our former United States Ambassadors to Armenia attend every year in April the commemoration of the Armenian genocide. It's amazing that we sent a United States Ambassador to the commemoration of an Armenian genocide which I would hope—that if your nomination is ultimately approved by the Senate that you would commit yourself to attending, and yet we cannot—how do you go and go to a commemoration of the Armenian genocide and never ever use the recognition of that fact?

I believe acknowledging historical facts as they are is a principle that is easily understood both at home and abroad. So while the administration believes that this posture benefits it vis a vis our relationships with Turkey, I think they should also recognize that it hurts our relationship elsewhere and it tarnishes the United States history of being a place where truth is spoken to power and acknowledgement of our failures in the past make us stronger, not weaker, and recognizing the evils of the past do not trap us but they set us free.

That is what I hope we can be able to achieve, Mr. Chairman, and I have great admiration for Ambassador Yovanovitch, she is the designee here and having to respond to questions and as I told her privately, I would be pursuing a line of questioning.

I appreciate her intent to be as frank and open as possible, and Mr. Chairman, if you have a second, I have a different set of questions for one of the other candidates.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Senator Menendez, thank you for your questions. You and I have talked frequently on human rights issues. We share that same passion. One of my roles is to cochair the Helsinki Commission which human rights issues are one of our major focuses.

There is no question in my mind that the facts speak for themselves and what happened was genocide. To me, it's a clear issue.

I think our nominee has demonstrated some of the reasons why she's an experienced diplomat. I don't agree with a lot of the administration's policies, not just as relates to the genocide in Armenia but as it relates to policies in many parts of the world.

Where we have career diplomats, I find, by and large, they are carrying out the mission of our Nation and in Armenia, we need an ambassador who is experienced, who understands the historical facts and has the historical facts correctly as stated, and I think I must say in your testimony, I think, and in your answer to Senator Menendez, you have spelled out very clearly what happened.

The facts are the facts and we have to make sure that the international community never forgets what happened, so we can learn from the past and protect the future generations, and I think you have been pretty clear about the circumstances of ethnic communities that were being cleansed.

And Senator Menendez, I agree with you, the definition couldn't be clearer as to what that equals, genocide.

Let me turn, if I might, to Mr. Chaudhry, if might, with the Republic of Moldova.

I was very pleased that you mentioned as one of your top priorities the trafficking issue. That is an issue that has been—that the United States Delegation to the OSCE has made one of our top priorities and we're pleased about the attention that has been received in Europe, and we would ask that if you are confirmed as the ambassador, that that remain not just a priority of yours as relates to the Republic of Moldova but in that region of Europe.

It's a very serious issue that the United States needs to continue to exercise tremendous leadership.

Mr. CHAUDHRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I absolutely pledge to you that this is an issue which is close to my heart and I intend to pursue it and follow it, if confirmed, to the fullest of my capabilities and continue to do the work that has been done by my predecessor in Moldova and in the region.

Senator CARDIN. There's been a lot of talk recently about Russia's influence here and as to whether Moldova is perhaps looking at an arrangement where Russia will remove its troops from Transnistria and there may be some other parts to that arrangement.

How do you see the prospects for a resolution, a political settlement of Transnitria?

Mr. CHAUDHRY. Mr. Chairman, as far as Transnitria is concerned, the best way to resolve this is in the context of 5Plus2 talks that have been going on for some time.

It is clear that these talks have stalled for some time, but there have been informal talks within the 5Plus2 as well as 3Plus2. That means excluding Moldova and the Transnitria side.

As recent as this month, there were discussions in Helsinki among the 3Plus2 group where they committed that we need to move forward in trying to resolve the issue and that issue, as I see it and as the United States Government sees it, must involve the territorial integrity, preserving the territorial integrity of Moldova and that means allowing its sovereignty to be exerted over all of its territory, including Transnitria, and that would definitely include removal of or withdrawal of Russian soldiers from the Moldovan territory.

Senator CARDIN. I agree with that. Thank you, Mr. Nominee. I appreciate that. That's a statement I fully concur in.

Let me turn to Kosovo for one minute, if I might. Ms. Kaidanow, you are seeking a critically important position.

Kosovo is a country that is just going to be subject to a lot of challenges. We still have not resolved the Russian influence, what's happening with Serbia. There's still a lot of countries that have withheld their recognition of Kosovo. We still don't have a clear mandate within the United Nations as relates to the security troops remaining or not. There are going to be a lot of challenges.

So let me start first with the Ahtisaari Plan and the protection of minority communities, you mentioned that several times, and I think the real challenge here is whether the Kosovo majority, having been ignored by the Serbian Government as far as their independence is concerned, whether they will react in a way of protection to the minority community or whether they'll yield to tempta-

tion to sort of say, you know, you're not going to work with us, so we'll do it our way.

I think the role that the United States plays here is going to be critical and everything you said in your statement I agree with, but it seems to me that we have to be extremely active to make sure the minority communities are properly protected within Kosovo.

Ms. aidanow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't agree more. In fact, I would say that this is if not the single most important priority for the United States in Kosovo, it's certainly one of the top priorities that we have.

We have actually come quite a long way in Kosovo. I remember maybe a year or so ago when we were contemplating where we would go, there was quite a lot of concern about population movement, the possible, you know, the numbers of Serbs who might decide to leave Kosovo, the consequence of independence and so forth.

Thankfully, we've not seen that, and I think that is a measure of the kind of progress that we've seen and the ability of Kosovo's authority and Kosovo's people to protect and to preserve its minority communities and particularly the Serb minority.

I don't want to say that there aren't challenges ahead. You've identified them, I think, very, very accurately. It's going to be incumbent upon the Kosovo Government and the people of Kosovo to ensure that their minority populations are not only protected but sustained and that they are given a chance to be living communities in Kosovo and that is critically important for us.

It involves not just implementation of the Ahtisaari Plan, which is quite robust and has many protections for the minority communities in Kosovo, but it also involves, I think, reaching out to them in ways that are creative and important, building infrastructure in their communities, encouraging returns. All of these things are things that we're going to have to, you know, work with them to do.

We have been working with them, we'll continue and certainly if I'm confirmed, that is something that we would make a priority.

Senator CARDIN. And let me mention perhaps the most discriminated minority community in Europe and that's the Roma population, a serious problem within Kosovo and many other European countries.

I would hope that we would find ways as a new country is emerging in Kosovo that they do it right from the beginning,——

Ms. aidanow. Yes.

Senator CARDIN [continuing]. That minority communities include the Roma and they're entitled that their children could be educated, that they can get affordable housing, that they can integrate into the community and Kosovo could be an example to the rest of Europe in that regard.

Ms. KAIDANOW. Absolutely. And in fact, I think the Roma community in Kosovo has suffered under some very specific historical circumstances that I won't get into here but I think really merit, as you said, particular care and consideration on the part of the Kosovo Government, something that we, the United States, have been very active in looking at. We will continue to do so, but I can't agree with you more that there are any number of minority ethnic communities in Kosovo. All of them have particular considerations

and particular needs and the Kosovo Government will have to be very, very astute and quite generous in looking at those communities and providing for their needs.

Senator CARDIN. One last question on Kosovo. With the UNMIK mission expired, it's not exactly clear as to the legitimacy of the protection troops within that region. Russia's cooperation is not necessarily understood at this point.

How do you see that challenge from the point of view of providing Kosovo the help they need so that they can maintain the type of protection to communities and stability that a young country needs?

Ms. aidanow. There are multiple levels of security in Kosovo. The NATO-led force known as KFOR will continue to have a fairly robust presence in Kosovo under the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 which continues to obtain and KFOR has a mandate under that Security Council Resolution.

We, the United States, provide some small number of troops, 1,500 troops to a 16,000-man force. I would anticipate that continuing, at least in the immediate future, and we take that responsibility very, very seriously, and our troops are doing just an outstanding job in doing it in Kosovo.

In terms of policing, for the time being, the U.N. has agreed to maintain a role in law enforcement and justice in Kosovo until such time as the European Union can establish fully its new law enforcement and justice mission on the ground which will be known as EULEX.

We will participate again in a small way but a significant way in that mission. We will have roughly 80 or so police to their 1,800 or so police and justice officers and so forth.

I think it's critical that those European Union forces deploy as quickly as possible. Certainly the Kosovo Government and the people of Kosovo are looking forward to that deployment, but in the meantime, it's also important that the U.N. security forces on the ground continue to receive the broad authority that they've had from the Kosovo people and every indication is that Kosovo will give them that authority and will agree to have them stay until the European Union can perform that duty.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I turn to Mr. Reeker for a moment, one last question, Ambassador.

Would you, if you were to be confirmed by the Senate, make a commitment to this committee that you would attend the Armenian Genocide Commemoration which is held every April 24 as previous ambassadors have?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. If I were confirmed, I would certainly commit to attend to Armenian Remembrance Day.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you. Mr. Reeker, let me first say with the adjective in which you introduced your wife, you're definitely going to get a hot meal tonight.

Mr. REEKER. I don't have to go to Senator Dole's. [Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. I have a few questions about your potential assignment.

The recent parliamentary elections that were held on June 1 were marked by a series of irregularities, intimidation and violence, according to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, and did not meet the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe Standards.

Furthermore, our own State Department called for a rerun in almost a 190 districts, quoting "where people were not able to cast their ballot free from the threat of violence or intimidation."

The New York Times reported on June 2 of this month that Dennis McCone, a former Europe minister in Tony Blair's government, who was in Skopje as a monitor for the Council of Europe, said that the "vote in FYROM would have no legitimacy unless new elections were called." He said, "This vote is a tragedy for supporters of Macedonia's European Union and TransAtlantic future." It continues to quote him to say, "Nobody can form a government on the basis of an election in which police have stuffed ballot boxes and thugs are attacking polling stations."

Do you think—I read your full statement. You gave us an abbreviated statement. It's very inspirational for Macedonia. It's an aspiration we share, but for FYROM, do you think that this corresponds to a democratic country that fulfills the criteria to join NATO?

Mr. REEKER. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate the question because I think for any of us who have followed events in Macedonia, the June 1 early elections, parliamentary elections were, frankly, very disappointing. They did not meet international commitments. As you noted, there were incidents of violence, intimidation, fraud, largely intraethnic among competing forces within the ethnic Albanian community.

What we have seen over a period of many years since Macedonia's independence is the development of institutions of government of civil society of democracy which rose to the occasion and did respond with reruns of those elections in numerous locations, ordered those reruns and those took place on June 15.

As noted by a number of the observers that you referenced, there were substantial improvements. There was significantly improved security. The environment was considerably better, but again there was serious irregularities in some polling stations, and as the OSCE and the Council of Europe have noted, they did not meet some of the key commitments that Macedonia has made.

I believe there will be additional reruns in several districts and that again shows that the institutions to respond to this kind of problems in Macedonia are in place and are working.

What we had seen, of course, was a series of elections over time that had been very positive and shown a tremendous development in democracy.

Senator MENENDEZ. But this latest round did not meet those standards.

Mr. REEKER. That's correct.

Senator MENENDEZ. And we should be concerned about it. We're thinking about allowing this country to enter into NATO.

Now, clearly, it must have certain standards in order to join and so I would hope that in our desire to have them join NATO that we're not willing to overlook those standards at the end of the day.

Let me ask you this. I have seen school textbooks and maps that circulate in the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia showing parts of Greece belonging to the so-called Greater Macedonia.

Do you think that the practice of the government there is an act of good neighborly relations when they pursue that as part of their official education?

Mr. REEKER. Senator, I have seen reports from both sides in the recent Macedonia dispute accusing each other of taking actions or making statements that have inflamed the issue of the name.

Obviously this points to the fact that this needs to be resolved. I think the overwhelming majority of people in both countries have shown over a course of many years the people to people relations, the economic relations, suggest that the two countries in fact can get along extremely well and can mutually support each other.

That underlies the fact that they have got to find a quick and mutually agreeable solution to the name issue and why we continue to encourage both countries to intensity their efforts along with the intensified efforts to the U.N. Ambassador Limits to find a solution.

Senator MENENDEZ. In fact, NATO took the position that while it has the desire to make that offer; it's not going to happen until there is some reconciliation and coming to a determination on the name, is that not so?

So if that is the case, what will you be doing? I know that Limits is at the head of this, but obviously if you are to be confirmed, you would be in a position as our ambassador in that country to try to get that country to understand it is in its own interests to find an accommodation. Is that something that you would be pursuing?

Mr. REEKER. Yes, Senator, I would certainly, if confirmed, continue to work through our embassy in Skopje, just as our embassy in Athens works with the Government of Greece to be supportive of both sides to encourage them to find a quick mutually agreeable solution because that is in the best interests not only of both Macedonia and of Greece but the region certainly and since the United States focus is to encourage a stable, secure partner in the center of the Balkans, in Macedonia, it is in our interests as well, and we will continue to push them to deal with as expeditiously as possible.

Senator MENENDEZ. Finally, I'd like to ask each of the nominees, do you feel the United States should apologize to foreign governments when Congress speaks out on matters of human rights? If each of you would just give me an answer to that?

Mr. BEYRLE. If the United States Government should apologize to the people, to the Government of Russia, would Congress——

Senator MENENDEZ. For each of your countries, should we feel compelled to apologize to foreign governments when Congress speaks on matters of human rights?

Mr. BEYRLE. No.

Mr. REEKER. I agree with the same answer, no.

Ms. aidanow. No.

Mr. CHAUDHRY. No.

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. No.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator. Let me ask one more question in regard to Macedonia.

First of all, you see the Limits process still workable? It was unsuccessful in a resolution prior to the Bucharest Conference. Is it still a viable process in which we should expect the potential resolving of the issues between Macedonia and Greece?

Mr. REEKER. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe it is a viable process. The United States supports that process and, most importantly, both sides of the dispute support that process which is why we, in our capacity as a friend and ally to both Macedonia and to Greece, have encouraged both sides to find a quick mutually agreeable solution to this problem.

It's a difficult problem. It's an emotional problem, but it is one that can be solved, we believe, and the Limits process is the way to go about that. So we're encouraging both sides to show greater flexibility, creativity, cooperation, and do what is needed to find a solution.

Senator CARDIN. Is part of that taking up issues, such as the name of the airport, Alexander the Great? I mean, it seems like some of this might be somewhat inflammatory. Is that part of the process?

Mr. REEKER. As I indicated, Mr. Chairman, and I've followed these issues for some time, since I served my first tour in Macedonia, both sides have taken actions, made statements over time, that have certainly inflamed the issue.

The important thing here is to move beyond that, to move toward cooperation, have that eclipse confrontation and have understanding supplant mistrust, use the Limits process because these countries have shown that as neighbors, in fact they can get along extremely well. They have robust trade relations. They have robust people to people relations.

You know, you see Macedonians eager to travel to Greece. You see trade and investment from Greece coming to Macedonia, and I think that's what's important. So we can get over the difficult issues by using the diplomatic and the negotiating structures we have available.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much. Let me make just one more comment, Ms. Yovanovitch, in regard to the Republic of Armenia.

You mention in your statement the violence that erupted after the last elections in March. The comments by the Armenian Government, at least some of its officials, that this was instituted to try to overthrow the government or similar comments which I found no basis at all, in fact, is it our position that we are still awaiting and asking for an independent review of what happened in this violence when civilians were killed, so that we can try to prevent these types of episodes in the future?

Ms. YOVANOVITCH. Yes, that is our position, that there be an objective, independent, and inclusive investigation.

I would say that over the last couple of days, the Government of Armenia has established an investigation. It will be important that there is a positive process that all sides can buy into and participate in.

Senator CARDIN. All right. Thank you for that. Let me just make one announcement. Members will have until the end of tomorrow to ask questions for the record. I would ask that you respond to those questions as quickly as possible so the committee can take appropriate action in regard to your nominations as soon as possible.

Once again, I want to thank all eight of our nominees for their patience today in answering our questions and their willingness to serve our country.

With that, the committee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:33 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

DOCUMENT NO. 1 FROM SENATOR MENENDEZ

THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH

CLICK HERE TO PRINT

For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
April 24, 2004

Armenian Remembrance Day

On this day, we pause in remembrance of one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1.5 million Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire. This terrible event remains a source of pain for people in Armenia and Turkey and for all those who believe in freedom, tolerance, and the dignity of every human life. I join with my fellow Americans and the Armenian community in the United States and around the world in mourning this loss of life.

The United States is proud of the strong ties we share with Armenia. From the end of World War I and again since the reemergence of an independent Armenian state in 1991, our country has sought a partnership with Armenia that promotes democracy, security cooperation, and free markets. Today, our Nation remains committed to a peace settlement in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and is grateful for Armenia's continuing cooperation in the war on terror. By advancing understanding and goodwill, free nations can help build a brighter future for the world. Our country seeks to help Armenia expand its strategic relations with the United States and our European allies.

Generations of Armenian Americans have also strengthened our communities and enriched our Nation's character. By preserving their heritage, faith, and traditions, Armenian Americans enhance the diversity that makes America great.

I commend individuals in Armenia and Turkey who have worked to support peace and reconciliation, including through the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission, and call on Armenia and Turkey to restore their economic, political, and cultural ties. I also send warm wishes and expressions of solidarity to the Armenian people on this solemn day of remembrance.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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Return to this article at:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040424-1.html

CLICK HERE TO PRINT

TELEGRAM RECEIVED*

WSB GREEN CIPHER

From Constantinople
Dated July 16, 1915.
Rec'd. 30, 8:10 A.M.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

858, July 16, 1 p.m.
CONFIDENTIAL

Have you received my 841? Deportation of and excesses against peaceful Armenians is increasing and from harrowing reports of eye witnesses it appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion.

Protests as well as threats are unavailing and probably incite the Ottoman government to more drastic measures as they are determined to disclaim responsibility for their absolute disregard of Capitulations and I believe nothing short of actual force which obviously United States are not in a position to exert would adequately meet the situation. Suggest you inform belligerent nations and mission boards of this.

AMERICAN AMBASSADOR
CONSTANTINOPLE

* Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/76

Trustworthy persons report that in the interior a perfect reign of terror exists, especially at Diarbekir. The same parties report that 300 prominent Christians at that place have been imprisoned in the course of the search for arms and proofs of disloyalty toward the Government; while other reports place the number of victims as high as 1,000. It is also stated that 22 have been beaten to death in the efforts to make them divulge information they did not possess. Some cases of bastinadoing have been treated by physicians, the injured feet having to be operated on to prevent amputation. It is believed that great numbers have been beaten to death. Such has been the condition there since about April 25, last; this is also true of the villages and towns in the country surrounding that city.

One person states that:

"Christians have been drafted to work on the new barracks of the Army there. These men receive 2 piasters (9 cents) a day for their work; men sent to work on roads at a distance do not receive enough to live on and are compelled to draw upon those at home for money and food."

"These men are not allowed to remain in their homes at night, like most of the inhabitants of the city, but are held as prisoners less they desert; their quarters are vile and filthy, with no accommodations whatsoever in the way of toilet rooms. The men are not permitted to leave their quarters even temporarily."

"The sick are unattended, and unless there are friends the hungry go unfed."

"Gendarmes and recruits worry, annoy and persecute the people of the cities and villages unmercifully. Blackmail is collected generally by the gendarmes."

"A few villages in the Moush plain, Keizan, Modgan and Garjgan (Van Vilayet) seem to have been destroyed by government orders because the inhabitants tried to protect themselves."

Hundreds of individual cases of persecution such as blackmailing, beating, imprisoning, etc., could be stated but which would lend no further weight to the general statement of outrages that are being practiced daily upon a defenseless and inoffensive people that demand nothing more than to be given a chance to eke out at the best a miserable existence.

The Government has been appealed to by various prominent people and even by those in authority to put an end to these conditions, under the representations that it can only lead to the greatest blame and reproach, but all to no avail. It is without doubt a carefully planned scheme to thoroughly extinguish the Armenian race.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

[signed] J. B. Jackson
Consul.

840.1
Copies sent to the Department and Consulate General

AMERICAN CONSULATE*

No. 71
Copy

Harput July 24, 1915

Honorable Henry Morgenthau,
American Ambassador,
Constantinople.

Sir:

I have the honor to further supplement my reports of June 30th and July 11th (File No. 840. 1) in regard to the expulsion of the Armenians from this region, or, to speak more correctly, the wholesale massacre of these Armenians, as follows:

Any doubt that may have been expressed in previous reports as to the Government's intention in sending away the Armenians have been removed and any hope that may have been expressed as to the possibility of some of them surviving has been destroyed. It has been no secret that the plan was to destroy the Armenian race as a race, but the methods used have been more cold-blooded and barbarous, if not more effective, than I had at first supposed. It was apparent that very few would ever survive the journey from here to Ourfa or to any other place at this season of the year. As a matter of fact, it has been quite unnecessary to consider the difficulties of such a journey. It seems to be fully established now that practically all who have been sent away from here have been deliberately shot or otherwise killed within one or two days after their departure. This work has not all been done by bands of Kurds but has for the most part been that of the gendarmes who accompanied the people from here or of companies of armed "tchetehs" (convicts) who have been released from prison for the purpose of murdering the Armenian exiles.

It has been repeatedly reported, and I think there is no doubt about the truth of these reports, that not a single man who has been sent away has been spared. Many of the women and children have been deliberately killed at the same time. A few of the more attractive women have been carried off to adorn the harems of some of the Kurdish chieftains and of some of the gendarmes. Some of the older women and children have been allowed to wander along, accompanied by gendarmes, with the certainty that all of them will soon perish from hunger, sickness and exhaustion.

I do not believe there has ever been a massacre in the history of the world so

* Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/269

TELEGRAM RECEIVED*

IHM GREEN

From Constantinople
(via Copenhagen)
Dated Oct. 17, 1916.
Recd. Oct. 20, 4:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2186, October 17, 9 p.m.
CONFIDENTIAL
Embassy's 2136, October 1, 8 p.m.

From report by eye-witness sent by Consul Jackson and from other reliable sources it appears that deportations accompanied by studied cruelties continue. Families are separated and scattered among Moslems. Clergy separated from their people, forced conversions to Islam perseveringly pushed, children and girls from deported families kidnapped. In order to avoid opprobrium of the civilized world, which the continuation of massacres would arouse, Turkish officials have now adopted and are executing the unchecked policy of extermination through starvation, exhaustion, and brutality of treatment hardly surpassed even in Turkish history. In spite of official opposition it has been possible to reach thousands and save their lives temporarily. But situation demands not only immediate financial assistance but active steps instead of formal protest. I therefore repeat suggestion in Embassy's 1948, July 15, 10 a.m., that Germany and Austria-Hungary be induced to force their Turkish ally to cease all further deportation and allow free relief work, as well as Mr. Philip's further suggestion in Embassy's telegram 2136, concerning forced conversions and the departure from Turkey of those who are able. Peet requests such part of the above as the Department may see fit be communicated to Barton who may use the information with some discretion.

Strictly Confidential

If such requests to Germany and Austria-Hungary are made through the usual channel and are found to be ineffective, which from information received in Berlin and from German sources here it is believed will be the fact, it is suggested if the gravity of the situation calls for such action and it is deemed advisable, that personal

* Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/299

letters reciting the facts, written by the President to the Emperors of Germany and Austria may produce the desired result. In that case publicity should be given such letters.

ELKUS

EGAN
AMBASSADOR

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

Approved and proposed for signature and ratification or accession by General Assembly resolution 260 A (III) of 9 December 1948

entry into force 12 January 1951, in accordance with article XIII

The Contracting Parties,

Having considered the declaration made by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 96 (I) dated 11 December 1946 that genocide is a crime under international law, contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations and condemned by the civilized world,

Recognizing that at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity, and

Being convinced that, in order to liberate mankind from such an odious scourge, international co-operation is required,

Hereby agree as hereinafter provided:

Article 1

The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

Article 2

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

(a) Killing members of the group;

(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Article 19

The present Convention shall be registered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the date of its coming into force.

Article 3

The following acts shall be punishable:

(a) Genocide;

(b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;

(c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;

(d) Attempt to commit genocide;

(e) Complicity in genocide.

Article 4

Persons committing genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties undertake to enact, in accordance with their respective Constitutions, the necessary legislation to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention, and, in particular, to provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III.

Article 6

Persons charged with genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III shall be tried by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by such international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which shall have accepted its jurisdiction.

Article 7

Genocide and the other acts enumerated in article III shall not be considered as political crimes for the purpose of extradition.

The Contracting Parties pledge themselves in such cases to grant extradition in accordance with their laws and treaties in force.

Article 8

Any Contracting Party may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III.

Article 9

Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation, application or fulfilment of the present Convention, including those relating to the responsibility of a State for genocide or for any of the other acts enumerated in article III, shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the parties to the dispute.

Article 10

The present Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall bear the date of 9 December 1948.

Article 11

The present Convention shall be open until 31 December 1949 for signature on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any nonmember State to which an invitation to sign has been addressed by the General Assembly.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

After 1 January 1950, the present Convention may be acceded to on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any non-member State which has received an invitation as aforesaid. Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 12

Any Contracting Party may at any time, by notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, extend the application of the present Convention to all or any of the territories for the conduct of whose foreign relations that Contracting Party is responsible.

Article 13

On the day when the first twenty instruments of ratification or accession have been deposited, the Secretary-General shall draw up a proces-verbal and transmit a copy thereof to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in article 11.

The present Convention shall come into force on the ninetieth day following the date of deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

Any ratification or accession effected, subsequent to the latter date shall become effective on the ninetieth day following the deposit of the instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 14

The present Convention shall remain in effect for a period of ten years as from the date of its coming into force.

It shall thereafter remain in force for successive periods of five years for such Contracting Parties as have not denounced it at least six months before the expiration of the current period.

Denunciation shall be effected by a written notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 15

If, as a result of denunciations, the number of Parties to the present Convention should become less than sixteen, the Convention shall cease to be in force as from the date on which the last of these denunciations shall become effective. Article 16

A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any Contracting Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such request.

Article 17

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall notify all Members of the United Nations and the non-member States contemplated in article XI of the following:

(a) Signatures, ratifications and accessions received in accordance with article 11;

(b) Notifications received in accordance with article 12;

(c) The date upon which the present Convention comes into force in accordance with article 13;

(d) Denunciations received in accordance with article 14;

(e) The abrogation of the Convention in accordance with article 15;

(f) Notifications received in accordance with article 16.

Article 18

The original of the present Convention shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

A certified copy of the Convention shall be transmitted to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in article XI.

LETTER FROM MATTHEW A. REYNOLDS, ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY, LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Waashington, DC, July 29, 2008.

Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr.,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BIDEN: I am writing in response to your concerns regarding responses to questions for the record submitted by you and Senator Menendez regarding the nomination of Marie Yovanovitch as Ambassador to Armenia.

Regarding your Question #1, Ms. Yovanovitch mentions an International Visitors Program under consideration that would bring archivists from Turkey and Armenia to the United States for professional training. Our goal is to help archivists protect the evidence of the past so that future generations will have the documentation of the mass killings and deportations of Armenians committed by Ottoman soldiers and other Ottoman officials in 1915. Our goal is not to open a debate on whether the Ottomans committed these horrendous acts; it is to help preserve the documentation that supports the truth of those events.

Regarding Ms. Yovanovitch's response to Senator Menendez's Question #8, the administration recognizes that the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations of over one and a half million Armenians were conducted by the Ottoman Empire. We indeed hold Ottoman officials responsible for those crimes.

In her testimony, Ms. Yovanovitch tried to convey her deep empathy with the profound suffering of the Armenian people and in no way sought to cast any doubt on historical facts.

We hope this information is helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW A. REYNOLDS,
Acting Assistant Secretary,
Legislative Affairs.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. I strongly believe that the killings and other atrocities perpetrated against some 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire beginning in 1915 clearly constituted genocide. Acknowledging when genocide has occurred is not simply a theoretical or legal exercise. It is key to preventing genocide from happening again. That's why, in my view, we must change United States policy to reflect the true nature of the tragic events that were perpetrated against the Armenians by calling them what they were—genocide.

I understand the following to be accepted facts:

- Article II of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group"—and it lists "killing members of the group" as one of these acts.
- The United States has "never denied the tragic events of 1915," and the Bush administration has acknowledged "the forced exile and mass killing inflicted on as many as 1.5 million Armenians," as indicated by the State Department in its response to my letter of June 5, 2006.
- The atrocities conceived and carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923 resulted in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom about 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, the expulsion of 500,000 survivors, and a concerted campaign that resulted in the elimination of the more than 2,500-year presence of Armenians in their historic homeland.
- The Honorable Henry Morgenthau, U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1913 to 1916, described to the Department of State the policy of the Government of the Ottoman Empire as "a campaign of race extermination," and was instructed on July 16, 1915, by Secretary of State Robert Lansing that the "Department approves your procedure . . . to stop Armenian persecution."
- Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term "genocide" in 1944, and who was the earliest proponent of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, invoked the Armenian case as a definitive example of genocide in the 20th century.

- Proclamation 4838 of April 22, 1981 (95 Stat. 1813) issued by President Ronald Reagan, stated, in part, that "[l]ike the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians which followed it—and like too many other persecutions of too many other people—the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten."
- President George W. Bush, on April 24, 2004, stated, "[o]n this day, we pause in remembrance of one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1,500,000 Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire."

Do you dispute any of the above? If so, which facts and why?

Answer. As noted above, the administration has never denied the facts of what happened in 1915, and it does not deny the facts that are listed above. The administration believes that the best way to honor the victims is to promote understanding and reconciliation between the people and Governments of Armenia and Turkey and to help Turkey come to terms with this dark chapter in history. The administration continues to encourage both Turkey and Armenia to work towards reconciliation. There are some hopeful signs that they are engaging each other.

Many Americans believe that the events of the past should be called "genocide." It has been President Bush's policy—as well as that of several previous Presidents on both sides of the aisle—not to use that term. The administration's focus is on encouraging people in Turkey to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people regarding these horrific events.

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the U.S. Government and I certainly recognize and deplore the mass killings and deportations that occurred in 1915 and after. No words of any kind can convey our sorrow for the suffering that still endures as a result of these terrible events. It is exactly this tragedy that makes us so determined to support reconciliation between the Armenian and Turkish peoples today.

Question. Do you personally believe that these atrocities meet the definition of a genocide? If not, please specify why not and provide your legal opinion.

Answer. As the child of refugees—at a different time and place—I do feel very strongly about the great suffering experienced by the Armenian people, both at that time and today, as they remember this dark chapter in their history. I too mourn the loss of so many innocent lives and fully respect that the Armenian-American community and the Armenian people want their pain and loss to be acknowledged. The specific terminology the administration uses to refer to this tragedy is a policy determination made by the President. Should I be confirmed as the personal representative of the President, I would have the duty to faithfully represent the policies of the President and his administration.

Question. Can you explain how the administration's denial of the Armenian genocide can be reconciled with the United States long history of opposing genocide in any form?

Answer. The administration has never denied the facts of what occurred in 1915. President Bush acknowledges this horrific tragedy each year on April 24, Armenian Remembrance Day.

Question. Do you personally believe there should be a change in the administration's policy of nonrecognition of this genocide?

Answer. The administration has never denied the terrible events of 1915. The President annually recognizes this tragedy on Armenian Remembrance Day. This policy is determined by the President and, should I be confirmed as the personal representative of the President, I would have the duty to represent the policies of the President and his administration faithfully. I pledge to provide the very best advice in this process that I can; this is what I have tried to do my entire career.

Question. Can you explain why the administration still refuses to recognize these atrocities as a genocide?

Answer. The administration has never denied the terrible events of 1915 and acknowledges the human tragedy of the mass killings and forced exile of over 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The administration also understands that many Americans and many Armenians believe that these events should be called "genocide." It has been the policy of this administration, as well as that of previous administrations of both parties, not to use that term. The President's focus is on encouraging Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people. Our goal is to stimulate a candid exploration within Turkish society of these horrific events in an effort to help this reconciliation. This is not easy.

It was not easy for the United States to address its own historic dark spots. Turkey is making progress addressing these issues. The administration seeks not to undercut voices emerging in Turkey who call for a truthful exploration of these events in pursuit of Turkey's reconciliation with its own past and with Armenia; we share their goal of opening Turkey's past through honest, if painful, self examination.

Question. To the best of your knowledge, is there any effort underway to reexamine this policy? If so, when can Congress expect the result of this reexamination?

Answer. U.S. policy on all issues is open to discussion both within and from outside the administration. The Congress has been instrumental in raising this issue, as have many American citizens, as is appropriate in our democracy. Secretary Rice has made it clear that there are no taboo subjects and that all viewpoints are respectfully heard. If confirmed, I would seek to provide unbiased information and the best policy advice so that Washington policymakers can make the best decisions.

Question. As the United States Ambassador to Armenia, would you personally work to change United States policy and have these atrocities acknowledged as a genocide?

Answer. As the child of refugees—at a different time and place—I do feel very strongly about the great suffering experienced by the Armenian people both at that time and today as they remember this dark chapter in history. I too mourn the loss of so many innocent lives and fully respect that the Armenian-American community and the Armenian people want their pain and loss to be acknowledged. We all have strong feelings about this. But, as the personal representative of the President of the United States, an ambassador must faithfully represent the policies of the President and his administration. The Secretary has made it clear that there are no taboo subjects for internal discussion and that all viewpoints are respectfully heard. I pledge to provide the very best advice that I can; this is what I have tried to do my entire career.

Question. As the United States Ambassador to Armenia, what actions, if any, would you take against your employees, if they properly characterized the massacre of Armenians during WWI as a genocide?

Answer. As representatives of this administration, all State Department officers have the duty to represent the policies of the President and his administration faithfully, and I would expect the same of my staff. This is a basic tenet of a diplomatic career.

Question. During your June 19, 2008 confirmation hearing, you stated that referring to the Armenian genocide as genocide was a "policy decision" that senior officials, such as the President and the Secretary of State, could determine.

Please describe, in detail, the source, purpose, content, and conclusions of all administration "policy" documents, "decisions," and other materials concerning the Armenian Genocide that you reviewed and provide copies of these materials to the committee for its review.

Answer. The President's policy on this issue is described in the President's yearly Remembrance Day statements, and I have reviewed all the statements of this administration. They are part of the public record and are attached to this response. I have studied the history of the tragic massacres and forced exile that occurred at the end of the Ottoman Empire and U.S. policy in that regard. I have reviewed the "U.S. Official Records on the Armenian Genocide 1915–1917" and have read a number of books that examine the subject from various perspectives, including "The Burning Tigris," "A Shameful Act," and "Unsilencing the Past." The individual stories are horrifying; the magnitude of this terrible act—over 1.5 million murdered or deported—is simply incomprehensible. I also have reviewed the statements made by various U.S. officials at that time, including those presented to me at my confirmation hearing on June 19.

[The above-referenced statements follow:]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2001.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

Today marks the commemoration of one of the great tragedies of history: the forced exile and annihilation of approximately 1.5 million Armenians in the closing years of the Ottoman Empire. These infamous killings darkened the 20th century and continue to haunt us to this day. Today, I join Armenian Americans and the Armenian community abroad to mourn the loss of so many innocent lives. I ask all Americans to reflect on these terrible events.While we mourn the tragedy that

scarred the history of the Armenian people, let us also celebrate their indomitable will which has allowed Armenian culture, religion, and identity to flourish through the ages. Let us mark this year the 1700th anniversary of the establishment of Christianity in Armenia. Let us celebrate the spirit that illuminated the pages of history in 451 when the Armenians refused to bow to Persian demands that they renounce their faith. The Armenian reply was both courageous and unequivocal: "From this faith none can shake us, neither angels, nor men, neither sword, fire or water, nor any bitter torturers." This is the spirit that survived again in the face of the bitter fate that befell so many Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Today, that same spirit not only survives, but thrives in Armenian communities the world over. Many Armenian survivors and their descendents chose to live in the United States, where they found safety and built new lives. We are grateful for the countless ways in which Armenian Americans continue to enrich America's science, culture, commerce and, indeed, all aspects of our national life.

One of the most important ways in which we can honor the memory of Armenian victims of the past is to help modern Armenia build a secure and prosperous future. I am proud that the United States actively supports Armenia and its neighbors in finding a permanent and fair settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. I hope that this year we will see peace and reconciliation flourish in the south Caucasus region between Armenia and all its neighbors. The United States welcomes the opportunity to support the courageous efforts by the Armenian people to overcome years of hardship and Soviet repression to create a prospering, democratic, and sovereign Republic of Armenia.

Let us remember the past and let its lessons guide us as we seek to build a better future. In the name of the American people, I extend my heartfelt best wishes to all Armenians as we observe this solemn day of remembrance.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2002.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ON ARMENIAN MASSACRE

Today, we commemorate an appalling tragedy of the 20th century, the massacre of as many as 1.5 million Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire. These horrific killings left wounds that remain painful for people in Armenia, in Turkey, and around the world. I join the Armenian community in America and across the globe in mourning this horrendous loss of life.

Today is an occasion for the world to reflect upon and draw lessons from these terrible events. It is a day for recognizing that demonizing others lays the foundation for a dark cycle of hatred. Transcending this venomous pattern requires painful introspection about the past and wise determination to forge a new future based on truth and reconciliation. In this spirit, I look forward to Turkey restoring economic, political, and cultural links with Armenia.

The United States greatly values the contributions that Armenians make to our national life. With faith and courage, generations of Armenians have overcome great suffering and proudly preserved their centuries-old culture, traditions, and religion. The United States is also deeply grateful for Armenia's swift and decisive cooperation in the war against terrorism.

Just as the United States reached out to the Armenian people to provide shelter and freedom early in the last century, so did Armenia extend a supportive hand to the American people in the immediate aftermath of September 11. Our two peoples stand together in this fight in support of values that define civilization itself.

I am also very proud of America's strong support for a free Armenian state, whose citizens enjoy the fruits of peace and increasing prosperity. In the months to come, America will continue to increase its security cooperation with Armenia and with Armenia's neighbors to combat terrorism and pursue a lasting and just settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which will strengthen peace and stability in the Caucasus. The United States will also continue its strong support for Armenia's efforts to develop democratic and free market institutions, and to deepen its integration into the Euro-Atlantic community.

On behalf of the American people, I send warm wishes and expressions of solidarity to the Armenian people on this solemn day of remembrance. Together, our nations look with hope and determination toward a future of peace, prosperity, and freedom.

GEORGE W. BUSH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2003.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE: ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY, 2003

Today marks the anniversary of a horrible tragedy, the mass killings and forced exile of countless Armenians in the final days of the Ottoman Empire. Many Armenians refer to these appalling events as the "great calamity," reflecting a deep sorrow that continues to haunt them and their neighbors, the Turkish people. The suffering that befell the Armenian people in 1915 is a tragedy for all humanity, which the world should not forget. I join the Armenian-American community and Armenians around the world in mourning the horrendous loss of life.

I also salute our wise and bold friends from Armenia and Turkey who are coming together in a spirit of reconciliation to consider these events and their significance. I applaud them for rising above bitterness, and taking action to create a better future. I wish them success, building on their recent and significant achievements, as they work together in a spirit of hope and understanding.

As we remember those who perished and suffered, we salute the nation of Armenia, and Armenians everywhere. The United States is grateful for the contributions of Armenian Americans to our national life. Generations of Armenians have employed wisdom, courage, and centuries-old traditions to overcome great suffering and enrich their adopted American homeland.

The United States is proud to be a friend of Armenia, a young state with an ancient heritage. We are deepening our partnership to help achieve a secure, prosperous, and dignified future for the citizens of Armenia. The United States is committed to achieving a just and lasting settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We will also continue to help Armenia as it strives to strengthen its democracy and market economy.

On behalf of the American people, I send solemn wishes to the Armenian people on this day of remembrance. Our nations stand together, determined to create a future of peace, prosperity, and freedom for the citizens of our countries, for our regions, and for the world.

GEORGE W. BUSH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2004.

ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

On this day, we pause in remembrance of one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1.5 million Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire. This terrible event remains a source of pain for people in Armenia and Turkey and for all those who believe in freedom, tolerance, and the dignity of every human life. I join with my fellow Americans and the Armenian community in the United States and around the world in mourning this loss of life.

The United States is proud of the strong ties we share with Armenia. From the end of World War I and again since the reemergence of an independent Armenian state in 1991, our country has sought a partnership with Armenia that promotes democracy, security cooperation, and free markets. Today, our Nation remains committed to a peace settlement in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and is grateful for Armenia's continuing cooperation in the war on terror. By advancing understanding and goodwill, free nations can help build a brighter future for the world. Our country seeks to help Armenia expand its strategic relations with the United States and our European allies.

Generations of Armenian Americans have also strengthened our communities and enriched our Nation's character. By preserving their heritage, faith, and traditions, Armenian Americans enhance the diversity that makes America great.

I commend individuals in Armenia and Turkey who have worked to support peace and reconciliation, including through the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission, and call on Armenia and Turkey to restore their economic, political, and cultural ties. I also send warm wishes and expressions of solidarity to the Armenian people on this solemn day of remembrance.

GEORGE W. BUSH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY, APRIL 24, 2005.

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

On Armenian Remembrance Day, we remember the forced exile and mass killings of as many as 1.5 million Armenians during the last days of the Ottoman Empire. This terrible event is what many Armenian people have come to call the "Great Calamity." I join my fellow Americans and Armenian people around the world in expressing my deepest condolences for this horrible loss of life.

Today, as we commemorate the 90th anniversary of this human tragedy and reflect on the suffering of the Armenian people, we also look toward a promising future for an independent Armenian state. The United States is grateful for Armenia's contributions to the war on terror and to efforts to build a democratic and peaceful Iraq. We remain committed to supporting the historic reforms Armenia has pursued for over a decade. We call on the Government of Armenia to advance democratic freedoms that will further advance the aspirations of the Armenian people. We remain committed to a lasting and peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We also seek a deeper partnership with Armenia that includes security cooperation and is rooted in the shared values of democratic and market economic freedoms.

I applaud individuals in Armenia and Turkey who have sought to examine the historical events of the early 20th century with honesty and sensitivity. The recent analysis by the International Center for Transitional Justice did not provide the final word, yet marked a significant step toward reconciliation and restoration of the spirit of tolerance and cultural richness that has connected the people of the Caucasus and Anatolia for centuries. We look to a future of freedom, peace, and prosperity in Armenia and Turkey and hope that Prime Minister Erdogan's recent proposal for a joint Turkish-Armenian commission can help advance these processes.

Millions of Americans proudly trace their ancestry to Armenia. Their faith, traditions, and patriotism enrich the cultural, political, and economic life of the United States. I appreciate all individuals who work to promote peace, tolerance, and reconciliation.

On this solemn day of remembrance, I send my best wishes and expressions of solidarity to Armenian people around the world.

GEORGE W. BUSH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2006.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

Today, we remember one of the horrible tragedies of the 20th century—the mass killings and forced exile of as many as 1.5 million Armenians in the final days of the Ottoman Empire in 1915. This was a tragedy for all humanity and one that we and the world must never forget.

We mourn this terrible chapter of history and recognize that it remains a source of pain for people in Armenia and for all those who believe in freedom, tolerance, and the dignity and value of every human life. It is a credit to the human spirit and generations of Armenians who live in Armenia, America, and around the globe that they have overcome this suffering and proudly preserved their centuries-old culture, traditions, and religion.

We praise the individuals in Armenia and Turkey who have sought to examine the historical events of this time with honesty and sensitivity. The analysis by the International Center for Transitional Justice, while not the final word, has made a significant contribution toward deepening our understanding of these events. We encourage dialogues, including through joint commissions, that strive for a shared understanding of these tragic events and move Armenia and Turkey towards normalized relations.

Today, we look with hope to a bright future for Armenia. Armenia's Millennium Challenge Compact reflects our confidence and the importance we place in Armenia making progress on democratic reform and advancement of free markets. We seek to help Armenia bolster its security and deepen its inclusion in the Euro-Atlantic family. We remain committed to securing a peaceful and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and hope the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan will take bold steps to achieve this goal.

On this solemn day of remembrance, Laura and I express our deepest condolences to the Armenian people. Our nations stand together, determined to create a future of peace, prosperity, and freedom for the citizens of our countries and the world.

GEORGE W. BUSH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2007.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE: HONORING MEMORY OF 1.5 MILLION ARMENIAN LIVES LOST DURING OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Each year on this day, we pause to remember the victims of one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, when as many as 1.5 million Armenians lost their lives in the final years of the Ottoman Empire, many of them victims of mass killings and forced exile. I join my fellow Americans and Armenian people around the world in commemorating this tragedy and honoring the memory of the innocent lives that were taken. The world must never forget this painful chapter of its history.

All who cherish freedom and value the sanctity of human life look back on these horrific events in sorrow and disbelief. Many of those who survived were forced from their ancestral home and spread across the globe. Yet, in the midst of this terrible struggle, the world witnessed the indomitable spirit and character of the Armenian people. Many of the brave survivors came to America, where they have preserved a deep connection with their history and culture. Generations of Armenians in the United States have enriched our country and inspired us with their courage and conviction.

Today, we remember the past and also look forward to a brighter future. We commend the individuals in Armenia and Turkey who are working to normalize the relationship between their two countries. A sincere and open examination of the historic events of the late-Ottoman period is an essential part of this process. The United States supports and encourages those in both countries who are working to build a shared understanding of history as a basis for a more hopeful future.

We value the strong and vibrant ties between the United States and Armenia. Our Nation is grateful for Armenia's contributions to the war on terror, particularly for its efforts to help build a peaceful and democratic Iraq. The United States remains committed to working with Armenia and Azerbaijan to promote a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We are also working to promote democratic and economic reform in Armenia that will advance the cause of freedom and justice.

Laura and I express our deepest condolences to Armenian people around the world on this solemn day of remembrance. We stand together in our determination to build a more peaceful, more prosperous, and more just world.

GEORGE W. BUSH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Press Secretary, April 24, 2008.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ON ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

On this day of remembrance, we honor the memory of the victims of one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the mass killings and forced exile of as many as 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. I join the Armenian community in America and around the world in commemorating this tragedy and mourning the loss of so many innocent lives.

As we reflect on this epic human tragedy, we must resolve to redouble our efforts to promote peace, tolerance, and respect for the dignity of human life. The Armenian people's unalterable determination to triumph over tragedy and flourish is a testament to their strength of character and spirit. We are grateful for the many contributions Americans of Armenian heritage have made to our Nation.

We welcome the efforts by individuals in Armenia and Turkey to foster reconciliation and peace, and support joint efforts for an open examination of the past in search of a shared understanding of these tragic events. We look forward to the realization of a fully normalized Armenia-Turkey relationship.

The United States is committed to a strong relationship with Armenia based on shared values. We call on the Government of Armenia to take decisive steps to promote democracy, and will continue our support for Armenia to this end. We remain

committed to serving as an honest broker in pursuit of a lasting and peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

On this solemn day of remembrance, Laura and I express our deepest condolences to Armenian people around the world.

Question. What, if anything, has the State Department directed you to say in public statements on the Armenian genocide? Who, if anyone, directed you to make such statements in public?

Answer. I have not been directed to say anything. However, I understand that I have a duty to faithfully represent the policy of the President. There is the same expectation for all Foreign Service officers and executive branch officials—regardless of the subject. This is a basic tenet of a diplomatic career. At the same time, the Secretary has made it clear that there are no taboo subjects for internal discussion and that all viewpoints are respectfully heard.

The United States Government acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day.

Question. Have you been directed not to use the word genocide when discussing the Armenian Genocide?

Answer. Policy on this issue is determined by the President. I understand that I have a duty to faithfully represent the policy of the President. There is the same expectation for all Foreign Service officers and executive branch officials—regardless of the subject. This is a basic tenet of a diplomatic career.

The administration understands that many Americans and many Armenians believe that the events of the past that I have referred to should be called "genocide." It has been President Bush's policy, as well as that of previous presidents of both parties, not to use that term. The President's focus is on encouraging Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people.

Question. If the Republic of Turkey recognized the genocide, would the United States then recognize it also?

Answer. The United States Government acknowledges and mourns as historical fact the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day. It is the prerogative of the President to set the policy on how the administration characterizes these historical events.

We have strongly encouraged Turkey to come to terms with its past. That will not be easy, just as it has not been easy for the United States to come to terms with dark periods of our own past. As one part of that effort, the United States is prepared to provide assistance if Turkey and Armenia agree to establish a joint historical commission.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read this cable concerning Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand and, if confirmed, will abide by the guidelines as conveyed in 04 STATE 258893.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the

day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I agree that the Peace Corps, in order to effectively carry out its mandate, needs to be distinct from the United States mission in Armenia, as in other countries.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. In line with Secretary Rice's guidance on this issue, if confirmed, I intend to allow the Peace Corps to operate with as much autonomy as possible, bearing in mind my responsibility to provide for the safety and security of the volunteers and to coordinate United States objectives and policy in Armenia.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BARACK OBAMA

Nearly 2 million Armenians were deported during the Armenian Genocide, which was carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, and approximately 1.5 million of those deported were killed. It is imperative that we recognize the horrific acts carried out against the Armenian people as genocide. The occurrence of the Armenian genocide is a widely documented fact supported by an overwhelming collection of historical evidence. I was deeply disturbed 2 years ago when the United States Ambassador to Armenia was fired after he used the term "genocide" to describe the mass slaughter of Armenians. I called for Secretary Rice to closely examine what I believe is an untenable position taken by the U.S. Government. I ask that you respond to the following questions:

Question. How do you characterize the events surrounding the Armenian genocide?

Answer. The United States Government acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day. As the child of refugees—at a different time and place—I do feel very strongly about the great suffering experienced by the Armenian people, both at that time and today, as they remember this dark chapter in their history. I too mourn the loss of so many innocent lives and fully respect that the Armenian-American community and the Armenian people want their pain and loss to be acknowledged.

Question. If confirmed, what actions will you take to remember the victims of the Armenian Genocide?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the tradition of participating in the official memorial event held in Yerevan every April. I will refer to this great historic catastrophe as the "Medz Yeghern," the term often used within Armenia to refer to that dark chapter of history. If confirmed, I also would make it a priority to promote understanding and reconciliation between the peoples and Governments of Armenia and Turkey. It is important for the United States to do everything that it can to encourage dialog between Armenia and Turkey, and to encourage Turkey, in particular, to examine the terrible events of that time openly. This was a tragedy that we and the world must never forget, so that it is never repeated.

Question. What steps is the State Department taking to encourage greater study and recognition of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey?

Answer. The United States Embassy in Ankara is committed to working with the Government of Turkey on ways in which the atrocities of 1915 can be studied. As a recent example, the administration is currently laying the groundwork for an International Visitor Program that would bring archivists from the Turkish State Archives to the United States to look at the ways in which we do historical research. As a confidence building measure, the United States Government has contacted Armenian archivists to participate in the program, in the hope that, upon return, the archivists from both countries could work together on a joint program that would study the issue.

In addition, our embassies take every opportunity in meetings with the Governments of Armenia and Turkey, and with civil society leaders from both countries, to encourage improved dialog between them. Since 2006, the United States Government has provided over $700,000 in support of initiatives to increase people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, academics, and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Question. How will you work with your counterparts in Ankara to decriminalize discussion of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey? Is the Department satisfied with recent modifications to Article 301 of Turkey's Criminal Code that allowed individuals such as Hrant Dink to be prosecuted for speaking about the Genocide? Why or why not?

Answer. The administration has made clear to the Turkish authorities on many occasions that such prosecutions violate free expression, run counter to Turkey's aspiration to join the European Union, and undercut Turkey's strategic significance as an example of a secular democracy that can inspire reform throughout the broader Middle East and Central Asia. The scope for free expression in Turkey, including on the Armenian issue, has expanded significantly in recent years, but clearly there is much more to be done. In May 2008, Turkey amended Article 301 of its Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness." While the administration would have preferred to have seen the repeal of Article 301, the amendments reduce the maximum possible sentence from 3 to 2 years and, most importantly, require the Minister of Justice to determine whether to accept the case for prosecution. The Minister's role should help to reduce significantly the number of cases brought by zealous prosecutors. The administration has encouraged the Turkish authorities to continue this progress and to end legal action against citizens for expressing their views.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. What conditions must be met for the administration to finally recognize the slaughter of over 1.5 million Armenians during WWI by the Ottoman Empire as "genocide"? Specifically, if the Republic of Turkey recognized the genocide, would the United States then recognize it also? Additionally, how is the President's policy on recognizing the Armenian Genocide different from the Turkish Government's policy?

Answer. In contrast to the Turkish Government's policy, the United States Government acknowledges and mourns as historical fact the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day. It is the prerogative of the President to set the policy on how the administration characterizes these historical events.

We have strongly encouraged Turkey to come to terms with its past. That will not be easy, just as it has not been easy for the United States to come to terms with dark periods of our own past.

Question. Should you be confirmed, how will you work to promote Armenian-Turkish reconciliation in a direction that would lead to full recognition of the Armenian genocide by Turkey and the United States? Additionally, how would you support efforts to promote overall reconciliation and improved relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue this administration's efforts to promote Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and normalization of relations. Specifically, I will continue, working with our Embassy in Ankara, administration efforts to encourage Turkey to open its land border, reinstitute transportation, communication, and utility links between the two countries, and reestablish diplomatic relations. Contact begins to build trust, and trust is the necessary first step to reconciliation, facilitating Turkey's ability and willingness to examine the dark spots in its own history.

The administration, through our Embassy in Ankara, also will be pressing for expanded freedom of expression in Turkey, helping to expand the public debate surrounding the events of 1915 that led to the amendment of Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness." We welcome this progress, though clearly there is more to be done. The administration will continue to encourage the Turkish authorities to end legal action against citizens for expressing their views.

As a Minsk Group cochair nation, we believe the single most important step toward bolstering peace and prosperity in Armenia as well as Azerbaijan would be a peaceful, just, and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. During the past 2 years, the parties have moved closer than ever to a framework agreement based on the Basic Principles that have been the subject of intensive negotiations, thanks in large part to the active mediation of the United States as a cochair of the OSCE's Minsk Group. The Minsk Group cochairs remain fully committed to helping Armenia and Azerbaijan finalize these Basic Principles, and hope to build momentum in the coming months after an introductory meeting between Presidents Sargsyan and Aliyev in St. Petersburg on June 6. If I am confirmed, I would uphold our commitment to support the efforts of the Minsk Group cochairs to sustain the negotiations and narrow the differences between the sides to promote the soonest possible endorsement of the Basic Principles, so the parties can proceed on this basis with drafting a peace agreement.

RESPONSES OF MARIE L. YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Does the United States have military or economic interests in Turkey that influence its decision on whether to use the word "genocide," when discussing the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians from 1915–1923?

Answer. Turkey is a long-standing NATO ally of the United States and an important partner in promoting peace and stability in the broader Middle East, and one with which we share democratic values. We seek to maintain strong United States-Turkey relations, just as we seek to maintain strong United States-Armenian relations. We believe our partnership will deepen with Turkey as it reconciles with its own painful past and with Armenia. We are encouraging Turkey to open its border, reinstitute transportation, communication, and utility links between the two countries, and reestablish diplomatic relations. The administration also has pressed for expanding freedom of expression in Turkey, which has helped to expand the public debate surrounding the events of 1915 and led to the amendment of Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness."

Question. What do you believe are the effects of Turkey's state-sponsored denial of a genocide on the survivors and their descendants?

Answer. Turkey's difficulty in coming to terms with this dark spot in its history only adds to the pain experienced by many Armenians and Armenian-Americans. The United States Government acknowledges and mourns as historical fact the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April 24 the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day.

Question. Do you believe there can be reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia, without an acknowledgment of the genocide by Turkey?

Answer. To achieve full reconciliation, Turkey must come to terms with its past. This will not be easy and progress so far has been slow, although there have been some signs of change, such as the outrage and ethnic solidarity that resulted from the murder of Hrant Dink, and recent changes to Article 301. The administration will continue to work to promote understanding between Turkey and Armenia, including by encouraging the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the opening of their land border. If I am confirmed, I will continue to promote not only government-to-government discussions, but also people-to-people cultural and economic contacts and partnerships, and other cross-border and regional initiatives. Contact begins to build trust, and trust is the necessary first step to reconciliation, facilitating Turkey's ability and willingness to examine the dark spots in its history.

Question. In a 1951 U.S. court filing with the International Court of Justice, the U.S. filing stated that, "the Turkish massacres of Armenians, the extermination of millions of Jews and Poles by the Nazis are outstanding examples of the crime of genocide." Also, on April 22, 1981, President Ronald Reagan used the term genocide to describe the Armenian Genocide, stating, in an official proclamation: "Like the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians which followed it—and like too many other such persecutions of too many other peoples—the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten."

What is your understanding of the reasoning behind the change in United States policy today that now prohibits executive branch officials from using the term genocide to describe the Armenian Genocide?

Answer. It has been President Bush's policy, as well as that of previous Presidents of both parties, not to use that term. The President's focus is on encouraging Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people. He seeks to support the painstaking progress achieved to date. A key part of that effort is to end Armenia's isolation in the region by encouraging normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey and the opening of their land border. President Bush believes that normalization can and should be achieved.

The United States Government acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day.

Question. How can we expect Turkey to come to terms with its past when we, as Americans, are unwilling to speak honestly about the Armenian Genocide?

Answer. The administration has never denied the facts—over 1.5 million Armenians were murdered, starved, or deported at the end of the Ottoman Empire. This was a tragedy that we and the world must never forget, so that it is never repeated. Our focus is on encouraging the people of Turkey to reconcile with their past regarding these horrific events. We mourn this terrible chapter of history and recognize that it remains a source of great pain for the people of Armenia and of Armenian descent, and for all those who believe in the dignity and value of every human life.

Question. As the ambassador-designate to Armenia you are clearly mindful of the work of your predecessors in this important diplomatic post, including former Ambassador John Evans, who was fired for speaking truthfully about the Armenian Genocide? What lessons do you draw from Ambassador Evans' experience, particularly the way in which his tenure in Yerevan and his diplomatic career were ended?

Answer. I understand that I have a duty to faithfully represent the policy of the President. There is the same expectation for all Foreign Service officers and executive branch officials—regardless of the subject. This is a basic tenet of a diplomatic career. At the same time, the Secretary has made it clear that there are no taboo subjects for internal discussion and that all viewpoints are respectfully heard.

Question. There were some questions about the characterization of the Armenian Genocide that you were unable to answer because you were not authorized to speak on them. Do you know of other cases where the President limits speech of Department of State employees based on his policy determinations on the characterizations of historical events?

Answer. As part of the executive branch, the State Department follows the President's policies on all issues. There is the same expectation for all Foreign Service officers and executive branch officials—regardless of the subject. I understand that I have a duty to faithfully represent the policy of the President. This is a basic tenet of a diplomatic career.

Question. Do you believe the 1951 United States court filing with the International Court of Justice stating, "the Turkish massacres of Armenians, the extermination of millions of Jews and Poles by the Nazis are outstanding examples of the crime of genocide" was inaccurate?

Answer. The U.S. Government acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The administration also understands that many Americans and many Armenians believe that these horrible acts should be called "genocide." It has been President Bush's policy, as well as that of previous presidents of both parties, not to use that term.

President Bush believes that the best way to honor the victims is to remember the past, so it is never repeated, and to look to the future to promote understanding and reconciliation between the peoples and governments of Armenia and Turkey. A key part of that effort is to end Armenia's isolation in the region by encouraging normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey and the opening of their land border. The Armenian Government has requested that we facilitate this process. It will not be easy nor will it likely be quick, but there are some hopeful signs. President Bush believes that normalization can and should be achieved.

Question. How does the administration's non-use of the genocide term advance United States efforts to promote Armenian-Turkish reconciliation?

Answer. The administration has never denied the terrible events of 1915 and acknowledges the human tragedy of the mass killings and forced exile of over 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The administration also understands that many Americans and many Armenians believe that these events should be called "genocide." It has been the policy of this administration, as well as that of previous administrations of both parties, not to use that term. The President's focus is on encouraging Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people. The administration's goal is to stimulate a candid exploration within Turkish society of these horrific events in an effort to help this reconciliation. This is not easy. It was not easy for the United States to address its own historic dark spots. We seek not to undercut voices emerging in Turkey who call for a truthful exploration of these events in pursuit of Turkey's reconciliation with its own past and with Armenia; we share their goal of opening Turkey's past through honest, if painful, self examination.

Question. The President's policies are not promoting an honest reexamination of its history, but actually intensifying Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide. What evidence can you identify for us today that can inspire any trust by the Senate that those words of facilitating dialog have borne any real results?

Answer. The administration's goal is to stimulate a candid exploration within Turkish society of these horrific events in an effort to help this reconciliation. This is not easy. It was not easy for the United States to address its own historic dark spots.

The administration has long pressed for expanding freedom of expression in Turkey, which has helped to expand the public debate surrounding the mass killings, forced exile, and ethnic cleansing that occurred during WWI at the end of the Ottoman Empire. After a long silence, Turkey is making progress addressing these issues. More than 100,000 Turkish citizens of all backgrounds demonstrated at the funeral of Hrant Dink, an Armenian-Turkish journalist murdered by a Turkish ultranationalist, and they demonstrated in support of tolerance and a candid exploration of Turkey's past.In May 2008, the Turkish Government amended Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness." While the administration would have preferred to have seen the repeal of Article 301, the amendments reduce the maximum possible sentence from 3 to 2 years and, most importantly, require the Minister of Justice to determine whether to accept the case for prosecution. The Minister's role should help to reduce significantly the number of cases brought by zealous prosecutors. The administration will continue to encourage the Turkish authorities to continue this progress and to end legal action against citizens for expressing their views on this (and any) issue.

The United States Embassy in Ankara also is committed to working with the Government of Turkey on ways in which the terrible events of 1915 can be studied. As a recent example, the United States Government is currently laying the groundwork for an International Visitor Program that would bring archivists from the Turkish State Archives to the United States to look at the ways in which we do historical research. As a confidence building measure, we also have contacted Armenian archivists to participate in the program, in the hope that, upon return, the archivists from both countries could work together on a joint program that would study the atrocities.

In addition, our embassies take every opportunity in meetings with the Governments of Armenia and Turkey, and with civil society leaders from both countries, to encourage improved dialog between them. Since 2006, the United States Government has provided over $700,000 in support of initiatives to increase people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, aca-

demics, and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Question. The President opposes the recognition of the Armenian Genocide because he believes it will harm reconciliation, however, he does not take this same position with the genocide in Darfur, although it is still heartily denied by the Sudanese Government. How is the Armenian Genocide any different?

Answer. The mass murder and ethnic cleansing of over 1.5 million Armenians in 1915 is a tragedy of epic proportions for all of humanity and one that is commemorated every year in the United States so that we never forget this dark chapter in history. Many Americans believe that these events should be called "genocide." It has been President Bush's policy—as well as that of several previous Presidents on both sides of the aisle—not to use that term. The administration's focus is on encouraging people in Turkey to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people regarding these horrific events.

Question. What will you do to help end Turkey's over 15-year-long blockade against Armenia?

Answer. Facilitating Armenia's regional integration by opening its border with Turkey is a priority for the United States. If confirmed, this would be one of my key priorities as ambassador—not only by supporting government-to-government discussions—but by promoting people-to-people contacts and partnerships, and other cross-border and regional initiatives. Contact begins to build trust, and trust is the necessary first step to reconciliation and conflict resolution. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with my colleagues at our embassy in Ankara in this common effort. Clearly, the status quo is not helpful to anyone.

Fortunately, some progress has been achieved in recent years. There are regular charter flights between Yerevan and Istanbul and other flights to Antalya; bus connections via Georgia are numerous; and trade with Turkey through Georgia is common. However, both countries would benefit greatly from increased direct trade, connecting their electrical grids, and implementing other measures natural to neighbors.

The United States also supports more cross-border dialog and cooperation between the people of Armenia and Turkey through research initiatives, conferences, and exchange programs. Our embassies take every opportunity in meetings with the Governments of Armenia and Turkey, and with civil society leaders from both countries, to encourage improved dialog. Since 2006, the United States Government has provided over $700,000 in support of initiatives to increase people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, academics, and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Question. How does Turkey and Azerbaijan's blockade of Armenia harm United States interests in the region, in particular our interest to promote an East-West trade corridor and minimize the influence of Russia and Iran?

Answer. Facilitating Armenia's regional integration is a particular priority for the United States. The United States Government has worked to end Armenia's isolation both by promoting reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey to reopen their land border, and by working to find a peaceful and lasting settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan. The U.S. Government believes regional integration is in the economic interest of all three countries and certainly in our interest. For example, U.S. investment is hampered by regional divisions. With its borders to the east and west closed, Armenia relies more than we would like on its relations with Iran. In terms of Russia's influence, Armenia's history and currently complicated relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey provide the impetus for a close relationship with Russia. In looking at the region as a whole, our strategic interests are focused on several issues—the advance of freedom and democracy; security, including counterterrorism and peaceful resolution of separatist conflicts; and energy. All would benefit greatly from good neighborly relations and regional integration of the South Caucasus.

Question. Currently, the United States assistance to Nagorno Karabakh is limited to only humanitarian assistance, however, there are serious needs for economic development, which have been ignored for over a decade. Do you support a shift from humanitarian to developmental assistance for Nagorno Karabakh to facilitate the construction of a hospital and other projects?

Answer. Since 1998, the United States has provided roughly $29 million in funding for projects that meet the highest priority needs, such as demining, health, drinking water, shelter, and infrastructure reconstruction. The administration believes these are the most appropriate and pressing priorities, based on a very recent (December 2007) needs assessment conducted by USAID in Nagorno-Karabakh, actual humanitarian conditions on the ground, and international legal constraints arising from the unresolved nature of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Question. What restrictions, if any, are in place that prohibit communications between United States and Nagorno-Karabakh officials? What is the justification for such restrictions, considering that the Nagorno-Karabakh officials have been democratically elected in free and internationally-monitored elections and are the legitimate representatives of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh? Where are these restrictions codified or enumerated?

Answer. No country, including Armenia, recognizes Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent entity. In accordance with the international legal principle of territorial integrity, Nagorno-Karabakh remains a part of Azerbaijan, and its future status is the subject of negotiations currently mediated by the OSCE's Minsk Group, of which the United States is a cochair. The United States strives to remain an honest broker of these negotiations. Because of these sensitivities, our level of interaction with de facto officials from Nagorno-Karabakh is limited. State Department policy authorizes only the United States cochair of the OSCE Minsk Group and his staff to maintain regular contact with the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities and to travel on a regular basis to Nagorno-Karabakh, with other United States officials meeting with the de facto authorities of Nagorno-Karabakh with the permission of the United States cochair. This policy is not codified in official State Department regulations, but is widely disseminated to all United States officials planning to travel to Armenia or Azerbaijan.

Question. Would you permit USAID personnel, who are not Armenian nationals, to visit Nagorno-Karabakh?

Answer. USAID personnel, like other United States officials, may travel to Nagorno-Karabakh with the permission of the United States cochair of the OSCE Minsk Group, who has the United States lead in mediating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. USAID personnel have traveled to Nagorno-Karabakh in the past with the permission of the United States cochair to implement humanitarian aid programs.

Question. Would you visit with government officials from Nagorno-Karabakh, if they requested such a meeting?

Answer. The United States cochair and his staff maintain regular contact with de facto officials from Nagorno-Karabakh. Under current U.S. policy, if confirmed, I would not meet with such officials unless requested to do so by the U.S. cochair.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BARBARA BOXER

Question. Can you please provide the State Department's definition of the term genocide and an explanation of how the killing and forced exile of 1.5 million Armenians between 1915–1923 fails to meet that definition?

Answer. The United States became a State Party to the Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1989. Genocide is defined in Article II of the Convention, as subject to the understandings made by the Senate in providing its advice and consent to ratification, and the State Department accepts that definition.

The administration has never denied the terrible events of 1915 and acknowledges the human tragedy of the mass killings and forced exile of as many as 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The administration also understands that many Americans and many Armenians believe that these events should be called "genocide." It has been the policy of this administration, as well as that of previous administrations of both parties, not to use that term. The President's focus is on remembering the past and on encouraging Turkish citizens to reconcile with their past and with the Armenian people. The United States believes that establishing an honest albeit painful dialog on these events is the best way to achieve reconciliation, peace, and stability in the region and to help encourage a full understanding of these terrible events.

Question. Have you, at any time, been advised, counseled, or informed in an explicit or implicit way not to use the term genocide?

Answer. Policy on this issue is determined by the President. I understand that I have a duty to faithfully represent the policy of the President. There is the same expectation for all Foreign Service officers and executive branch officials—regardless of the subject.

Question. Have you reviewed the evidence provided by our own United States diplomats and ambassadors at the time of the 1915 Armenian Genocide (including reports and cables from United States Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, United States Ambassador Abram Elkus, United States Consul Jesse Jackson, and United States Consul Leslie Davis) that is available in the United States archives?

Answer. I have read a number of books on this subject that quote from the officials you mention, and I am familiar with key passages that they have written, including those passages that were raised during my confirmation hearing on June 19. I am acquainted with the history of the tragic massacres and forced exile that occurred at the end of the Ottoman Empire, and with U.S. policy in that regard. I also have reviewed the "U.S. Official Records on the Armenian Genocide 1915–1917," and have read a number of books looking at the subject from various perspectives. The individual stories are horrifying; the magnitude of these terrible acts—over 1.5 million killed or forcibly deported—is simply incomprehensible.

Question. Do you acknowledge that the United States Government affirmed the Armenian Genocide in its 1951 International Court of Justice (ICJ) filing, which read in part: "The Genocide Convention resulted from the inhuman and barbarous practices, which prevailed in certain countries prior to and during World War II, when entire religious, racial and national minority groups were threatened with and subjected to deliberate extermination. The practice of genocide has occurred throughout human history. The Roman persecution of the Christians, the Turkish massacres of Armenians, the extermination of millions of Jews and Poles by the Nazis are outstanding examples of the crime of genocide. (Document follows).

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

PLEADINGS, ORAL ARGUMENTS, DOCUMENTS

RESERVATIONS TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE

ADVISORY OPINION OF MAY 28th, 1951

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4. WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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I. *The Genocide Convention*

The Genocide Convention resulted from the inhuman and barbarous practices which prevailed in certain countries prior to and during World War II, when entire religious, racial and national minority groups were threatened with and subjected to deliberate extermination. The practice of genocide has occurred throughout human history. The Roman persecution of the Christians, the Turkish massacres of Armenians, the extermination of millions of Jews and Poles by the Nazis are outstanding examples of the crime of genocide. This was the background when the General Assembly of the United Nations considered the problem of genocide. Not once, but twice, that body declared unanimously that the practice of genocide is criminal under international law and that States ought to take steps to prevent and punish genocide.

Answer. It is my understanding that the U.S. Government did file this document with the International Court of Justice in 1951.

Question. Do United States-Turkish relations influence the Bush administration's policy concerning the Armenian Genocide in any way?

Answer. Turkey is a long-standing NATO ally of the United States and an important partner in promoting peace and stability in the broader Middle East. We seek to maintain strong United States-Turkey relations, just as we seek to maintain strong United States-Armenian relations. We do not believe that use of the term "genocide" will contribute to Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and normalization of relations. Instead, we are encouraging Turkey to open its border, reinstitute trans-

portation, communication, and utility links between the two countries, and reestablish diplomatic relations. The administration also has pressed for expanding freedom of expression in Turkey, which has helped to expand the public debate surrounding the events of 1915 and led to the amendment of Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness."

Question. Do you fear you could lose your job or be demoted if you were to use the word "genocide" to describe the atrocities committed against the Armenians?

Answer. Policy on this issue is determined by the President. I understand that I have a duty to represent the policy of the President faithfully. There is the same expectation for all Foreign Service officers and executive branch officials—regardless of the subject.

Question. In preparations for this hearing, you may have reviewed your predecessor's responses to questions from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Do you have any reservations about Ambassador Richard Hoagland's initial written responses to the SFRC?

Answer. I did review his responses. I believe that we must make it clear that the administration has never denied the facts—as many as 1.5 million Armenians were murdered, starved, or deported at the end of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the administration has stated this quite clearly. This was a tragedy that we and the world must never forget, so that it is never repeated. We mourn this terrible chapter of history and recognize that it remains a source of great pain for the people of Armenia and of Armenian descent, and for all those who believe in the dignity and value of every human life.

Question. What actions, if any, would you take against your employees if they properly characterized the massacre of Armenians during WWI as genocide?

Answer. As representatives of this administration, all State Department officers have the duty to represent the policies of the President and his administration faithfully, and I would expect the same of my staff. This is a basic tenet of a diplomatic career. At the same time, Secretary Rice has made it clear that there are no taboo subjects for internal discussion and that all viewpoints are respectfully heard. I would follow the same policy with my employees.

Question. Would you advise Members of Congress against supporting the Armenian Genocide resolution, H.Res.106, which was recently passed by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs?

Answer. If confirmed, as the personal representative of the President of the United States, I would have the duty of faithfully representing the policies of the President and his administration. If asked by Members of Congress, I would provide my understanding of the reasoning underlying the President's policy.

Question. Would you support a decision to allow USAID personnel who are not Armenian nationals to visit Nagorno Karabakh?

Answer. USAID personnel, like other United States officials, may travel to Nagorno-Karabakh with the permission of the United States cochair of the OSCE Minsk Group, who has the United States lead in mediating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. USAID personnel have traveled to Nagorno-Karabakh in the past with the permission of the United States cochair to implement humanitarian aid programs.

Question. Would you visit with government officials from Nagorno-Karabakh if they requested such a meeting?

Answer. The United States cochair and his staff maintain regular contact with de facto officials from Nagorno-Karabakh. Under current U.S. policy, if confirmed, I would not meet with such officials unless requested to do so by the United States cochair.

Question. Will you consult with former Ambassador John Evans before you depart for Armenia?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I would consult with former Ambassador Evans and others before I depart for Armenia in order to better understand the complex issues and challenges that I would face.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

Question. United States assistance to Armenia has demonstrated effectiveness in promoting free market reform and is vital to democracy building in Armenia. What actions will you take to continue to facilitate a robust assistance program?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strongly support the continued evaluation and fine-tuning of the United States Government assistance programs and will coordinate closely with the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance, the Office of Management and Budget, and Congress to ensure that future budget requests meet United States Government policy goals, as well as the development needs of Armenia.

Many of the United States Government assistance programs in Armenia have achieved measurable success, particularly in promoting economic growth. For example, in part because of United States Government assistance, the poverty rate in Armenia fell from 56 percent in 1999 to 30 percent in 2005 (based on IMF reporting); rural poverty fell from 48 percent to 28 percent. However, the events surrounding the flawed Presidential elections in February and its aftermath prove that there is still much work needed to foster democratic reform. In the wake of these developments, the U.S. Government is evaluating how to better target our assistance programs to achieve our policy objectives by focusing more on increasing the capacity of civil society to seek accountable and transparent governance.

Armenia was recently chosen as one of 10 pilot countries for which the United States Government will develop a "Country Assistance Strategy" (CAS). The CAS will identify goals and priorities for United States assistance over a 5-year period, and will cover not only the Department of State and USAID, but all other United States Government agencies providing assistance to Armenia. The process of developing the CAS should assist us in determining how the United States can best contribute to Armenia's economic, social, and democratic development.

Question. Please explain the rationale behind the administration decision to reduce aid to Armenia by over 50 percent in its fiscal year 2009 request, while maintaining or increasing aid to every other former Soviet republic?

Answer. The reduced request for fiscal year 2009 does not detract from the critical importance of Armenia to United States interests nor does it signal a change in United States policy. Rather, the request level meets the country's development needs and is appropriate within the context of assistance priorities within the region and around the globe. Armenia has made real progress on reversing rural poverty; nevertheless, the government's commitment to democratic reform is not as strong as others in the region, and Armenia still struggles with rampant corruption and weak democratic institutions.

Within the fiscal year 2009 assistance request for Eurasia, funding is prioritized to help the most reform-oriented countries in the region—Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova—by promoting economic and energy independence, helping to diversify export markets, and improving democratic governance in the face of increasing Russian economic and political pressure.

Question. What will be your key priorities as Ambassador to Armenia?

Answer. If I am confirmed, my top priority would be to support the efforts of the United States in working toward regional stability by facilitating Armenian-Turkish relations, including the opening of their border, and a peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan. The status quo in both situations is unacceptable and not in U.S. or regional interests. Promoting good governance in Armenia is also a key United States goal. The conduct of the recent Presidential elections and their violent aftermath in which 10 individuals died were deeply disturbing. The path toward democracy is rarely fast or smooth. The United States Government's aim is to help the Armenian Government and the Armenian people restore democratic momentum and to renew their own stated mission of moving forward to become a country where government institutions are transparent and accountable and where rule of law is accepted by all. The relationship of the United States Government with Armenia is broad and deep, both on a bilateral level and between our peoples. Over the past 17 years, the United States has provided close to $2 billion in assistance and materially improved the lives of millions of Armenians. If confirmed, I will do everything in my power to ensure that United States interests are promoted and protected, that the bilateral relationship flourishes, and that Armenia's isolation ends and regional stability is enhanced.

Question. What do you think will be your greatest challenges?

Answer. If confirmed, my greatest challenges will be in working to reduce Armenia's geographic isolation and helping Armenia recover from recent setbacks to its

democratic development. Supporting Armenia's regional integration is a priority for the United States.

Achieving normal relations between Armenia and Turkey is a principal concern. As a key part of that effort, the United States supports the opening of the Turkish-Armenian land border. The status quo is not helpful to either country. Some progress has been achieved in recent years. There are regular charter flights between Yerevan and Istanbul and other flights to Antalya; bus connections via Georgia are numerous; and trade with Turkey through Georgia is common. Both countries would greatly benefit from increased, direct trade with the other, connecting their electrical grids, and implementing other measures natural to neighbors. The United States also supports more cross-border dialog and cooperation between the people of Armenia and Turkey through research initiatives, conferences, and exchange programs.

Reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey, however, will require dealing with sensitive, painful issues. Turkey needs to come to terms with a dark chapter in its history—the mass killings and forced exile of up to 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. That will not be easy, just as it has not been easy for the United States to come to terms with dark periods of our own past. For its part, Armenia must be ready to acknowledge the existing border and disavow any claim on the territory of modern Turkey, and respond constructively to any efforts Turkey may make.

Another major step toward regional integration would be a peaceful, just, and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. During the past 2 years, the parties have moved closer than ever to a framework agreement based on a set of Basic Principles developed through intensive negotiations under the auspices of the Minsk Group cochairs.

Another challenge will be to work with Armenia to strengthen its democratic institutions and processes, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to regain the democratic momentum lost after the flawed presidential election in February and its violent aftermath.

Question. How do you plan to help promote United States-Armenia trade and business cooperation?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to work to provide United States businesses with information about opportunities involving Armenia. The United States now ranks near the bottom of the list of Armenia's trading partners, with trade turnover in 2007 of approximately $194 million—just 4.4 percent of the total. Promotion of trade and business cooperation between the United States and Armenia will require greater awareness of Armenia and the Caucasus as a whole by United States business. Some sectors, such as information technology, already have significant U.S. investment. But others, financial services and insurance for example, hold largely untapped potential. I also believe there is considerable opportunity for the establishment of United States-based franchises in Armenia. If confirmed, I would work to identify new opportunities for United States exports to Armenia. This week's visit to Armenia by Assistant Secretary of Commerce David Bohigian is an important step forward.

Another critical factor for improved trade and business relations between the United States and Armenia is the need for the Armenian Government to create a more favorable investment environment through reforms of its tax administration and customs procedures, and improvements to its legal system. The United States Government is already actively working on these issues with the Armenian authorities through a variety of assistance programs. Our embassy also works closely with the American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia, which has played a significant role in creating private sector support for needed reforms.

Although our embassy does not have a Foreign Commercial Service presence, it plays a strong advocacy role on behalf of United States firms that encounter legal problems while doing business in Armenia. The United States Government presses the Armenian Government to investigate and resolve disputes in a prompt and equitable manner, noting that the perception of an unfair business climate will not encourage the foreign investment that Armenia seeks to attract.

Finally, I believe that the key to unlocking Armenia's economic potential—and opening up more opportunities for United States-Armenian business cooperation—lies in the resolution of regional conflicts. If confirmed, I will support the continued efforts of the United States Government to open the land border with Turkey and to achieve a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Armenia's economic integration into the wider region remains an important United States policy objective.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR NORM COLEMAN

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Genocide remembrance is vital in the effort to end this crime against humanity, and the world rightfully looks to the United States to demonstrate leadership in both remembrance and prevention. The Armenian Genocide is settled history, and is overwhelmingly documented in the WWI-era archives of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary. Nevertheless, it has been the continual policy of the executive branch in contemporary history to refrain from employing the accurate and generally recognized term "genocide" to describe what President Bush himself acknowledged was "one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1,500,000 Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire."

Question. Do you acknowledge that the events in 1915 involved the annihilation of as many as 1,500,000 Armenians through forced exile and murder at the hands of the Ottoman Empire?

Answer. Yes, the United States Government acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The United States recognizes these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century, the "Medz Yeghern," or Great Calamity, as many Armenians refer to it. That is why every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day. This was a tragedy that we and the world must never forget, so it is never repeated. We mourn this terrible chapter of history and recognize that it remains a source of great pain for the people of Armenia and of Armenian descent, and for all those who believe in the dignity and value of every human life.

Question. In your view, what specific actions should the United States take to convince the Turkish Government that a global campaign of genocide denial and intimidation of 3rd parties that seek to reaffirm this crime against humanity serve no constructive purpose?

Answer. The United States Government has worked to stimulate a candid exploration within Turkish society of these horrific events in an effort to help Turkey reconcile with the past. This is not easy. It was not easy for the United States to address its own historic dark spots.

The administration has long pressed for expanding freedom of expression in Turkey, which has helped to expand the public debate surrounding the mass killings, forced exile, and ethnic cleansing that occurred during WWI at the end of the Ottoman Empire. After a long silence, Turkey is making progress addressing these issues. More than 100,000 Turkish citizens of all backgrounds demonstrated at the funeral of Hrant Dink, an Armenian-Turkish journalist murdered by a Turkish ultranationalist, and they demonstrated in support of tolerance and a candid exploration of Turkey's past.

The scope for free expression in Turkey, including on the Armenian issue, has expanded significantly in recent years, but there is much more to be done. The Turkish Government responded in May 2008 by amending Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness." While the administration would have preferred to have seen the repeal of Article 301, the amendments reduce the maximum possible sentence from three to 2 years and, most importantly, require the Minister of Justice to determine whether to accept the case for prosecution. The Minister's role should help to reduce significantly the number of cases brought by zealous prosecutors. The administration will continue to encourage the Turkish authorities to continue this progress and to end legal action against citizens for expressing their views.

Our Embassy in Ankara also is committed to working with the Government of Turkey on ways in which the terrible events of 1915 can be studied. As a recent example, we are currently laying the groundwork for an International Visitor Program that would bring archivists from the Turkish State Archives to the United States to look at the ways in which we do historical research. As a confidence building measure, we also have contacted Armenian archivists to participate in the program, in the hope that, upon return, the archivists from both countries could work together on a joint program that would study the issue.

In addition, our embassies take every opportunity in meetings with the Governments of Armenia and Turkey, and with civil society leaders from both countries, to encourage improved dialogue between them. Since 2006, the United States has

provided over $700,000 in support of initiatives to increase people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, academics and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Question. As Ambassador to Armenia, what will you do to assure the Armenian Government and its people that the United States is mindful of the facts and ongoing unresolved consequences of the events of 1915?

Answer. As the child of refugees—at a different time and place—I do feel very strongly about the great suffering experienced by the Armenian people both at that time and today as they remember this dark chapter in their history. I, too. mourn the loss of so many innocent lives and fully respect that the Armenian-American community and the Armenian people want their pain and loss to be acknowledged. If confirmed, I would assure the Armenian people that the United States Government acknowledges and mourns the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportations that devastated over one and a half million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire; that we recognize these events as one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century; and that every April the President honors the victims and expresses American solidarity with the Armenian people on Remembrance Day. If confirmed, I also will continue the tradition of participating in the official memorial event held in Yerevan every April. I will refer to this great historic catastrophe as the "Medz Yeghern," the term often used within Armenia to refer to that dark chapter of history. Most importantly, I would make it a priority, if confirmed, to promote understanding and reconciliation between the peoples and governments of Armenia and Turkey. It is important for the United States to do everything that it can to encourage dialog between Armenia and Turkey and to encourage Turkey to come to terms with this dark chapter in history and examine the terrible events of that time openly. This was a tragedy that we and the world must never forget.

Question. As you know, Armenia continues to offer full relations to Turkey without preconditions, and a bilateral commission to deal with historic and contemporary issues that presently divide the two nations. As Ambassador to Armenia, what specific steps will you take with your counterpart serving in Turkey to hasten the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey and to secure an affirmative response from Turkey to Armenia's offer of a bilateral commission?

Answer. The administration strongly encourages Turkey to move ahead in normalizing relations with Armenia and reopening the two countries' border.

If confirmed, I will support efforts by the United States Embassy in Ankara to launch an International Visitor Program that would bring archivists from the Turkish State Archives and hopefully from Armenia to examine methodologies for conducting historical research, including on the mass killings and forced deportations of 1915.

I will also support our effort begun in 2006 to promote people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, academics and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Turkey has suggested convening a bilateral commission to deal with historic and contemporary issues, as part of the normalization process. The administration hopes to see the commission convene and full relations normalize between Turkey and Armenia in the nearest future.

Question. The United States has repeatedly and unsuccessfully demanded that President Aliyev and other senior Azerbaijani officials desist from war preparations and threats against Armenia and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. What specific additional actions should the United States take to ensure that war is not triggered by the actions of Azerbaijan?

Answer. The United States Government, as a cochair of the OSCE Minsk Group mediating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, has led the way in formulating a set of Basic Principles that offers the best hope for a negotiated and peaceful settlement. We are actively involved in encouraging the Government of Azerbaijan to work with the Government of Armenia and within the Minsk Group to finalize the Basic Principles and proceed on that basis with drafting a comprehensive peace settlement, which would provide the surest guarantee there is not another war. The June 6

meeting in St. Petersburg between Azerbaijani President Aliyev and Armenian President Sargsyan restored momentum in the Minsk Group talks and should clear the way for an invigorated effort to bridge remaining differences on the Basic Principles. The U.S. Government played an active role in deescalating military tension in early March, during the most serious ceasefire violation along the Line of Contact in over a decade. Additionally, the United States calibrates all of its security assistance to Azerbaijan to ensure that it is not usable in an offensive operation against Armenia, does not affect the military balance between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and does not undermine or hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Question. What is your analysis of the pace of democratic advancement in Armenia in light of the February elections, as well as efforts by the new president to further democratic reform—including the formation of a coalition government, the organization of a public council to include all sectors of civil society, the support for the creation of a commission of inquiry into the post-election violence, and pledged electoral and governance reform?

Answer. The developments noted in the question are positive in principle, and we welcome them. However, the key will be to have these steps fully implemented, not just announced. Implementation of other reforms has not been as fast as we had hoped, and we continue to press for changes not just in law but also in practice. While we welcome recent revisions to the Law on Rallies, Marches, and Protests, we have been disappointed that the opposition has been unable to gain permission to rally, despite applying for it almost 50 times. We welcome the fact that the opposition was allowed to hold a demonstration on June 20, despite never being given official permission. While we welcome the recent release of some persons detained for their political views, we note that many dozens more remain in prison and must be released. We look to the upcoming Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe meeting this week for their views on the pace of progress and encourage the Government of Armenia to do all that it can to heal the rifts created in its society in the aftermath of the March 1 violence.

Question. In your view, what is the most constructive way in which the United States, and you as United States Ambassador, work to further democratic reforms in Armenia? What immediate steps does this involve?

Answer. Promoting good governance and democracy in Armenia is a key priority. The conduct of the February Presidential elections and their violent aftermath on March 1, in which at least 10 individuals died, were deeply disturbing and disappointing. The United States Government's aim is to help the Armenian Government and the Armenian people restore democratic momentum and to renew their own stated mission of moving forward to become a country where government institutions are transparent and accountable and where rule of law is accepted by all. In the short term, it is essential that the Armenian Government support an independent, objective, and inclusive investigation into the fateful events of March 1 and release those who have been held on politically-motivated charges. It is important that freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are fully protected. Longer term, it is important that the judiciary becomes truly independent. The U.S. Government is looking at how our democracy programs can be targeted to better support civil society, watchdog organizations, the independent media, and development of the Internet. U.S. Government programs will continue to focus on anticorruption efforts and strengthening the rule of law. The Armenian authorities need to show the will to move forward with a reform program that is responsive to the legitimate desires of the people and that inspires public confidence in the country's political and economic processes.

RESPONSES OF PHILIP REEKER TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. As ambassador, what steps would you take to resolve the name dispute between Athens and Skopje? If confirmed, what steps will you take to coordinate with your counterpart in Athens to assure that the dispute receives adequate attention from the State Department?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the political and party leaders in Macedonia to urge their utmost flexibility, cooperation, and constructive engagement in the U.N. process led by Matthew Nimetz, so that a mutually acceptable solution can be found and Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration can proceed.

If confirmed, I will coordinate very closely with Ambassador Speckhard in Athens to ensure that the administration is well informed of developments related to the name issue and that our reporting and recommendations from the field reflect a joint best assessment of the situation and how the administration's continued close engagement could help facilitate a solution.

With my counterpart in Athens, if confirmed, I also will seek to facilitate constructive communication between both sides to clarify their respective positions, reduce tensions, and resolve any bilateral irritants that might impede resolution of the issue.

Question. Are you satisfied with the progress of the United Nations-sponsored process to bring a resolution to the naming dispute? Why or why not?

Answer. Although a mutually acceptable solution remains to be found, U.N. Negotiator Ambassador Matthew Nimetz's significant experience and strong engagement remain invaluable contributions to a solution to the name dispute.

With the strong support of the administration, Ambassador Nimetz has stepped up his efforts and the dialog between the parties has intensified. I believe that the sooner this issue is resolved, the better the chances for Macedonia to rapidly move toward full integration in NATO and the European Union.

If confirmed, I will fully support the U.N. process toward resolving the name issue, as do both Governments in Skopje and Athens.

Question. What role should the United States play in promoting reconciliation between the country's ethnic Albanian parties?

Answer. The United States Government has long encouraged constructive dialog between Macedonia's political parties and between government and opposition on issues of overriding interest for the country—especially implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

The administration will continue to urge that interparty rivalry and competition for votes finds healthy expression and outlet within Macedonia's democratic institutions and in accordance with Macedonian law. If I am confirmed, I will use my good offices to facilitate positive dialog and consensus-building, for implementation of the Ohrid Framework and other issues critical to Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

Question. How will you and the embassy work to address the issue of smuggling along the border with Kosovo?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek, within means provided by Congress, to continue important United States assistance programs that assist the Macedonian Government increase the capacity of its law enforcement, customs, security, and border control institutions. These programs also assist the Macedonian Government to address remaining weaknesses in the judiciary and to tackle corruption.

The United States Government is providing Macedonia's Interior Ministry, criminal and border police, and customs specialized training, equipment and advice on developing a modern, highly effective border control system to combat trafficking-in-persons, smuggling of WMD materials, conventional weapons, and narcotics, and to detect and intercept illicit movements of people and other contraband across Macedonia's borders.

The administration also is working to enhance the capacity of Macedonia's judicial institutions and prosecutors to fight transnational crime, trafficking, money laundering and terrorism, and prevent Macedonia from becoming a transit hub for organized crime to the European Union and to the United States.

The administration also is facilitating regional cooperation on investigations, seizures, arrests, prosecutions, and other joint efforts to deter criminal or terrorist organizations from using the region as a safe haven or transit point.

If confirmed, I will work with our Ambassador in Pristina to deepen coordination between the Governments of Macedonia and Kosovo and, as appropriate, with NATO's Kosovo Force, the international civilian and security missions in Kosovo, and other international organizations active in the region, to advance these efforts.

RESPONSES OF PHILIP REEKER TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref: 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read the cable.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. I understand and agree to abide by the guidelines as conveyed in the cable.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I understand and accept these principles, which govern the relationship between U.S. missions and the Peace Corps.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. I pledge to exercise my authorities as chief of mission according to this guideline laid out by Secretary Rice as Departmental policy.

RESPONSES OF ASIF CHAUDHRY TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable ref 04 STATE 258893—Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes, I have read the cable 04 STATE 258893 concerning Peace Corps-State Department Relations.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes, I understand the principles set forth in 04 STATE 258893 and, if confirmed, will abide by the guidelines described in the cable.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and that "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other U.S. Government agencies"?

Answer. I understand and accept that in order for the Peace Corps to maintain its unique people-to-people contacts to promote world peace and friendship, it needs to remain substantially separate from the mission. I agree that this need is distinct from other U.S. Government agencies.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Carps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. Consistent with the guidance contained in 04 STATE 258893, if confirmed, I will allow the Peace Corps to operate in Moldova with as much autonomy and flexibility as possible, so long as those operations are consistent with my responsibility to coordinate United States objectives and policy in Moldova.

RESPONSES OF JOHN BEYRLE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. For the last several years, the Russians have proven very adept in dividing traditional allies within the Euro-Atlantic community. If confirmed, what steps would you take to develop a joint strategy for managing relations with Russia in cooperation with our European allies?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to enhance trans-Atlantic cooperation by continuing to engage our European partners in Moscow on a variety of key strategic issues, specifically those related to Russia. Throughout my career I have found discussions on Russia with European colleagues in both official and informal settings to be thought-provoking and productive, and I would hope to continue such talks in Moscow, if confirmed. Through the use of a variety of existing mechanisms that include NATO and the NATO-Russia Council, the G–8, the OSCE, United States-European Union summits and meetings at all levels, as well as bilateral meetings with individual European partners, the United States continues to strengthen Euro-Atlantic coordination on issues of paramount importance to our nations.

Question. Where does the administration think Russia will be in 5 or 10 years? Where would you like Russia to be? To what extent will our current policy toward Russia allow us to bridge the gap between those answers?

Answer. We desire for Russia to develop strong democratic institutions, modernize its economy, join global, rules-based organizations, such as the WTO and OECD, and develop and maintain productive relationships—characterized as respectful—with both its neighbors and other countries around the world. Russia remains an important partner to address nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Iran, North Korea, Middle East Peace, and other global challenges such as climate change, corruption and international organized crime, and terrorism. We have sought ways to cooperate on these important issues to our national security, without losing sight of the importance of free market principles and promoting democratic values as Russia continues to transform. It takes steady engagement to nurture such a relationship. Our current policy has been aimed at precisely this, but at this time of change in the Kremlin and our own administration we will need to look for new opportunities for engagement and be ready to adjust to changes and challenges as needed over the next decade.

Question. Russia faces a host of existential threats to the country's future—demographic collapse, an insurgency in the North Caucasus, depopulation of the far east, and a failure to invest in the country's domestic energy infrastructure to name a few. How effective has the Russian Government been in dealing with these challenges? Are the Kremlin's recent actions in Abkhazia intended to deflect attention away from these domestic problems?

Answer. Russia does indeed face a number of significant challenges, including improving the health of its population and decreasing mortality rates, addressing complex and diverse challenges to stability in some of the Southern republics, addressing migration out of certain regions, such as the Far East, and modernizing its infrastructure. The Russian Government appears to recognize these challenges, launching a number of initiatives in each of these areas. For example, since 2005, President Medvedev (then Deputy Prime Minister) directed implementation of "National Projects" in health, agriculture, education, and housing. While demographic results improved in 2007, 2008 appears mixed with a decline of .07 percent in population from January to April. The impact of other reforms has also been mixed, but we expect the new government to continue to focus on these critical development challenges. We hope that as Russia addresses these challenges, it does so in adherence to international obligations in areas such as human rights. Regarding Abkhazia, Russian behavior may be motivated by both domestic and foreign policy concerns. We look to Russia to act responsibly to deescalate the situation,µwork with the Friends of Georgia to encourage the defacto Abkhaz authorities to engage in direct negotiations with Georgia, and respect Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Question. Corruption is reportedly endemic in Russia. How high does the problem go, and what—if anything—is the Russian Government doing to combat it? What role should the U.S. Embassy play in efforts to root out corruption?

Answer. President Medvedev and other Russian Government officials acknowledge the enormous challenge of addressing corruption, which runs deep in Russian society and government. Medvedev has placed a renewed emphasis on the need to establish respect for rule of law and enact comprehensive anticorruption measures. Within the first months of his presidency, Medvedev has created a Presidential Council on corruption, an interagency anticorruption task force, has instructed government agencies such as the Procuracy to review legislation with an eye to eliminating loopholes for bureaucrats who encourage corrupt practices, and encouraged law enforcement reforms, investigations, and prosecutions. Bodies such as the Investigative Committee under the Procuracy and Ministry of Interior have formed special anticorruption units. In the Duma, a special anticorruption committee has been formed to review legislation and make recommendations for future anticorruption legislation. In the past 2 months there have been examples of investigations and prosecutions of corrupt officials ranging from mid-level law enforcement to mayors and governors. Also, President Medvedev is considering measures to increase the independence of the judiciary.

Despite these efforts, the scope of the corruption problem is large and many investigations and prosecutions are arbitrary and often for political or commercial purposes. The challenges of corruption are significant and systemic, but the United States stands ready to assist in supporting Russia's internal efforts to combat corruption and strengthen rule of law, whether through accession to the OECD Bribery Convention (a prerequisite for OECD membership), cooperation in implementation

of the U.N. Convention against Corruption, or through bilateral technical cooperation.

Question. Prior to her assassination, Anna Politkovskaya was widely known as one of the bravest voices for decency in Russia. While she never stressed the point, she was also an American citizen. What has the U.S. Government done to help bring the individuals responsible for her murder to justice?

Answer. The United States remains deeply disturbed by acts of violence committed against journalists, particularly killings, such as the brutal murders of independent journalist Anna Politkovskaya and Paul Klebnikov. We have repeatedly urged the Russian Government to ensure that it is meeting its commitments to protect journalists and freedoms of speech and press, as well as bringing those responsible for such acts of violence to justice. We have been in regular touch with Novaya Gazeta, Politkovskaya's newspaper, law enforcement authorities, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as we follow the case and press for progress.

RESPONSES OF MARIE YOVANOVITCH TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What has the State Department done to end Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide?

Answer. The administration has worked to stimulate a candid exploration within Turkish society of these horrific events in an effort to help Turkey reconcile with the past. This is not easy. It was not easy for the United States to address its own historic dark spots.

The administration has long pressed for expanding freedom of expression in Turkey, which has helped to expand the public debate surrounding the mass killings, forced exile, and ethnic cleansing that occurred during WWI at the end of the Ottoman Empire. After a long silence, Turkey is making progress addressing these issues. More than 100,000 Turkish citizens of all backgrounds demonstrated at the funeral of Hrant Dink, an Armenian-Turkish journalist murdered by a Turkish ultranationalist, and they demonstrated in support of tolerance and a candid exploration of Turkey's past.

The scope for free expression in Turkey, including on the Armenian issue, has expanded significantly in recent years, but clearly there is much more to be done. The Turkish Government responded in May 2008 by amending Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, under which individuals have been prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness." While the administration would have preferred to have seen the repeal of Article 301, the amendments reduce the maximum possible sentence from 3 to 2 years and, most importantly, require the Minister of Justice to determine whether to accept the case for prosecution. The Minister's role should help to reduce significantly the number of cases brought by zealous prosecutors. The administration will continue to encourage the Turkish authorities to continue this progress and to end legal action against citizens for expressing their views.

Our embassy in Ankara also is committed to working with the Government of Turkey on ways in which the terrible events of 1915 can be studied. As a recent example, the United States Government is currently laying the groundwork for an International Visitor Program that would bring archivists from the Turkish State Archives to the United States to look at the ways in which we do historical research. As a confidence building measure, the United States Government has contacted Armenian archivists to participate in the program, in the hope that, upon return, the archivists from both countries could work together on a joint program that would study the issue.

In addition, our embassies take every opportunity in meetings with the Governments of Armenia and Turkey, and with civil society leaders from both countries, to encourage improved dialogue between them. Since 2006, the United States has provided over $700,000 in support of initiatives to increase people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, academics and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Question. What is the United States doing to end the destructive Turkish blockade of Armenia? Is it your intention to have the United States Ambassador in Ankara visit Yerevan in an effort to move this issue? Is it your intention to have the

new ambassador to Yerevan (if confirmed) travel to Ankara to advance an end to the blockade?

Answer. Facilitating Armenia's regional integration by opening its land border with Turkey is a priority for the United States. If confirmed, I would give this important issue my utmost attention—not only by supporting government-to-government discussions—but by promoting people-to-people contacts and partnerships, and other cross-border and regional initiatives. I would certainly work closely with my counterpart in Ankara to advance this goal, including travel to each other's host country, as appropriate. Contact begins to build trust, and trust is the necessary first step to reconciliation and conflict resolution. I also look forward to working with my colleagues at our embassy in Ankara in this common effort. Clearly, the status quo is not helpful to anyone.

Fortunately, some progress has been achieved in recent years. There are regular charter flights between Yerevan and Istanbul and other flights to Antalya; bus connections via Georgia are numerous; and trade with Turkey through Georgia is common. However, both countries would benefit greatly from increased direct trade, connecting their electrical grids, and implementing other measures natural to neighbors. The United States also supports more cross-border dialog and cooperation between the people of Armenia and Turkey through research initiatives, conferences, and exchange programs. Our embassies take every opportunity in meetings with the Governments of Armenia and Turkey, and with civil society leaders from both countries, to encourage improved dialog. Since 2006, the United States Government has provided over $700,000 in support of initiatives to increase people-to-people connections between Armenia and Turkey, including research projects, conferences, documentary production, and exchange and partnership programs with the goal of increasing cross-border dialog and cooperation. These programs are focused on bringing together Armenian and Turkish NGOs, think tank researchers, academics and business leaders at the grass roots level by creating opportunities for them to work together on common projects that will benefit both countries.

Question. Wouldn't the end of the blockade and the establishment of peaceful commerce and economic linkages between Armenia, Turkey, and among the states of the South Caucasus not promote the long-term stability and prosperity of the entire region? Doesn't the absence of these linkages undermine the region's peace and prosperity?

Answer. I agree that improved commerce and economic linkages in the region would promote its stability and prosperity. Therefore, facilitating Armenia's regional integration is a priority for the United States. We work steadfastly to end Armenia's isolation both by promoting reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey to reopen their border, and by working to find a peaceful and lasting settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan. The administration believes regional integration is in the economic interest of all three countries and certainly in our interest; for example, United States investment is hampered by regional divisions. With its borders to the east and west closed, Armenia relies more than we would like on its relations with Iran. In terms of Russia's influence, Armenia's history and currently complicated relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey provide the impetus for a close relationship with Russia. The administration is working with Armenia to help it diversify its sources of energy supply through electricity cooperation with Georgia, and eventually, by tying Armenia into Caspian oil and natural gas infrastructure. In looking at the region as a whole, the administration's strategic interests are focused on several issues. The advance of freedom and democracy; security, including counterterrorism and peaceful resolution of separatist conflicts; and energy. The administration believes that all would benefit greatly from good neighborly relations and regional integration of the South Caucasus.

Question. Azerbaijan's substantial revenue stream from its oil exports is facilitating increasingly aggressive military spending and dangerous rhetoric. What is the administration doing bilaterally to prevent further destabilizing conflict in the South Caucasus? What is the administration telling Baku?

Answer. The administration consistently stresses publicly and privately in Baku that there is no military solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As a cochair of the OSCE Minsk Group mediating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the United States has led the way in formulating a set of basic principles that offers the best hope for a negotiated and peaceful settlement, which is the only way ahead. The administration consistently stresses to the authorities in Baku that any rhetoric intimating that war is an option is dangerous and undercuts our efforts to negotiate a just and lasting settlement, which is outlined by the basic principles. The administration therefore encourages the Government of Azerbaijan to work with the Gov-

ernment of Armenia and within the Minsk Group to finalize the basic principles. The June 6 meeting in St. Petersburg between Azerbaijani President Aliyev and Armenian President Sargsyan restored momentum in the Minsk Group talks and should clear the way for an invigorated effort to bridge remaining differences on the basic principles. The U.S. Government played an active role in deescalating military tension in early March, during the most serious ceasefire violation along the Line of Contact in over a decade.

Question. Fourteen years passed since the end of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh without a permanent resolution and still people are dying along an unsettled border. What progress has the Minsk process achieved in that time and doesn't the lack of progress warrant a reexamination of this approach?

Answer. During negotiations over the past 2 years, Armenia and Azerbaijan have moved closer than ever to a framework agreement based on the "basic principles" outlined by the Minsk Group cochairs. The Minsk Group cochairs—the United States, France, and Russia—are working with the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan to build on new momentum following the positive meeting of Presidents Sargsyan and Aliyev on June 6 in St. Petersburg, with the goal of narrowing the remaining differences on the basic principles between the sides in coming months. Ultimately, it is up to the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to take the difficult decisions required to finalize the Basic principles.

RESPONSES OF TINA KAIDANOW TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. Kosovo faces a challenging road ahead, particularly as it relates to interethnic reconciliation. The minority protections that were engineered into the Ahtisaari Plan and are now being adopted by the Kosovar Government could end up completely insulating the two communities from each other. Kosovo's ethnic Albanian leadership have already made some admirable initial attempts to reach out to minority Serbs, but what more needs to be done to ensure that the two communities are not permanently estranged? How is the Department planning to contribute to this process?

Answer. Implementation of the Ahtisaari plan, with its significant provisions for protection of minority rights in Kosovo, remains a key priority for the United States Government. The newly-established International Civilian Office (ICO) will have the leading role in supervising the implementation of the plan.

The United States is supporting ICO's efforts through both secondment of personnel and strong political backing on the ground. The United States Embassy in Pristina is also directly engaged on a daily basis in encouraging Kosovo's Government to reach out to its minority communities, with a special emphasis on the Serb community. The embassy has supported the formation of a government with Serb participation, ensured that Kosovo's constitution contains all the protections for minorities required by the Ahtisaari plan, and worked to propel passage of over 40 new laws enshrining those protections. The embassy will continue to encourage Kosovo's Government to implement laws on decentralization of authority, provide funding and support for returns of Serb refugees and internally displaced persons, and ensure Serb and other minority concerns are heard and acted upon as a matter of priority. The embassy will continue to speak with members of the Serb community directly, facilitate communications with the government when necessary, and sponsor other creative ways of encouraging interethnic dialog, including programs for youth and civil society initiatives that work at grass roots level.

Question. The United States support for the people of Kosovo is a compelling counterargument to the narrative put forward by radical extremists that the United States is anti-Muslim. It is a case in which the United States risked American lives to protect innocent Muslim civilians, stood by them for 8 long years, and midwifed the creation of an independent Muslim state in the heart of Europe. Why hasn't the administration done more to highlight United States support for Kosovo in the Muslim world? Are there plans to do so in the future?

Answer. Since Kosovo declared its independence in line with the Ahtisaari plan in February 2008, 43 countries have announced recognition of the new state, including several members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The OIC has historically has been supportive of Kosovo. The United States and its European partners, as well as the Kosovo Government itself, are working to encourage further recognitions among the OIC countries. Kosovo's newly appointed Foreign Minister, with United States support and assistance, has met with representatives of key

Middle Eastern and Gulf states, while United States officials have also made high-level approaches to these countries. We anticipate that with continued progress and stability in Kosovo, additional OIC member states will recognize its independence in the next few months.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2008

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

Alemayehou, Mimi, to be the United States Director of the African Development Bank
Durkin, Patrick, to be a member of the board of directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation
Peel, Ken, to be the U.S. Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
San Juan, Miguel, to be the U.S. Director/Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank

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The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez and Lugar.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. The hearing of the Committee on Foreign Relations will come to order. Today, the committee meets to consider the nomination of four individuals for key leadership positions in the administration.

The President has nominated Mimi Alemayehou to be the United States Director of the African Development Bank, Ken Peel to be the U.S. Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Miguel San Juan to be the U.S. Director—Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank, and Patrick Durkin to be a member of the board of directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

I want to congratulate you all on your nominations, and we look forward to hearing from each and every one of you this afternoon.

I will start off with an opening statement. Hopefully, it will buy some time for some of our colleagues to get here. I want to make introductions, and if we have any other members, we will acknowledge them as they come—such as the distinguished ranking member of the full committee.

The United States plays a crucial role in promoting economic and social development, trade, political stability, and poverty alleviation around the world. Multilateral development banks and the Over-

seas Private Investment Corporation are a part of the toolkit the United States has to address these challenges.

Each nominee before us, if confirmed, would be expected to play a key role in these organizations' missions and the overall U.S. Government strategy overseas, something that I take very seriously. As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance, my role is to look at the overall funding, management, and implementation of our foreign assistance.

I look at how each organization contributes to the overall context of our larger development goals and foreign policy goals. Are we getting the most for our money? Are we carrying out the right mix of programs? How do we balance priorities in education, health, economic growth, social investment, and the environment? What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that the funds are being used for the purposes Congress intended?

And particularly with our contributions to multilateral efforts, I look to see how the goals of the United States are conveyed and carried out along with other member nations. I know that this administration's use of the term "multilateral" has often been used in vain, but now it is used out of necessity, but rarely has it been used by choice. The United States should be using it as a way of strengthening a unified effort, rather than as a last resort.

I personally believe that multilateralism is a strong element of our foreign policy. In fact, I believe it so much that I have a bill, which was recently voted favorably out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that equally divides contributions between bilateral efforts and multilateral efforts. It would provide $2.5 billion over 10 years for the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Inter-American Development Bank. In addition, it would pay the arrears the United States owes to the IDB.

The United States contributions to the multilateral development banks give the United States a seat at the table, a seat that allows the United States to contribute to direct programs that help countries develop their economies, strengthen their institutions of governance, and care for their people.

Mr. San Juan, your position, if confirmed, will be to represent the United States in the largest multilateral bank in the Western Hemisphere. You would be in the unique position to communicate and advance the U.S. priorities for the region and represent the United States in an important process of developing consensus among member states.

However, as I am sure you know, the IDB is not without its own challenges. In particular, a decreasing demand for sovereign loans is forcing the IDB to go through a transformation, a transformation which may result in a significantly different institution than we just saw 10 or 20 years ago. And I look forward to hearing from you today how you believe we can reconcile these challenges while advancing the bank's mission in the region.

Mr. Peel, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is also a bank in transition, but maybe in different ways. Given the constantly changing nature of the region, the bank is now reducing the amounts it lends to countries of Central Europe and expanding lending to countries like Kazakhstan. These

changes are not without complications, and I look forward to your views on how you will help the institution deal with this.

Mr. Durkin, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation is something that I am actually quite familiar with. I worked on the reauthorization of OPIC's legislation both during my time in the House of Representatives and now in the Senate. I am hopeful that OPIC's reauthorization is passed soon to allow OPIC to get back to business.

I understand that your nomination is for a part-time position as a member of the board of directors of OPIC. And while this committee does not always hold hearings for OPIC board members, given the increasing role that OPIC is playing in development-related efforts, I felt that it is important to have you here today, and we appreciate your appearance.

Like any institution, OPIC is not without its challenges either. It has a mixed history of rigorous oversight of programs and a mixed history of what I would call success. While I understand OPIC officials often emphasize the fact that OPIC has no net cost to the United States taxpayer, and in fact, through the fees it collects, OPIC actually generates income and contributes significant resources annually to the U.S. Treasury, I recognize those facts.

However, just because the particular structure of OPIC is less costly to the taxpayer, it doesn't mean that Congress doesn't hold OPIC to a similar standard of excellence. I expect the same kind of oversight and rigorous evaluation of projects as I expect from all of our initiatives overseas.

I look forward to your thoughts on the OPIC's role in our overall development efforts and your thoughts on its changing role.

Ms. Alemayehou, the African Development Bank is an institution for a region devastated by war, famine, AIDS, and genocide. We need to use every tool at our disposal to make sure that the cycles of tragedy that are all too familiar on the continent of Africa are controlled, tempered, and eventually eliminated.

So, together, your positions, if you are confirmed, would be partly responsible for setting the tone of the relationship with the United States and carrying out their respective missions. You would play a vital role in work that is neither trivial nor extracurricular, but, in my view, work that is at the core of U.S. efforts to combat the world's most intractable problems, problems that merit our undivided attention. In short, this work matters.

In that spirit, I look forward to hearing your testimony today. And now I would like to turn to the distinguished ranking member of the committee, Senator Lugar, for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

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

Today, as you have mentioned, the committee will have a discussion with nominees for positions at the African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The United States has strong national security and humanitarian interests in alleviating poverty, promoting development

around the world. These efforts of these organizations are important to this mission. Each of our nominees will play a key role in formulating policies that will impact on U.S. standing in their respective organizations.

During the past 5 years, our committee has held 6 hearings on the operation of the multilateral development banks. Those hearings contributed to the committee's understanding of both the value of the banks' efforts and problems with their operations.

In 2005, building on this initiative, I introduced Senate bill 1129, the Development Bank Reform and Authorization Act, and most of the provisions of this bill were enacted into law in November of 2005. With the passage of this legislation, Congress made a strong statement that recognized the critical role of MDBs in achieving the development goals around the world, but also that the operation of these banks must be transparent and free of corruption.

The United States Government must work to ensure that this money is spent efficiently, both because of our responsibility to American taxpayers and because inefficiency and corruption undermine the basic humanitarian and foreign policy objectives of our participation in MDB financing.

I continue to work with my colleagues toward reauthorization of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, which provides project financing, investment insurance, and other services for United States business in over 150 developing countries and emerging economies. OPIC's authorization expired April 1, and cannot enter into new commitments. This is deeply concerning, given OPIC's dedication to the United States foreign policy goals, including economic development in countries recovering from conflict.

OPIC has not drawn on appropriated funds in recent years because it has recorded a positive net income for every year of operation, with reserves now totaling more than $5 billion. OPIC is proactively incorporating the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, the EITI, into its project selection and project selection design. This is an excellent example of how United States agencies should be integrating the initiative.

EITI, endorsed repeatedly by the United States at the G–8, is one tool to ensure that earnings from oil and gas revenues are tracked. History shows oil and natural gas reserves can be a bane as well as a blessing for poor countries, leading to corruption, wasteful spending, military adventurism, and instability. Because the resource curse threatens our own security in the United States and our economic interests, I have asked the committee's minority staff to assess the efforts so far in lifting it.

Now, looking at more than 20 countries around the world, staff found that while awareness of the potential dangers from sudden oil wealth has grown, progress has been spotty. I would be interested in hearing from the nominees about the respective development banks to which they are nominated to serve as to how they are currently integrating EITI into their operations.

I congratulate all of the nominees on your nomination. I thank the chairman for the opportunity to make this statement and to participate in questions and answers with you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

We are going to start. Senator Hutchison may join us at some point, at which time we will certainly recognize her to introduce one of our nominees. But in order to try to give her some more time for that opportunity, we will start the process of hearing from our members.

So we invite you all to summarize your statements for about 5 minutes. Your full statements will be entered into the record in its entirety.

And certainly, if you have members of your family or friends who are accompanying you, we would love to have you introduce them to us because we understand that these sacrifices are not just of the individual, but of families themselves. And so, we appreciate their sacrifice.

So let us start with you, Ms. Alemayehou. You are recognized for your statement. And if you have family here, we would be happy to be introduced to them.

STATEMENT OF MIMI ALEMAYEHOU, NOMINEE TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF 5 YEARS

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. Thank you, Chairman Menendez and members of the committee.

First, I would like to introduce my family. They have a saying in Africa, "It takes a village to raise a child," and I am afraid that my whole village is here today. But I would like to especially thank my son, Jacob, for being so patient with me. He wants me to introduce him as Spiderman today. So, Jacob?

And his father, Papa; my Uncle Johannes; my brother, Addis, is here all the way from Ethiopia with his wife, and the rest of my family. Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. Welcome to all of you. And for Spiderman, we need to talk afterwards. So I have got a few things I need to be taken care of. So——

[Laughter.]

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. Chairman Menendez and members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you. I am truly honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the U.S. Executive Director for the African Development Bank.

After his recent visit to Africa, President Bush commented, "Things have changed in Africa since my first visit. I mean striking changes. And we are treating African leaders as equal partners. We expect them to produce measurable results. We expect them to fight corruption and invest in the health and education of their people and pursue market-based economic policies."

I truly share the President's vision that it is through such respectful and engaged partnerships that Africans can play a driving role in Africa's development, and African leaders can be accountable for their actions. If confirmed, I pledge to work with this committee and the full Congress, as well as Secretary Paulson, the Treasury Department, and the administration in furthering U.S. international development goals.

Increasingly, America's prosperity is becoming linked to peace and the raising of living standards for all individuals in the devel-

oping world. Throughout my life, I have made choices which prepared me for this challenging role—to serve as a bridge between our country of opportunity and the continent of Africa, with its tremendous yet far from realized potential.

I have been fortunate in my professional life to continuously work on United States and Africa-related matters, from my policy experience serving right here on Capitol Hill to my private sector international telecom work and, more recently, as an entrepreneur serving—supporting the efforts of the United States-sponsored Africa Growth and Opportunity Act.

I have learned a great deal from this and enjoyed working with African and United States officials. I must say, however, that I have taken the most pleasure working with actual African entrepreneurs with great skills, but in desperate need of basic tools and training to effectively develop their businesses.

Today's Africa is a far cry from my early years in Ethiopia under a Communist regime, which left an indelible mark on me. Entrepreneurship and democracy are now the order of the day, but the African private sector cannot thrive without an upgrade of the continent's infrastructure, financial systems, transparency, and governance. America's style of government and its liberalized economic model put us in an exceptional position to help steer the bank toward more effective policies.

While humbled by the nomination, I am excited about the prospects facing the continent. I do hope to have the opportunity to play a role in enabling the United States and the African Development Bank to work more closely together and to help improve the lives and dignity of all 940 million Africans.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Alemayehou follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MIMI ALEMAYEHOU, NOMINEE TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF 5 YEARS

Chairman Menendez, Senator Lugar, and members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the U.S. Executive Director for the African Development Bank.

After his recent visit to Africa, the President commented: "Things have changed in Africa since my first visit, I mean striking changes;" and then he continued: "We're treating African leaders as equal partners. We expect them to produce measurable results. We expect them to fight corruption, and invest in the health and education of their people, and pursue market-based economic policies."

I share the President's vision of a "partnership of equals" between the United States and Africa. It is through such respectful and engaged partnership that Africans can play a driving role in Africa's development and African leaders can be accountable for their actions. If confirmed, I pledge to work with this committee, Congress, and the administration in furthering U.S. International Policy and Development goals. Increasingly, America's prosperity is becoming linked to peace and the raising of living standards for all individuals in the developing world. The African Development Bank is one of the most important regional development banks as it serves the world's least developed continent. The bank's activities have a very high impact on the region and therefore command the focused attention of Africa's leadership.

Throughout most of my life, I made personal and professional choices which prepared me for a focused and challenging role—to serve as a bridge, an enabler, between our country of opportunity, and the continent of Africa, with its tremendous yet far from realized potential. I am grateful for the educational and professional opportunities the United States has afforded me. This, I believe, prepared me for

a role in the development of Africa and the international private sector as early as my days serving as an aide on Capitol Hill. Africa and the private sector reemerged later in my work in international telecoms focusing on the introduction of a new technology to African countries, and more recently as an entrepreneur supporting the efforts of the United States-sponsored Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. I started TradeLinks in order to assist AGOA eligible member countries in the regional grouping of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) so that they may increase their exports to the United States. While I enjoyed working with the African Governments and United States officials, I took the most pleasure from working with African entrepreneurs with great skills and products but were in desperate need of basic tools. They were in need of training or adequate equipment so that they can produce consistently high quality goods on a meaningful scale and in a tight timeframe.

Today's Africa is a far cry from my early years in Ethiopia under a communist regime that left an indelible mark on me. Entrepreneurship and democracy are now the order of the day; but the African private sector cannot thrive without a significant upgrade of the continent's infrastructure and financial systems. These challenges call for a strong and active African Development Bank to finally help turn Africa's long held promise into a reality. This optimism does, however, bring increased expectations with respect to governance, transparency, regional integration, and the need to develop African skills. That is the reason why Africa needs reliable partners such as the United States and strong institutions such as the African Development Bank. America's style of government and its liberalized economic model put us in an exceptional position to help steer the bank toward the right policies and usher an unprecedented era of sustainable economic growth in Africa. The implementation of United States policy toward Africa, as well as our role on the Board of the African Development Bank, together constitute key tools to help Africa achieve this growth. It would therefore be a privilege to work with Secretary Paulson, the Treasury Department, and Congress to increase the African Development Bank's impact and effectiveness.

While humbled by the nomination, I am excited about the prospects and challenges facing the African continent. I do hope to have the opportunity to play a role in getting the United States and the African Development Bank to work more closely together in order to help improve the lives and dignity of all 940 million Africans.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for considering my nomination. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MIMI ALEMAYEHOU, NOMINEE TO BE U.S. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Chairman Menendez, Senator Lugar, and members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the U.S. Executive Director for the African Development Bank.

After his recent visit to Africa, the President commented: "Things have changed in Africa since my first visit, I mean striking changes;" and then he continued: "We're treating African leaders as equal partners. We expect them to produce measurable results. We expect them to fight corruption, and invest in the health and education of their people, and pursue market-based economic policies."

I share the President's vision of a "partnership of equals" between the United States and Africa. It is through such respectful and engaged partnership that Africans can play a driving role in Africa's development and African leaders can be accountable for their actions. If confirmed, I pledge to work with this committee, Congress, and the administration in furthering U.S. International Policy and Development goals. Increasingly, America's prosperity is becoming linked to peace and the raising of living standards for all individuals in the developing world. The African Development Bank is one of the most important regional development banks as it serves the world's least developed continent. The bank's activities have a very high impact on the region and therefore command the focused attention of Africa's leadership.

Throughout most of my life, I made personal and professional choices which prepared me for a focused and challenging role—to serve as a bridge, an enabler, between our country of opportunity, and the continent of Africa, with its tremendous yet far from realized potential. I am grateful for the educational and professional opportunities the United States has afforded me. This, I believe, prepared me for a role in the development of Africa and the international private sector as early as my days serving as an aide on Capitol Hill. Africa and the private sector reemerged later in my work in international telecoms focusing on the introduction of a new

technology to African countries, and more recently as an entrepreneur supporting the efforts of the United States-sponsored Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. I started TradeLinks in order to assist AGOA eligible member countries in the regional grouping of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) so that they may increase their exports to the United States. While I enjoyed working with the African Governments and United States officials, I took the most pleasure from working with African entrepreneurs with great skills and products but were in desperate need of basic tools. They were in need of training or adequate equipment so that they can produce consistently high quality goods on a meaningful scale and in a tight timeframe.

Today's Africa is a far cry from my early years in Ethiopia under a communist regime that left an indelible mark on me. Entrepreneurship and democracy are now the order of the day; but the African private sector cannot thrive without a significant upgrade of the continent's infrastructure and financial systems. These challenges call for a strong and active African Development Bank to finally help turn Africa's long held promise into a reality. This optimism does, however, bring increased expectations with respect to governance, transparency, regional integration, and the need to develop African skills. That is the reason why Africa needs reliable partners such as the United States and strong institutions such as the African Development Bank. America's style of government and its liberalized economic model put us in an exceptional position to help steer the bank toward the right policies and usher an unprecedented era of sustainable economic growth in Africa. The implementation of United States policy toward Africa, as well as our role on the Board of the African Development Bank, together constitute key tools to help Africa achieve this growth. It would therefore be a privilege to work with Secretary Paulson, the Treasury Department, and Congress to increase the African Development Bank's impact and effectiveness.

While humbled by the nomination, I am excited about the prospects and challenges facing the African continent. I do hope to have the opportunity to play a role in getting the United States and the African Development Bank to work more closely together in order to help improve the lives and dignity of all 940 million Africans.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for considering my nomination. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much.

Mr. Peel.

STATEMENT OF KENNETH L. PEEL, NOMINEE TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. PEEL. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Senator Lugar.

I am grateful to the President for nominating me to be U.S. Executive Director to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. I am deeply honored to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today to discuss my qualifications.

Being here today, I feel that I have come home. Since July 2001, I have served in a series of foreign and economic policy positions in the administration. But for 6 years before that, I served two Senators on this committee—Senator Hagel, when he chaired the International Economic Policy Subcommittee, your predecessor subcommittee, and Senator Snowe during her first 2 years in the Senate when she chaired the International Operations Subcommittee.

The great bulk of my professional career has been working on foreign policy and international economic policy in Congress, with a special focus on multilateral diplomacy. Before working in the Senate, I spent 12 years in the House, 10 of them as a professional staff member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Since July 2001, I have held three executive branch positions. I have served, first, as a member of Secretary Powell's policy planning staff, working on international organization and Eurasian issues; second, as an NSC director, covering international energy

and environment issues; and then, currently, as Treasury's Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Development Finance, and Debt.

In short, I believe that I am well equipped, both by my academic and professional background, to take on the position for which I am nominated. My current job prepares me particularly well. As a deputy assistant secretary at Treasury, I oversee U.S. policy toward all of the major multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank, and the regional development banks, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Even though this nomination is coming late in the administration, there are huge issues currently at the EBRD, as there are at the other institutions, that will affect our interests in both the institution and in the region over the next 6 months. As you know, U.S. executive directors at MDBs are essentially our ambassadors to those institutions. Since I work day in and day out on MDB policy, I see how important it is to have strong Senate-confirmed directors in place.

I would just note at these three institutions, Clay Lowery, who you all know very well, is our executive director to those institutions in absentia. And while we have very talented people staffing those offices, it still makes a difference when you don't have a Senate-confirmed ED in place.

If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I would put my skills and background to immediate use in advancing U.S. interests at the EBRD. I believe in our sometimes-complicated system of government. Our coequal, separate branches give us a unique strength when we work together, when we genuinely consult on policy directions, and when we can speak with one voice.

If confirmed, I look forward to being available to speak or meet with you or your staff at any time, and I hope you won't mind if I seek your advice on some of the very key issues that will be facing U.S. interests at the EBRD in the months ahead.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, I am truly grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today and, of course, would be pleased to answer any questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Peel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNETH L. PEEL, NOMINEE TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Chairman Menendez, Senator Lugar, and members of the committee, I am grateful to the President for my nomination to be U.S. Executive Director to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and I am deeply honored to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to discuss my qualifications for this position.

Being here today, I feel that I have come home. Since July 2001, I have served in a series of foreign and economic policy positions in the administration. For 6 years before that, I served two Senators on this committee: Senator Hagel, when he chaired the International Economic Policy Subcommittee, and Senator Snowe, during her first 2 years in the Senate when she chaired the International Operations Subcommittee.

The great bulk of my professional career has been working on foreign policy and international economic policy in Congress, with a special focus on multilateral diplomacy. Before working in the Senate, I spent 12 years in the House, 10 of those as professional staff on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Since July, 2001, I have held three positions in the executive branch. I served:

- As a Member of Secretary of State Colin Powell's Policy Planning Staff working on international organization and Eurasian issues;
- As an NSC Director covering international environment and energy issues; and
- As Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Development Finance and Debt at the Treasury Department.

In short, I believe that I am well equipped, both by my academic and professional background, to take on the position for which I have been nominated. My current position prepares me particularly well. As Treasury Deputy Assistant Secretary, I oversee U.S. policy toward all of the major multilateral development banks such as the World Bank and the regional development banks, including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Even though this nomination is coming late in the administration, there are huge issues currently at the EBRD that will affect our interests in both the institution and in the region over the next 6 months. As you know, U.S. Executive Directors at the multilateral development banks are essentially our ambassadors to those institutions. Since I work day in and day out on MDB policy, I see how important is to have strong Senate-confirmed directors in place.

If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I look forward to bringing my skills and background to advancing U.S. interests at the EBRD. I believe in our sometimes complicated system of government. Our coequal, separate branches of government give us a unique strength when we work together, genuinely consult on policy directions, and speak with one voice. If confirmed, I look forward to being available to speak or meet with you or your staff at any time, and hope you won't mind if I seek out your advice at critical junctures in several of the key issues facing U.S. interests at the EBRD in the months ahead.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any of your questions.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much.

I am incredibly impressed that both of you are under your timeframe. So that is very rare before the committee.

Mr. Durkin. Not that I want to put any pressure on you. You can use your full 5 minutes if you want to.

STATEMENT OF PATRICK J. DURKIN, NOMINEE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 17, 2009

Mr. DURKIN. And I will endeavor to make that shorter.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator Lugar.

I am deeply honored to be President Bush's nominee to serve as a board member for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, a corporation I have known since 1980. And I appreciate the trust placed in me.

If I am confirmed, I would be honored to bring my private sector and NGO experience and former government experience to strengthen OPIC. The unique role of OPIC in mobilizing private capital on a self-funded basis to promote economic and social development is important to help sustainable economies improve the lives of people and support U.S. foreign policy interests. In my own work over 20 years in the emerging markets, I have seen OPIC be a catalyst for responsible investments in developing countries that would not have taken place without the organization's support.

Besides experience in the private sector and in government, I have a commitment to public service and nongovernmental organizations, and I greatly value their roles. Amongst others, I have been involved and served on the boards of CARE, the American Red Cross, College for Every Student, and the New York Advisory

Committee for Human Rights Watch, and I value that experience immensely.

Taken together, this background has given me a great appreciation for the importance of the public and private sectors working together to achieve common goals not only here, but overseas. Nowhere is this more important than in developing economies and nations of the world where OPIC programs are focused.

In closing, Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar, thank you and your staff for expeditiously considering my nomination and for including me in this hearing. If confirmed, I pledge to commit my full energies and experience and time to carry out the important responsibilities of the OPIC board.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Durkin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PATRICK J. DURKIN, NOMINEE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 17, 2009

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today to consider my nomination to serve on the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). I am honored to be President Bush's nominee to serve as a board member for OPIC and appreciate the trust placed in me.

I learned about OPIC 28 years ago when I was working as a legislative assistant in the House of Representatives and have watched it effectively execute and expand its political risk insurance and financing to help U.S. businesses in the developing markets for many years. In my own work in the emerging markets, I have seen OPIC be a catalyst for good investments in developing countries which would not have taken place without the organization's support.

The role of OPIC in promoting economic and social development remains important to help establish sustainable economies, promote democracy, and improve the lives of millions of people. It is also exemplary how OPIC has operated in the most challenging markets and countries in the world and functions as a self-sustaining organization. This is a great tribute to the leadership of OPIC and the Congress.

I believe my background and experience in international finance are relevant in assisting OPIC fulfill its mission. I have spent my career in both the private and public sectors. During the last 22 years in business at Credit Suisse and Donaldson, Lufkin, and Jenrette, I spent the majority of that time in the international markets and as a managing director of our international banking group. I established businesses for advisory, capital raising, and direct investment in Africa, Asia, Central and Latin America, Emerging Europe, India, and the Former Soviet Union. I began working in these markets 20 years ago at the early stages of private sector financing and learned how difficult it can be to get capital in the hands of good entrepreneurs and businesses.

While some capital to the developing nations has become more available, there is still a great need for OPIC to provide financing and insurance in the most challenged emerging economies, and particularly for smaller businesses. Expanding international opportunities for U.S. small business, particularly minority- and women-owned business, has been a high priority for current OPIC President Robert Mosbacher, and I look forward to working toward this important objective.

Besides the private sector, I have a commitment to public service in both government and nongovernmental organizations and greatly value their roles. Prior to a career in finance, I served as a Legislative Assistant in the House and a Special Assistant and Speechwriter at the U.S. Treasury Department. I also served on the Executive Staff of the President's Commission on the 1987 Markets Collapse (Brady Commission). I have been deeply involved for over 20 years with CARE, a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty, and have served on its board. I am currently on the boards of the American Red Cross of New York, and College for Every Student, and have served on the New York Advisory Committee for Human Rights Watch for over 10 years. I am also a member of the Council of Foreign Relations.

My work in the international markets, government, and not-for-profit organizations has given me a great appreciation for the importance of the public and private sectors working together to achieve common goals. Nowhere is this more important

than in the developing economies and nations of the world, where OPIC programs are focused.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for including me in this hearing. If confirmed, I pledge to commit my full energies and experience in carrying out the important policy and fiduciary responsibilities of the OPIC Board and the organization.

I would be pleased to respond to your questions.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Mr. San Juan.

STATEMENT OF MIGUEL R. SAN JUAN, NOMINEE TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF 3 YEARS

Mr. SAN JUAN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Lugar, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank. I am grateful to have the support of the President and Secretary Paulson and the privilege of your consideration.

I would like to introduce members of my family sitting in the audience, my wife, Lucia, who is more used than I am to be in front of cameras, if you will, and my sons, Miguel, Marcus, and Maximo, who is at the moment asleep, and let us hope that continues for the good of this hearing. My family continues to support me as a full partner in my quest for public service.

I have long held aspirations of working in the public service, especially in a capacity dealing with the Americas. Further, I believe strongly in the Inter-American Development Bank's mission. I look forward to having the opportunity to state my objectives as a candidate for the position, as well as answering any questions regarding my experience and qualifications.

By the good graces of many, my family and I were reunited in Houston, TX, after many years of separation following my departure from Cuba. I feel extremely fortunate that my career in economic development has given me an opportunity to give back to the country that welcomed us with open arms so many years ago.

I am very eager to apply the lessons I learned at one of the Nation's premier chamber organizations in service of the United States and another region dear to my heart, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Vicious cycles of poverty and crime pose an ongoing threat to the region's vast potential. The words of Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz come to mind, and I quote, "America no es tanto una tradicion que continuar, como un futuro que realizar." America is not so much a tradition to continue, as a future to realize.

If Latin America is to realize the future it deserves, it must overcome these longstanding obstacles. There are, however, signs of hope and progress everywhere. I believe the IDB plays a critical role in accelerating economic and social development in the region. In so doing, it also fosters hemispheric and global security. And at a critical point in the hemisphere's history, the IDB constitutes a force that can hold the region together while others threaten to tear it apart.

Another area on which I hope to focus is in the development of small- and medium-sized industries in the region. President Bush

has stated the relevance of SMEs to the health of this Nation's economy. The same logic applies to the whole of the Americas.

Today's SMEs are tomorrow's multinationals. They are the seeds that create jobs and economic prosperity. To stimulate their growth in the region, I advocate for increased cooperation and coordination between the IDB and the Chambers of Commerce throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Above all, I view the principal role of the IDB's executive director as representing the United States.

In closing, I want to acknowledge my family as the bedrock of my value system. We are hard-working, God-fearing people who keep and treasure our immigrant roots. Public service allows us to give back some of the many blessings that have come our way.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of my nomination and stand ready to respond to any questions that you may have.

Thank you for your attention.

[The prepared statement of Mr. San Juan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MIGUEL R. SAN JUAN, NOMINEE TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF 3 YEARS

Chairman Menendez, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Bush has nominated me to serve as the United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank. I am grateful to have the support of the President and Secretary Paulson and the privilege of your consideration.

I would like to introduce members of my family sitting in the audience. My wife, Lucia, and my sons, Migue, Marcus, and Maximo. My family continues to support me as a full partner in my quest for public service.

I have long held aspirations of working in the public sector, especially in a capacity dealing with the Americas. Further, I believe strongly in the Inter-American Development Bank's mission. I look forward to having this opportunity to state my objectives as a candidate for the position, as well as to answering any questions regarding my experience and qualifications.

By the good graces of many, my family and I reunited in Houston, TX, after many years of separation following our departure from Cuba. I feel extremely fortunate that my career in economic development has given me an opportunity to give back to the country that welcomed us with open arms so many years ago. I am very eager to apply the lessons I learned at one of the Nation's premier chamber organizations in service to the United States and another region dear to my heart, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Vicious cycles of poverty and crime pose an ongoing threat to the region's vast potential. The words of Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz come to mind: "America no es tanto una tradicion que continuar, como un futuro que realizar." America is not so much a tradition to continue, as a future to realize. If Latin America is to realize the future it deserves, it must overcome these longstanding obstacles. There are, however, signs of hope and progress everywhere.

I believe the IDB plays a critical role in accelerating economic and social development in the region. In so doing, it also fosters hemispheric and global security. And at a critical point in the hemisphere's history, the IDB constitutes a force that can hold the region together, while others threaten to tear it apart.

Another area on which I hope to focus is the development of small to medium size industries in the region. President Bush has stated the relevance of SMEs to the health of this nation's economy. The same logic applies to the whole of the Americas. Today's SME's are tomorrow's multinationals. They are the seeds that create jobs and economic prosperity. To stimulate their growth in the region, I advocate increased cooperation and coordination between the IDB and Chambers of Commerce throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

Above all, I view the principal role of the IDB Executive Director as representing the United States.

In closing, I want to acknowledge my family as the bedrock of my value system. We are hard-working, God-fearing people who keep and treasure our immigrant

roots. Public service allows us to give back some of the many blessings that have come our way.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, Senators, members of the committee, I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of my nomination and stand ready to respond to any questions that you may have. Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much. Thank you all for your testimony.

We will start with 7-minute rounds of questions, and the Chair will recognize himself.

Ms. Alemayehou, let me ask you, what, to your knowledge—(I know you are not at the bank yet), so I am sure you have prepared, to some degree. What is the engagement of the African Development Bank with the Sudan?

If you could pull the microphone toward you.

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. Hello? Can you hear me now? Okay.

From some of the readings that I have, I don't believe the African Development Bank is doing any projects currently in Sudan. And Zimbabwe, actually, too.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. I hope that you will look at this because my understanding is that there is a capacity-building for poverty reduction and good governance project with the Government of Sudan that works with the Ministry of Finance. And my further understanding is that the grant is used to support a capacity-building project, which would support the implementation of the Poverty Eradication Strategy Paper.

Now, those are all good goals. My difficulty, to be very honest with you, is I am not quite sure how the African Development Bank can possibly be working with a government and providing funds to the government when everyone knows that it is one of the most corrupt and illegitimate regimes, at least in my view, in the world right now. And whose high-level officials, including the President himself, was just indicted by the International Criminal Court as it relates to the genocide in Darfur.

So one of the things I would like you to know is that if you are to achieve the success of not only the committee, but ratification by the Senate that, in fact, this is something that we need to look at. Because I think it is, if we are doing this, it seems to me to be sending the wrong policy and the wrong messages.

So will we have your commitment that if you are to be confirmed by the Senate, that you will look at this, if, in fact, these facts are right?

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. Yes, I definitely will, if confirmed, look into that issue.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now let me ask you this, what do you believe is the appropriate role for China to play at the African Development Bank? China's relatively small contribution as an African Development Bank funder is, as I said, it is relatively small. Are we concerned that Chinese firms are receiving an inordinate amount of the funds from the bank, considering they are a relatively small size of the bank's funders?

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. Thank you for that question. That is—the China issue, as you know, is one on the minds of many of us that work on Africa, just because in the last few years, the investment from China has really increased, particularly in very resource-rich countries. And the concern is very real, as we just went through

several rounds of debt relief, and we definitely should be concerned that some of these countries may be accumulating debt.

I think one of the issues that—one of the ways I believe that we could deal with the China issue, obviously, is engage them more. They are represented on the board of the African Development Bank by our neighbor and ally Canada, and we need to engage them more on that issue.

And another thing is, I believe, technical assistance programs to some of these countries, especially the resource-rich countries that are negotiating the terms of the contracts with China, I think that is where the bank could really come in handy in making sure that these countries have the capacity to actually negotiate what they are negotiating, and they are not— they are looking into the concerns of social, environmental impacts to make sure that their people benefit in the long term.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Mr. San Juan, let me ask you, one of the significant initiatives that I have been pursuing for some time actually includes the bank, the Inter-American Development Bank. It is the Social Investment Fund for the Americas, something that we have had good bipartisan support. Senator Martinez is our main cosponsor. We are privileged to have Senator Lugar on it, Senator Biden, and others. Passed through the committee, see what action we can get on the floor.

I don't know that the calendar will allow us to achieve everything we want to, but it talks about a significant engagement. Nearly 50 percent of the funds would be used with the IDB, and our whole effort is to, of course, use the bank to leverage these dollars and create a multiplier effect, including pursue the private sector.

If you were to receive the approval of the Senate, could we count on you, as the American director at the bank, should this legislation pass, to be actively supportive in the bank to promote its goals?

Mr. SAN JUAN. Senator, as you know, the legislation that you have drafted and introduced with Senator Martinez of Florida is somewhat in line with the works and activities of the Inter-American Development Bank, which is to create economic prosperity and social prosperity for the region. So we, indeed, welcome the initiative that you have taken, specifically also as it addresses the debts or the arrears in which the United States finds itself as it relates to the Inter-American Development Bank.

So I would, indeed, support the effort, and I would look forward to working with you and your colleagues in making it happen.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, let me ask you one other question before my time runs out, and I will come back for our other witnesses after I turn to Senator Lugar.

Five years ago, the IDB Board of Governors proposed that the bank should take a more countercyclical approach to lending, expanding its assistance at times when private capital is hesitant to come into the region and lessening its flow of assistance when private capital flows were stronger. In recent years, there appears to have been little discussion at the IDB about this concern.

What is the administration's view, as represented through your nomination, about countercyclical lending? Should the bank expand its lending during slack times and reduce its lending when the flow of private funds is strong? Or should the IDB emphasize projects and not the overall pattern of capital flows in this respect? Give us your views on that.

Mr. SAN JUAN. Senator, as you know, the bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the IDB has rules of engagement in place where they look at the projects as they come in, and they are evaluated on whether they meet the challenges of effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, and also combat corruption.

I would support, if—with the support of this hearing and of the full Senate, that we continue to evaluate the projects as they come in to determine that they are doing and fulfill the mandate for which they are being proposed. And in so doing, I think the bank has an obligation to make those projects happen.

There are over 100 million people that are still under the poverty line in Latin America. Depending on how inflation and with energy and food prices impacts them, an additional 26 million people could also be—come under the poverty line. So I think the commitments of the bank need to continue to be on a project-by-project basis and that the bank of which, if approved, I would be part of, to make sure that they meet the guidelines of the bank, the governance that the bank has established for them.

Senator MENENDEZ. So that should be the priority versus whether or not private capital is available? We should be looking at the projects. If they meet those criteria, the bank should be robust in its engagement irregardless of whether the private capital is there lending or not?

Mr. SAN JUAN. I think every effort should be made to bring private capital into the equation. But, yes, it would be my position to make sure that we evaluate projects as they come in on the need basis.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Peel, there has been a debate at the EBRD on whether or not Turkey should become a recipient member. Some are interested in linking Turkey more closely to Europe through the EBRD. Others suggest that the mission of the bank to begin with was to transition countries from communism to capitalism.

What is your judgment on whether Turkey should become a recipient member, and at what point should the EBRD think about changing its mandate or its method of operation?

Mr. PEEL. Senator Lugar, thank you for your question.

That actually is one of the key issues right before the EBRD right now and one which I have had the pleasure to discuss with your staff, with Senator Menendez's staff, and with Senator Biden's staff as well.

Turkey applied for membership. The EBRD was set up, and its charter says that it is supposed to support countries in Central and Eastern Europe making the transition toward free market economies with multiparty democracies. The charter itself is silent on what the beginning state is. But at the time that the EBRD was established in 1991, it was very clearly understood that its purpose

was to help the former Communist countries make this historic transition to free market economies.

Turkey, as you know, is a country that has many of the characteristics of some of the economies that are transitioned economies, like Bulgaria or Romania or Ukraine. Turkey believes that it can benefit from the very special expertise that EBRD has for building free markets, for building small- and medium-sized enterprises. And Turkey's particular interest is outside of the Ankara and Istanbul area, out in Anatolia, where the economy of Turkey takes on a much different characteristic.

We are looking at this issue right now. We have not come to any conclusion. There are really two questions there. One is a legal question. Do we believe legally Turkey can qualify under the charter as a country of operation?

And then there is the policy issue, and that is sort of in two parts. That is first, do we believe that Turkey would benefit, and Turkey, of course, is one of our most important allies in Europe—in fact, one of our most important allies in the world. And Turkey is facing some difficult economic times, and would Turkey benefit?

And then, second, is this the right direction for the institution to take? Even if we feel comfortable with Turkey, both on legal and policy grounds, we might still feel uncomfortable because this is not really what the institution was intended for.

And then the final issue is, is if Turkey comes in, can Turkey come in such a way that it does not prejudge the very important question on whether the bank should change its nature in a more fundamental way? I believe that that will a central issue that we will be debating, beginning next year in the Fourth Capital Resources Review.

Senator LUGAR. Well, you have certainly outlined the dilemma. How will you make a decision? Will this be guided by our administration's overall foreign policy views? Or how would you describe your own role in this?

Mr. PEEL. Well, my own role, if confirmed, would actually be very similar to the role I have right now as one of the key members of the policy team that is reviewing and making recommendations to my superiors. And a part of that is a very close consultation with this committee, which I have had two conversations so far at the staff level and would want to continue.

Senator LUGAR. Let me explore a different sort of dilemma that some have criticized the bank for increasing its loans and investments in Russia. Those critics have argued that financing is not apparently helping Russia to become more market-oriented and that a few of the recipients of the financing are so-called oligarchs.

What is your assessment of the EBRD's lending policy to Russia?

Mr. PEEL. Our view is that while we believe that there are great opportunities, great needs for Russia to continue and to actually make the transition, the historic transition to a free market, multiparty democracy, we have had some concerns with the kind of priorities the bank has been making in Russia and across a range of ways.

I mean, there are a number of tests we look at when we look at EBRD. One is additionality. If it is something that is going to happen in the private sector anyway, we shouldn't be putting essen-

tially taxpayer money at risk. You can actually be undermining the private sector if you start to skew the market.

For the EBRD, transition impact is absolutely vital. It can't just be a good commercial project like you would see at the IFC, at the World Bank, for instance. It has to fit within the mission.

And then on state ownership, it is okay to be involved with state ownership if you are doing it in a way that involves privatization, helping to move state companies into becoming private companies. What we see in Russia these days, unfortunately, is many private concerns being essentially nationalized in fact or de facto.

And then, finally, the issue you raised—the integrity issue. It is vitally important on who you partner with. We have found in years before last year, we would only be voting against a handful of projects in Russia. And the character is the—it was no different from other countries. We always vote against certain projects because we don't think they make sense or they trigger a voting mandate.

However, in the last year, we have found, as we looked back, we opposed 17 out of 54 projects. That is a very, very high percentage. It is an outlier, both at the EBRD and at any of our institutions. And so, we have begun discussions with the new president of the EBRD, Thomas Mirow, who is formerly the Deputy Finance Minister of Germany. This will be one of our key priorities because we are very concerned about the direction that the EBRD has been takingin Russia.

And this is a concern not just of Treasury, but NSC, State Department. We have these conversations interagency, and we have had these conversations with your staff, as well. So this is one of these areas where I think the whole of the U.S. Government can work together to help the bank make better investment choices in Russia.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I have concluded that my time is up.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

We will do another round of 7 minutes, and then, hopefully, we will conclude.

Let me just—I want to return in a moment to Ms. Alemayehou. I wanted to make sure that what I was telling you was right, and we have here a story from the bank that where the Sudan Minister of Finance, who we are concerned may be implicit in some of the issues that have been raised in the Sudan, calls for a greater role of the AFDB in Sudan's reconstruction.

And we have had a Sudan country report from the bank that approximately puts the amounts of monies that we have invested there around $400 million, in United States. This is a concern. So I reiterate it again so that as you look forward, we will hopefully have your engagement on that.

Mr. Peel, let me pick on a continuation of where Senator Lugar was. I thought he had a good line of questioning. And certainly the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, which I will just call the bank moving forward, for the record, its Articles of Agreement says that the bank should take into account in its aid program the degree to which countries are committed to and are

implementing the principles of multiparty democracy, pluralism, and market economies.

And it seems to have become increasingly—to me, in the context of Russia, these principles seem to be in short supply. It seems to have become increasingly less democratic, more authoritarian in its political style, as well as that many of the countries of Central Asia also remain firmly authoritarian.

Nevertheless, the bank has been increasing dramatically the amount of assistance that it provides to Russia and Central Asian states. Now, I heard your responses to Senator Lugar. I heard the use of the word "concerns." I am glad we are concerned.

Let me express, at least from this one Senator, that I am very concerned when we are having resources of the United States committed to certain countries through the bank in which those goals that the articles speak to are far from being pursued. And so, and Russia is not a country of lack of resources as it has huge reserves and, especially with the price of oil, is very proactively pursuing policies that are very significant in its own national interests.

Can you speak to us a little bit more about how, as the director for the United States of the bank, you are going to be looking at this element of the Articles of Agreement and how forceful you will be in its pursuit?

Mr. PEEL. Sure. I will be glad to do that.

The Articles of Agreement are exactly as you laid out. Only three countries really have by a de facto decision by the Board of Directors—Belarus, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan—had their EBRD operations very sharply curtailed as a result of political concerns and of, frankly, noncompliance with Article 1.

There are real opportunities in Russia. I mean, Russia is—the increase in the volumes, I think what you have seen is in part because the bank is rapidly decreasing its volume in the so-called "European Union eight," the first eight countries that joined the European Union. And all of those countries will be graduating by 2010.

But in the small and medium enterprise area, I think there are great opportunities in building entrepreneurs. One thing to remember is that the EBRD does almost all of its work in the private sector. So we are not against lending in Russia. We are for the right kind of lending in Russia, if you are talking about, again, smaller and medium enterprises, enterprises out in the hinterlands away from Moscow and St. Petersburg. As you point out, there are lots of resources going into those parts of the country.

But I am frank in raising our concerns, we have shown our concerns by our voting habits along with a number of other countries on the board, who have with us on many of these projects as well. So, you have my commitment that this would be one of my top concerns, and I think that this is an issue that warrants close observation by this committee and by the U.S. Government. And, again, it is an area of concern, and I don't know how to say it otherwise.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Durkin, I don't want to not keep you in this conversation. So let me ask you, particularly with your background and your experience, there are detractors here of OPIC, who say we shouldn't have an OPIC. I am not one of those, but nonetheless, to what extent should OPIC base its investment deci-

sions on economic analysis and rates of return when choosing projects to support?

And as a corollary to that question, to what extent should strategic considerations of foreign policy factors play a role in its decision-making?

Mr. DURKIN. Thank you, and that is okay that I have few questions, and I will keep my answers short.

I have had the great fortune, over about 20 years, in seeing OPIC at work. I have provided private capital to over 40 developing countries, and I see OPIC, when they do work in these countries in the past, there has to be commercial viability first.

But I have seen them also be very diligent about making sure the goals, the developmental goals are met. I know that the issues of environmental quality are important. I know, more recently, and I think it has to do a lot with the urging of this committee, that human rights issues, worker rights issues are taken into consideration, and I think that has led us to a point where also that it all wraps around. There has to be broad foreign policy goals in what we are doing.

But I think, first and foremost, the projects have to work in order to make them viable and sustainable because that is the only way that I have witnessed and I think in the future OPIC will be, have an impact, a long and meaningful impact to the communities in which they work.

It is an extraordinary organization. I have provided private capital, but I have seen where OPIC, particularly in small- and medium-sized enterprises in these transitioning economies, just can't get capital. And often they are competing against other countries that come into developing nations that have subsidized capital by their own governments. China being one of them, and Africa, where I have worked for 8 or 9 years.

So, yes, commercial. But there have to be other aspects of the decision, and indeed, the interests of the U.S. Government have to be paramount in every decision of capital that is committed.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that answer. Let me ask you this. Do you believe, from your experience with it from the private sector side, looking at it now from a director's side, that we are striking the right balance at OPIC?

Mr. DURKIN. You know, I think that OPIC is probably striking a better balance today than it was 7 or 8 years ago because I think it has transitioned out of economies where there is plenty of private sector capital for worthy projects and moving OPIC's attention to more challenged countries and economies, particularly in the Middle East, Africa, some parts of Central Asia, but particularly Africa and the Middle East.

And there are still areas of Central America, which is one of the earlier regions that I came into contact with OPIC, when we were providing private sector capital to the biggest organizations' enterprises.

But I think OPIC has been very sensitive to where its capital—because it is limited. It is a lot on any relative scale, but it is limited compared to the demands for that capital. It is putting it in countries where it is in high demand, where it can have impact,

and particularly in areas of the business size that just don't have access to capital from the outside or even within the countries.

Senator MENENDEZ. One last question. With the premise that commercial viability exists in the project, what role do you think OPIC should play in helping to reduce global climate change and harm to the environment? Should that be one of the priorities of OPIC, within commercial viability?

Mr. DURKIN. Yes, you are right. I mentioned four or five things in the past. Let us add that as a six. I know that the organization—I have had the fortune to spend a meaningful amount of time with staff and also with Mr. Mosbacher. And that is important, and they have a goal to reduce their CO2 footprint by 20 percent over the next 10 years.

Possibly you could be more aggressive, but I think that should be a part of every decision that is made, particularly in the energy sector and some of the extractive areas that the organization works.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Following up, Mr. Durkin, with OPIC's authorization expiring April 1, what does this mean? What sort of activities can continue? What has been stopped? In other words, describe to us just the organizational dilemma that you have there.

Mr. DURKIN. Well, first, I would say that I haven't been part of the committee hearings, but I have been told that this committee has been a proponent of moving it along, and thank you very much.

The organization can do its work to evaluate projects and to try to fulfill its goals, but it cannot allocate capital. So its hands are caught behind its back.

And while I am not a board member, I have been briefed on the kind of projects that the organization is looking at, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, that are certainly worthy projects. And I think particularly, again, in some of these challenging countries and economies where this capital, whether it is in housing or for small enterprise assisting, can have an immediate impact on people's attitudes toward the United States and the stability of the economies and the political environment.

So all I am is trumpeting a concern, and if there was something I could do with my local senator, I will do it to push the work that this committee has done in order to bring a vote on this to the full Senate.

Senator LUGAR. Ms. Alemayehou, what is the African Development Bank's assessment of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, and how, if at all, is the bank integrating EITI into its operations, in your judgment?

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. Thank you, Senator Lugar, for that question.

I do share your concern about EITI. I know when I met with your staffer, that was one of the issues that was raised. For Africa particularly, a lot of the citizens that live in the resource-rich countries have not benefited for the last 30 years, only the very few connected.

The African Development Bank, I believe, ratified EITI in October of 2006, but ratifying it is one thing internally at the bank, but not a lot of the resource-rich, mineral-rich countries have really

joined or ratified it. So that is one of the issues that needs to be worked on further.

I know they are providing some sort of technical assistance to some of the countries that do want to adopt EITI, but do not have the capacity for financial or other reasons. And they are trying that in several countries right now. And if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to make sure that EITI is ratified, just as OPIC has in its projects, on the country level.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I think it is an increasingly important issue, with which apparently you agree, in Africa. Now you raised the point that individual countries have to adopt those principles, and that gets us into the internal politics, some would say the sovereignty, of various countries. However, we note, as persons outside of Africa, increasing conflict at the sites of oil wells or oil lines being disrupted. There are spikes in the markets here because of activities that are occurring on the ground there, and they do have something to do with perceptions of citizens as to the distribution of that wealth of the country.

Now you cannot do this at the bank all by yourselves, but at the same time, I raise the question as serious foreign policy issue as well as an equity issue for the people who are being served by the loans.

Ms. ALEMAYEHOU. I completely agree with you, Senator. And the good thing is I know President Kaberuka has endorsed EITI at the bank, and he is personally committed to this policy.

Senator LUGAR. Earlier, Mr. Peel, we touched upon this thought that the scope of the bank that you would be serving in Central Asia, these are not European countries, although the scope of NATO may include countries as you move around the Caspian Sea and what have you in due course. So there are a number of interests involved. What sort of lending is occurring in Central Asia at this point?

Mr. PEEL. I would have to—I don't know if I have that in my materials to show the breakdown. But I could certainly get that for you.

One thing, Central Asia is actually an area of operation. When the EBRD was established, when they said "Central and Eastern Europe," the Soviet Union was initially a member, and when the Soviet Union broke up, all of the Soviet Union and then we later brought in Mongolia as well because it was part of the Soviet——

Senator LUGAR. I see. So, by definition, all of the countries——

Mr. PEEL [continuing]. Sort of a Soviet satellite. So that is the area of operation.

And we believe, in fact, we have pressed the bank, what we say is it should be going further and faster south and east into the areas where the bank's need is greatest. And that is the Caucasus and Central Asia, the Western Balkans, and Ukraine. The needs in those countries are huge, and the expertise that the EBRD can bring to those countries is very sizable.

The bank has been moving that direction, increasing its volume in those regions. And I would also include in that Kosovo. Kosovo is not yet a member, but the bank can do work in Kosovo in the private sector, and we are hoping that Kosovo will be able to in the

relatively near future become a formal member of the bank. The votes aren't quite there yet, but it is getting close.

Senator LUGAR. Just a matter of curiosity, is there a data bank or at least some background which members of the boards that make these decisions have some idea of the economies, as you move south and east? To what extent is there extensive knowledge that might be available, let us say, in Western Europe or the United States or elsewhere as you try to make those loans?

Mr. PEEL. Yes, the bank does very extensive research on all of its countries of operation, and they do a transition analysis of every country. It is one of the things that the bank does the best.

If I can just take a moment and go back onto the EITI, just to mention what the EBRD is doing? The EBRD is actually ahead of all of the other MDBs. They not only have endorsed it and worked with countries that are members or seeking to become members of the EITI—and those are Azerbaijan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Mongolia—the bank has gone further and has adopted transparency in its own natural resource projects. So those who are borrowing from the bank have to meet these criteria for their own projects.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Let me thank all four nominees for testifying today and for their willingness to serve our country in these important positions.

I do have additional questions for each of you, but I will submit them for the record for your written answer so not to keep you here under the lights any longer. I am sure you will be responsive.

The record will remain open for all members for 1 day so that the committee members may submit additional questions for the record, and we ask that each nominee respond expeditiously to these questions, as they are always a prerequisite toward being able to move to the floor's consideration and the committee's full consideration.

With that, if there are no other members seeking additional comment, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:34 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF MIGUEL SAN JUAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. President Moreno's reorganization of the International Development Bank (IDB), adopted in 2007, seeks to change the bank's institutional culture and to make the bank more responsive to its borrowers' needs. Could you elaborate on the kinds of problems the new reform is intended to remedy? How will we know if the reorganization has been successful?

Answer. The bank is in the midst of a large and complicated reorganization but from what I understand, when this process is complete the bank will be more nimble and in a better position to meet the needs of the growing region.

According to the bank, global economic conditions and the participation of the region's countries in the globalization process have substantially changed the environment in which the bank operates, presenting it with significant opportunities and new challenges. This is the general context for the process of realignment of the IDB.

The realignment will allow the bank to work to become an organization that efficiently aligns its resources to its strategy, enabling it to respond promptly to the changing needs of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. At the same

time, the bank indicates that it must become more adaptable to the constant changes taking place in the region.

The realignment has two basic objectives: (1) To increase the development effectiveness of bank activities by means of a greater country focus, deeper sector expertise, and improved management based on risk management and attainment of results. This is how the bank will attempt to enhance its relevance in the region; and (2) To increase organizational efficiency through better corporate integration of operations and scaling up the various functions.

Prior to the April annual meeting, IDB management released a paper entitled "The Realignment to Date: Main Achievements" which presents an overview of its achievements since the realignment proposal's approval at end-2006, including enhancing country focus, improving coordination between the private sector windows, and deepening sector specialization.

Recently, the bank submitted to the board its proposed corporate performance framework. This framework defines the key objectives for the institution and provides specific indicators that will allow management to evaluate its progress. The framework, which focuses on development results, country and client satisfaction, and efficient use of the bank's resources, should indicate the success of the realignment.

Question. What is the IDB's current assessment of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI)? How, if at all, is the IDB currently integrating EITI into their operations? What steps have been taken? What will be your role in promoting EITI?

Answer. The EITI was launched in 2003 to promote transparency in resource-rich countries through the reporting and publication of company payments and government revenues from oil, gas, and mining operations. EITI is implemented through multistakeholder partnerships (government-industry-civil society) that adhere to a series of 20 voluntary steps embodied in a "validation grid." Countries are deemed to be EITI compliant if they have met all 20 steps, and EITI candidates if they have met the first four "sign up" steps. To date, no country is compliant; 23 countries are candidates (Peru is the only candidate from Latin American and the Caribbean). Candidate countries have two years to achieve compliance (implement the 20-steps). The United States, through the State Department, sits on the EITI board of directors, which sets broad policy for the initiative. The U.S. recently contributed around $3 million to the EITI trust fund administered by the World Bank, and has provided nearly $2 million in bilateral support to help countries to implement EITI.

The United States has actively pressed the IFIs to support EITI through their policy dialog, lending and technical assistance programs, and analytical work.

The IDB has not yet formally endorsed EITI, despite encouragement by the U.S. Government to do so. However, bank management has indicated that they are preparing a proposal regarding EITI which will be submitted to the board shortly. Steps for integrating EITI into operations will depend on the outcomes of the consultations with the board.

If confirmed, I will work with IDB management and the board to integrate EITI into their operations and also engage upstream with bank staff and management to promote the related objectives identified in recent legislative guidance on IFI extractive industry projects.

Question. If confirmed, how would you further promote anticorruption efforts at the Inter-American Development Bank? What specific actions would you take? Are current efforts adequate? What more would you do?

Answer. The Office of Institutional Integrity (OII) is the IDB group's primary office for addressing external matters of integrity, fraud, and corruption. As a measure of the significance that the IDB group attaches to integrity, OII reports directly to the President. OII coordinates this work closely with other entities in the bank group, particularly the Oversight Committee on Fraud and Corruption (OCFC) and the Sanctions Committee. OII also plays a supportive role in internal ethics and integrity matters and helps member countries develop and refine their own integrity programs.

OII approaches its mandate based on three "pillars" as defined by Strengthening a Systemic Framework against Corruption for the Inter-American Development Bank, the IDB group's comprehensive blueprint for addressing corruption. These pillars include staff integrity, support for member governments, and the fiduciary obligation to ensure that activities financed by the bank are free of corruption.

Overall, in 2007, OII made significant progress in streamlining investigative activities, enhancing the department's capacity, and building knowledge-based systems to strengthen prevention efforts. OII also broadened its research on past cases,

expanding outreach and pursuing more complex investigations. Of course, a large part of what OII does is to respond to inquiries regarding possible fraud and corruption.

Recently, former U.S. Attorney General Thornburg was commissioned to conduct an evaluation of OII. This type of evaluation will be similar to the Volcker Report at the World Bank. Work began in late 2007 and is continuing this year.

Current efforts to promote anticorruption and transparency efforts at the IDB are well established. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Bank and its shareholders to promote these efforts, including efforts to complete anticorruption policy goals, specifically whistle blowing. Despite the presence of safeguards and procedures related to whistle blowing, outside parties have continued to express some doubts about their effectiveness. I understand that the OII is undertaking efforts to bring its whistle blowing safeguards and protections in line with international best practice standards.

If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for greater transparency and accountability.

Question. Do you agree to appear and testify upon request, before any duly constituted committee of the Senate? If your agreement is subject to any conditions, please specify those conditions.

Answer. Yes.

Question. When you receive written inquiries from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will you respond in writing, within 30 days of receipt of such inquiries?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSES OF KENNETH L. PEEL TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. What is the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) current assessment of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI)? How, if at all, is the EBRD currently integrating EITI into their operations? What steps have been taken? What will be your role in promoting EITI?

Answer. The EBRD supports the EITI and is participating in the work of the EITI. For all natural resource projects, the EBRD requires its project sponsors to publicly disclose their material project payments to the host government, regardless of whether the government is a member of the EITI. The EBRD is actively involved in the EITI consultative process, including through providing input into the development of technical mechanisms for reporting (templates, aggregation of data, etc.). The EBRD promotes transparent revenue reporting, as well as increased financial and organizational transparency, with the draft EITI reporting guidelines providing a useful starting point for even greater revenue transparency. The EBRD is working in cooperation with other international financial institutions and the participating private financial institutions to promote governance and transparency initiatives in the financial community. The EBRD is helping to build capacity in countries of operation to enable them to implement the objectives of the EITI. Two countries, Azerbaijan and the Kyrgyz Republic, have been in the forefront on this, and may be among the first countries to achieve full EITI compliance. In Mongolia, the EBRD is helping the country to implement the EITI through its work with mining companies.

My role would be to monitor EBRD activities in this area and also to engage upstream with bank staff and management to promote the related objectives identified in recent legislative guidance on IFI extractive industry projects. Accountability and transparency are key to the mandate of the EBRD to promote transition to market economies.

Question. Given your current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Development Finance and Debt, what is the Asian Development Bank's current assessment of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative? How, if at all, is the Asian Development Bank currently integrating EITI into their operations?

Answer. The Asian Development Bank endorsed the EITI on February 29, 2008. The AsDB has five member states that have already agreed to comply with EITI principles: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, and Timor Leste. All of these countries are at the EITI's "candidate" stage.

The AsDB already promotes transparency and anticorruption efforts in its projects and its developing member countries through projects and initiatives. These efforts will be strengthened by the endorsement of EITI, which is a natural complement to these existing activities. Also, the AsDB is currently revamping its safeguards

policies and our expectation is that extractive industries, and the principles of the initiative, will be part of that.

Question. Also, what is the World Bank's assessment of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative? How is the World Bank currently integrating EITI into their operations?

Answer. The World Bank formally supported EITI in December 2003 as a global initiative, which aims to support good governance and transparency in resource-rich countries through the publication of payments and revenues from oil, gas, and mining in a multistakeholder process. EITI is achieving strong momentum globally and has become an established standard for transparency. There are EITI programs in 23 candidate countries, 21 of which have active bank programs. In addition, there are several countries that have publicly stated their intention to join EITI and others who are in contact with the World Bank group about the EITI process.

The World Bank group role, led by the oil, gas, and mining policy division (COCPO), is to support EITI implementation at the country level and globally. COCPO's technical assistance programs on EITI are supported by a multidonor trust fund (MDTF). The MDTF seeks to broaden support for the EITI principles and process through the establishment of extractive industries transparency initiatives in countries that have signed on to EITI through programs of cooperation among the government, the private sector, and civil society. The MDTF is instrumental in funding the EITI work programs and grants in 10 countries and 7 additional programs are in negotiation. The World Bank group also has special funds dedicated to supporting civil society groups working on EITI through the Development Grant Facility. Following strong U.S. leadership during negotiation of the 15 replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) in 2007, the World Bank expressed a continued commitment to enhance transparency of revenue flows to governments from extractive-industry projects.

World Bank group support for EITI includes making EITI consultants and advisors available to governments to assist them in implementation and sharing international best practice. The bank also works with client governments on EITI issues as part of broader bank-supported programs on extractive-industries reform, natural resource management, and good governance/anticorruption. Aside from the MDTF, the bank has also provided financial support from its own funds to a number of civil society groups involved in EITI implementation.

Question. If confirmed, how would you further promote anticorruption efforts at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development? What specific actions would you take? Are current efforts adequate? What more would you do?

Answer. Promotion of good governance is an important part of EBRD's mission. I would work with the EBRD staff and the board to continue to strengthen the EBRD work in this important area.

The EBRD has in place policies and practices to combat corruption that are quite good, but best practices are always evolving. In particular, the EBRD undertakes extensive due diligence to ensure the integrity of project sponsors prior to making any investments. The EBRD recently updated its due diligence guidelines to strengthen "know your customer" rules, identifying beneficial ownership and investigating risks associated with politically exposed persons.

This autumn, we anticipate board discussion on, among other things, an enforcement mechanism for fraud and corruption cases in private sector operations, formal, written policies with respect to compliance and anticorruption, and a revised procurement policy.

I would take every opportunity to ensure that these and other anticorruption measures are acceptable to the United States, consistent with international best practice, and most importantly, are scrupulously implemented by the EBRD. I would make every effort to support the work of the Office of the Chief Compliance Officer, the internal auditor and other key staff.

Question. Do you agree to appear and testify upon request, before any duly constituted committee of the Senate? If your agreement is subject to any conditions, please specify those conditions.

Answer. Yes.

Question. When you receive written inquiries from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will you respond in writing, within 30 days of receipt of such inquiries?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSES OF MIMI ALEMAYEHOU TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Some analysts are concerned about the development effectiveness of African Development Bank projects and programs. If necessary, what recommendations would you suggest to strengthen its performance? What unique roles, if any, does the African Development Bank play in a crowded field of development donors in Africa?

Answer. President Kaberuka has embarked on institutional reforms to consolidate the bank's role as Africa's premier development finance institution. As such, the bank, which is predominantly African-owned, speaks with a voice that often has greater legitimacy to African Governments and offers a role bolstered by its unique African character and perspective. Its competitive advantages include unparalleled access to and trust of African decision makers, a seasoned staff with deep knowledge of the African economic environment, and vast institutional memory on African projects.

The bank, like no other institution, has a mandate for supporting regional integration, which is key for economic development of the continent. I believe that proportionately the bank supports more regional operations than any other development institution. With my background in trade, I will be able to lend my experience to encourage the bank's support in trade, regional integration, and private sector development. The enhanced focus on fragile states, as agreed to in the African Development Fund's eleventh replenishment, is also an area where institution can make a unique and critically important contribution.

With the bank's renewed press on managing for results, agreed to in the recent replenishment of the African Development Fund, we will be better able to determine the development effectiveness of the bank's projects and programs. This work is important and I will continue to press for the measurement, monitoring, managing for and reporting of results because we all want to see the positive results on the ground and the difference that the institution is making in the lives of the African people.

Question. What is the African Development Bank's assessment of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative? How, if at all, is the bank currently integrating EITI into their operations? What steps have been taken? What will be your role in promoting EITI?

Question. AfDB President Kaberuka endorsed the EITI in October 2006. Since then, I understand that the bank has developed an implementation framework to guide the bank's operations to help African countries improve resource management of extractive industries. The framework is results-oriented and includes both short- and medium-term measures to help countries strengthen transparency and accountability in the management of extractive industries. The approach includes technical and financial assistance for countries which have demonstrated political will by endorsing the EITI and for those countries participating in EITI++, advocacy and outreach activities to encourage resource rich countries to improve governance, and mainstreaming the EITI principles in the bank's own natural resources operations. The AfDB has worked with the Liberian Government to develop its EITI work plan, and has assisted Madagascar to become an EITI candidate country. The bank is also financing efforts by the Central African Republic, Botswana, and other countries to become EITI candidates.

I believe that it is very important that every appropriate measure is taken to ensure that all people in resource rich countries benefit from the extraction of resources, and not just a well-connected few. As U.S. Executive Director, I will actively promote the bank's involvement in achieving the important transparency and accountability objectives of the EITI in the bank's borrowing member countries. Furthermore, I would work to block any support by the bank for the extraction and export of certain natural resources unless the government of a country has in place functioning systems which meet three broad standards on revenue accounting, independent auditing of accounts, and transparency.

Question. If confirmed, how would you further promote anticorruption efforts at the African Development Bank? What specific actions would you take? Are current efforts adequate? What more would you do?

Corruption is a critical obstacle to development. It diverts development resources from where they need to go, reducing the potential for economic growth necessary for poverty reduction. The African Development Bank has a central and crucial role to play in assisting African countries to build capable states, strengthen governance, and combat corruption. I understand that the bank has an established mandate in

good governance and has recently put forward a governance strategy and action plan to sharpen its strategic focus in the area of good governance and anticorruption. It is imperative that the bank use its position as the premier development finance institution in Africa to intensify its efforts to help African countries improve transparency and accountability in the management of public resources and fight corruption.

Institutionally, the bank has a zero tolerance with respect to corruption or fraud with the bank's operations. Support from the top is essential for strong anticorruption enforcement and President Kaberuka is fully behind the bank's governance work overall and the bank's auditor general function, in particular. The auditor general directs an anticorruption and fraud team which investigates complaints of possible fraud, corruption, or misconduct and many of the allegations came to the team through the bank's whistle-blower mechanism that was approved in early 2007.

As U.S. Executive Director, I would work to ensure that the bank's support for good governance is effective and ask that the performance and impact of this work be measured and reported. In addition to making sure that the anticorruption measures already adopted are being properly implemented, I will urge the AfDB to work closely with African Governments on the adoption and implementation of best practice anticorruption measures. The AfDB can be more effective within the countries where it works by helping to improve underlying conditions such as civil service reform, better public sector financial management, and judicial sector reform.

Question. Do you agree to appear and testify upon request, before any duly constituted committee of the Senate? If your agreement is subject to any conditions, please specify those conditions.

Answer. Yes, I agree to testify upon request before any committee of the Senate without any condition.

Question. When you receive written inquiries from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will you respond in writing, within 30 days of receipt of such inquiries?

Answer. Yes, I will respond in writing within 30 days to any written inquiries from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

RESPONSES OF MIMI ALEMAYEHOU TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Sudan—What is the current engagement of the African Development Bank with Sudan? What loans are outstanding? What, if any, projects or programs are planned? What is bank's engagement since 2002 in terms of loans provided and support given? Please provide detailed information on budget figures since 2002. Also, please provide your views on the appropriate role of the bank with the Government of Sudan, given the current political and humanitarian situation. Should the bank be providing loans for reconstruction assistance in Darfur or in South Sudan? If so, how should those loans be managed and how should the projects be implemented?

Answer. Sudan has been in arrears to the African Development Bank since 1995. As of the end of June, these arrears stood at roughly $208 million. Accordingly, for the last 13 years AfDB has only engaged in limited support in relief of humanitarian emergencies and institutional capacity building. The only such support since 2002 is a $15.3 million grant for governance capacity building approved by the AfDB in February 2007. This grant was provided in line with the policy that allows for post-conflict countries in arrears to receive limited financing if targeted for strengthening institutional capacity. AfDB currently plans for a second phase of this support in 2010. The design of this second phase of support will be informed by a social sector assessment scheduled for 2009.

The U.S. Executive Director is currently directed by congressional voting mandates on international terrorism, religious persecution, and the Sudan Peace Act to oppose (vote "no" on) any financing to Sudan. Until and unless Sudan changes its behavior with respect to these critical issues, the United States Executive Director will not be in a position to support any assistance to Sudan. In fact, the Sudan Peace Act calls for the United States to actively oppose any such assistance.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS

I am pleased to speak in favor of the nomination of Miguel San Juan to be United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank. I have known Miguel for many years. He has been a great friend to me, and a great leader for the State of Texas.

Currently, he serves the Houston region as senior vice president of Business Development for the Greater Houston Partnership. The GHP is the primary advocate of Houston's business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. Miguel's role in the GHP has given him the knowledge and training in key business and trade areas that will enable him to immediately benefit our Nation through the Inter-American Development Bank.

In recent years, Houston's extraordinary economic growth has been fueled in large part by Miguel and his team at the GHP. Today, the Port of Houston ranks first in the United States in foreign tonnage, and second in total tonnage. In 2007, exports rose 25 percent to $72 billion.

Miguel's previous positions include serving as president of the Partnership's World Trade Division from 1992 to 2004. He also distinguished himself as vice president of government and public relations for CITGO Petroleum Corporation.

In addition, Miguel has been actively involved in public service at both a national and local level. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush appointed him to the President's Export Council, the premier national advisory council. He serves on the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's development committee and is currently a director of the Houston Hispanic Forum.

These experiences have given Miguel the wealth and diversity of knowledge to become an outstanding Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

I can think of no more deserving individual than Miguel for this position, and I hope that the committee quickly approves his nomination.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR CHUCK HAGEL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA

Mr. Chairman, it is my privilege to support the nomination of Kenneth Peel for the position of U.S. Director for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

Ken served as my Foreign Relation Counsel for almost 5 years, from 1997–2001. He was instrumental in helping draft the 1997 Byrd-Hagel Climate Change Resolution, and played an important role in the Senate's 1998 ratification of the treaty enlarging NATO. He accompanied me on many congressional delegation trips around the world, including visits to Russia, Central Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Europe.

Since 2006, Ken has served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for International Development Finance and Debt. This position carries responsibility for American participation in multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, regional development banks, the Global Environment Fund, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. He has also represented American interests with the Paris Club of international creditors.

Recently, Ken has been working to secure American participation in a new Clean Technology Fund, within the World Bank. This fund aims to reduce the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries through financial assistance to bridge the cost gaps between dirty and clean technology. I strongly support this initiative and, along with Senators Lugar and Menendez, I am a cosponsor of Chairman Biden's legislation to authorize contributions to this fund.

In his new position as the U.S. Director for the EBRD, Ken will be responsible for representing the interests of the United States with this important multilateral development institution. The EBRD was chartered in 1991 to help the state-run economies of Eastern Europe transition to modern, free-market economies. Through financing, expertise, and capacity-building, it has helped shepherd 11 former communist economies into the European Union. Today, the EBRD operates in 29 countries, ranging from European Union members like Poland and the Czech Republic to Central Asian states like Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. This area of the world is one of the most strategically important areas of the world, and it will continue to be important that the interests of the United States—as the bank's largest shareholder—are strongly represented in decisions that affect this region.

Ken Peel has deep knowledge and experience with this region and with international development and finance. Ken is the right leader for the job, and I support

his nomination and recommend his confirmation to be the United States Director for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

RESPONSE OF PATRICK J. DURKIN TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Please describe OPIC's policy regarding the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative. How is OPIC integrating EITI into its policies and operations? How is implementation proceeding?

Answer. As I understand it, in 2006 OPIC included the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in its initiative to combat corruption and improve transparency. Under the policy announced by OPIC President Robert Mosbacher, OPIC will encourage its investors to abide voluntarily by EITI guidelines to ensure that revenues from extractive industries projects contribute to sustainable development and poverty reductions and not individual enrichment. Implementation of EITI has been a high priority and OPIC is working with the EITI Secretariat to encourage compliance with other multilateral organizations and OPIC counterparts. I understand the OPIC Board of Directors has approved the first OPIC-supported project where the agency's commitment to greater transparency in reporting on royalty payments to host governments on extractive projects has been realized. Additionally, OPIC's pending reauthorization legislation would formalize OPIC support for EITI principles.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2008, MORNING

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

Eastham, Hon. Alan W., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Congo
Simon, John, to be Ambassador to the African Union
Swan, James, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti
Symington, Hon. W. Stuart, to be Ambassador to Rwanda

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Russell D. Feingold presiding.

Present: Senators Feingold, Nelson, Lugar, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator FEINGOLD. The committee will come to order.

I would like to begin by thanking our four nominees for being here today, but more importantly for your many years of service and for your willingness to work in some of the most demanding positions in the United States Government and some of the more difficult postings around the world. I am confident that you agree with me that our missions across Africa are doing some of the most important diplomatic work of the 21st century.

More than any time in the past, United States policies and relationships in Africa are now in the spotlight. Next month, we will mark the 10th anniversary of the bombings of the United States embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi.

Since those tragic attacks, we have increasingly opened our eyes to the real threats that emanate from weak states and ungoverned spaces. The new United States combatant command for Africa, AFRICOM, expected to be stood up this October, is one response to that realization.

However, military tools and expertise can only contribute so much and perceptions of an overly militarized presence can generate hostile backlash. In order to fully address Africa's security challenges, we need to get at the underlying roots of instability and violent conflict. We also need to provide sustained support for conflict prevention, human rights, and economic development.

Diplomats are uniquely positioned to identify and implement strategic long-term objectives. If confirmed, you will be the eyes

and ears of our Government. We will turn to you for analysis of changing dynamics on the ground, as well as how we here in Washington can make the most effective foreign policies.

As you know, information-gathering and reporting is especially challenging in Africa. In many countries and regions across the continent, the United States does not have a long history of engagement or a whole lot of institutional knowledge. Fostering diverse contacts, not just with government officials, but also with business, religious, civil society, and other leaders is essential. We must not lose sight of the fact that today we are building the reputation and relationships that will determine our ability to help shape outcomes in Africa for decades to come. The four postings before the committee today embody those challenges.

First, if confirmed, Ambassador Stuart Symington will head to Rwanda, "the land of 1,000 hills." Rwanda is still overcoming the tragic legacy of the 1994 genocide but is making great gains in economic growth and political stability and has been a tremendous contributor to U.N. peacekeeping missions across the continent. U.S. assistance has played a significant role in this progress and increased fourfold over the last 4 years.

However, diplomatic engagement will be crucial to ensure democratic reforms before the 2010 elections and to ensure that Rwanda plays a constructive role in helping to resolve the violence in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo.

Turning then to the Republic of Congo, normal United States diplomatic activities in Brazzaville have only recently resumed after years of recurring violence and a new embassy building is set to open early next year. If confirmed, Ambassador Alan Eastham will have a unique opportunity to build a United States diplomatic presence in Congo at a time when the country's oil-based economy is growing rapidly but suffering from the challenges of resource management and economic governance.

Next, Djibouti is a country rapidly becoming a regional financial hub based around its strategic port for the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. However, Djibouti's hopeful future is somewhat limited by its rough neighborhood and hampered by recent tensions with both Ethiopia and Eritrea. If confirmed, James Swan will have to manage United States-Djiboutian relations in light of those regional challenges, as well as navigate the complexities of having the United States Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa based within that country.

Finally, if confirmed, John Simon will tackle a different kind of challenge as he engages an emerging regional institution with great ambitions but limited capacity. In its first years, the African Union has already become a significant player in continental peace and security, whether it be peacekeeping in Darfur, sanctions in Mauritania, or mediation in Kenya. The AU offers a framework for real African solutions to African problems, but its long-term capabilities will require sustained United States investment and strategic engagement.

So, again, I would like to thank you all for embracing these responsibilities, as well as to extend a warm welcome to your families and friends. I know that these people have played a critical role in

your respective journeys and will continue to support you in the challenges that lie ahead.

I would now like to invite my colleague, Senator Johnny Isakson, the ranking member of the subcommittee, to offer some opening remarks.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am proud to welcome all four nominees, of which I have had the privilege of meeting with each of them in the days preceding this hearing. I have said many times that I think Africa is the continent of the 21st century for America, and these are tremendously important roles that each of you will play and some of you have been playing.

I want to particularly acknowledge Stuart Symington whose storied history—his family's storied history, obviously, is known to all of us. But I had the benefit of receiving his hospitality in Djibouti earlier this year, and I appreciate very much what he has done there on behalf of our country. And I know he will do wonderful things in Rwanda.

I have also had the privilege of going to Ethiopia and to our embassy in Ethiopia in Addis Ababa, and I know the tremendous potential our relationship with Ethiopia has and the help that Ethiopia has been to the United States most recently in Somalia.

I am also particularly excited about the posting at the Africa Union. Darfur is of great concern to the chairman and myself. The African Union is a fledgling organization in Africa that could be essential in putting an end to genocide and beginning to a new freedom for all people on the African continent. So your posting there, John, will be very important for the United States and for that country.

But to all of you, thank you very much for your willingness to serve and what your commitment to give the United States of America.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

I am so pleased to see Senator Lugar here, the ranking member of the committee, the former chairman of the full committee, and somebody who has been very diligent throughout his career with regard to Africa. Senator, would you like to make any remarks?

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have just come today, as we always do, to support the nominees for these important positions in Africa. I appreciate your special diligence in calling the hearings in a timely way so these embassies can be filled with talented Americans. It is a pleasure to be here this morning. I look forward to hearing the nominees.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

And now I would like to turn to two of my distinguished colleagues who are here to introduce, I believe, Ambassador Symington. First, we will go to the Senator from Missouri, Senator McCaskill.

STATEMENT OF HON. CLAIRE MCCASKILL, U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This morning it is such an honor for me. It completes a circle that as a young child I never dreamt that I could complete. I remember distinctly the day the photograph arrived at my home when I was a youngster. It was a framed photograph of Senator Stuart Symington personally inscribed to my parents. It was not taken to my father's office and it was not put back in my mother's desk in the utility room. It was put in our living room with our family photos because it was a photograph that we were so proud of.

His grandson is here today, and this is, in fact, a hall of fame family in terms of public service to our country. When I realized that I am so honored to sit in the Senate seat not just of Harry Truman but of Senator Stuart Symington, that frankly is hard for me to really get my arms around that I have distinct privilege and honor. And I know how proud Senator Symington would be of his grandson.

After being raised in Missouri and graduating from Brown and getting his law degree from Columbia, he clerked for the Eastern District of Missouri, practiced corporate law across the world, returned back to St. Joseph, MO, before he became a Foreign Service officer in 1986. He has been all over the world for his country and has served in both dangerous situations and very politically difficult situations, from Mexico to Ecuador, Niger, Djibouti, and now on to Rwanda, a strategically very important country for our Nation on the important continent of Africa.

I must also acknowledge that in addition to a grandfather, he had an uncle that was very important in my life who is here this morning, Congressman Jim Symington, who served in Congress for a number of years. And I was pleased to be the campus chairman for Symington for Senate, and I was even more pleased to begin my career on the Hill as an intern in Jim Symington's office in the summer of 1974.

As I say, this is a distinct pleasure for me, and you should not by my remarks for a minute assume that mentioning his grandfather and mentioning his uncle in any way takes away from the talent, the strength, and the intellect that this man offers our country. We are lucky to be able to draw on that intellect and that strength at this important time in the continent of Africa. It is my honor to introduce him and I am even more pleased as an American at his willingness to serve.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator McCaskill. I agree with your comment. It is hard not to mention the Symington family because those of us who are old enough to remember—can you imagine a year in which four sitting United States Senators ran for President? Oh, that is right. It just happened again. [Laughter.]

But with the names—correct me if I am wrong. I believe the Senators were John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and Stuart Symington. Is that right?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Exactly.

Senator FEINGOLD. And also a guy named Adlai Stevenson. That was a heck of a primary, too.

So anyway, memory lane on that one for me.

And now we go to the Senator from Minnesota, Senator Klobuchar.

STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I am here to honor all of the nominees and also my friend, Stuart Symington. He must be pretty special to have the two new women Senators come here and speak for him. But I am actually here—as I hear you bring up the senior Stuart Symington and Hubert Humphrey, we have now bridged the gap between Missouri and Minnesota. And I know him as a friend.

His brother, who is here today, is a very good friend of mine and married my roommate from college. I still remember being in that wedding in my lovely peach bridesmaid dress and seeing him then. And I also remember doing the toast and having Uncle Jim come up and tell me that I think you could run for office. So I appreciate the blessing of their wonderful family.

As you all know, Ambassador Symington has dedicated his career to advancing U.S. national security and diplomatic interests around the world. Since entering the U.S. diplomatic corps in 1986, he has held, as Senator McCaskill pointed out, numerous positions all across the world and, in the important position of United States Ambassador to Djibouti, has coordinated United States policies around the Horn of Africa among the world's most difficult diplomatic and security environment.

I had the pleasure of having him over for dinner with my friends. I have to tell you, Senator Lugar, I rarely cook. So he must be something special. But we had them over and it was just so heartwarming to hear his views on Africa and his views on what we can do in Rwanda. We know that Rwanda's transition from the sorrow of the past to the potential of the future will require a strong partner in the United States which still carries the burden of remorse from failing to respond 15 years ago. Ambassador Symington—what I heard that night—his vision of bringing together all parts and functions of the United States Government, the private sector, the NGO community, in a united policy to partner with the Rwandan Government is the right vision.

And I was thinking, just to end, of something. I heard Senator Durbin tell a story when he was talking about Darfur once on the Senate floor, and he talked about one of his favorite movies, Schindler's List. And he talked about at the very end when Schindler, who as you know at the beginning was a war profiteer and was making money off the war, and then came to see the victims of the war and came to help them and give them safety and hide them. At the very end, those that he had saved from the concentration camps came together and they got all the gold that they could find and made him this ring. At the end of the movie, he breaks down as they are around him, and says, if only I could do more. If only I could have done more.

Well, these people before you who are taking on such difficult assignments, especially as I think about Rwanda—I do not think they are going to be in that position to say if only I could have done more because they are doing the right thing at the right time for this country. And I am just honored to be here with my friend, Stuart Symington.

Thank you very much.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Senator Klobuchar. We understand that the Senators need to go to other locations, but they are, of course, welcome to stay if they wish.

But I think it is only fitting now we go to Mr. Symington, who will offer his testimony after he says goodbye to the Senators. Each of you please, of course, feel free to introduce any family or friends that you would like to introduce to the committee. Mr. Symington.

STATEMENT OF HON. W. STUART SYMINGTON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Thank you for holding this hearing, as you always have, in a way to keep our diplomatic missions staffed, for the opportunity to appear before you, the pleasure of being with you again, Senator Isakson, and the pleasure and honor of being with you, Senator Lugar.

I am deeply grateful to the President of the United States and to the Secretary for the honor of being their nominee to serve in Rwanda.

I also want to point out that one of the many things that the United States and Rwanda share is the remarkably important role of women in public life, and having just heard from two remarkable United States Senators, I cannot think of a better way to begin my engagement, not just with the men of Rwanda, but with the women too.

Before I turn to my prepared statement, I would like to mention, in addition to Uncle Jim and my brother John, the real diplomats of the family who are with me today, my wife, Susan, and my daughter, Janey, and my son, Stuart.

Senator FEINGOLD. Let us see where you are please, if you could rise. Thank you. Welcome all. We are very happy to see you here.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Thank you, Senator.

They have never been confirmed, but I want you to know they are the real ambassadors, and they have been since Stuart was 1 month old and went to our first post.

I also want to acknowledge that I am lucky enough to have with us today America's Executive Director to the World Bank, Whitney Debevoise, and his wife, Heidi, who is a friend of many years.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. And finally, thinking of interns and those people who brought us here, in this room are both members of the promotion panel of the State Department that I am working with this week and the desk officer for Rwanda and an intern who put together my book. So for them and all the other friends and family here, my thanks.

Finally, my role model in diplomacy is sitting right behind me and she has been both behind me and in front of me for my whole career, Ambassador Ruth Davis.

Senator, I want to mention also, as I think about your efforts to see that we integrate all the instruments of our Nation's strength, public and private, Chairman Ike Skelton, who could not be with us today but who challenged me a long time ago with two ideas. The first is that the strength of the United States lies in its people and their principles. And the second is that only by integrating all agencies and all services and public and private efforts can we achieve our goals in the world. I thought it was absolutely true and I will try to continue to do that, if confirmed, to be your ambassador in Rwanda.

The people of Rwanda today have a remarkable opportunity to show that it is possible for any people to forge a common future in a land consumed by the horror of genocide so few years ago. It is vital to all of us that they succeed. The Rwandans and the rest of the world must ensure that the genocide is never forgotten and that it is never repeated.

Rwandans know that the best way to honor the victims of genocide is to look forward and unite after having looked back to remember what can happen through division and hatred. Rwandans today recognize that they have a chance to make this future better. They have, over the last few years, improved security and stability, education, health care, advanced reconciliation, and made progress meting out justice to many of those involved in the genocide. They continue to face security threats, but in the midst of that, have created economic growth and worked with us to improve the investment climate. They have achieved noteworthy progress, but they still face enormous challenges.

As Rwandans look to their future, they call on all Rwandans to unite and to see themselves as one people with equal justice and opportunity under their law. That call is also their own test. Rwandans are testing themselves to counter extremists while vigorously protecting human rights, to improve governance while also improving transparency, to strengthen democratic institutions at the same time that they are trying to deliver basic services, attract investment, and promote jobs and growth. To create a shared sense of national unity and a positive climate for development, they know that they must instill widespread faith throughout every Rwandan in the fairness of their governing institutions. That means being open to dissent and permitting free access to information and to the work of a free, responsible, and independent press. Progress meeting this test is particularly important in the run-up to their September elections for the House of Delegates and to the next presidential elections.

If confirmed, I will work with all those parts of America's investment in Rwanda, especially the people out of your mission there, to help them strengthen their democratic institutions and their economy, to take care of Rwandans who need our help, and to advance transparency and respect for human rights. With continued progress, I absolutely believe that Rwanda will be a catalyst for regional peace and development and an instrument for good beyond its borders.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to ask that the remainder of my testimony be entered in the record and would welcome any questions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Symington. Without objection, that will be done. Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Symington follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. W. STUART SYMINGTON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO RWANDA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be Ambassador to Rwanda. I am deeply grateful to the President and to Secretary Rice for this honor. I also want to thank you Senators for the kind introduction. One of the many things the United States and Rwanda have in common is the prominent role of women in public life. I know of no better American examples of that success.

Before I turn to my prepared statement, may I introduce the members of my family who are here with me today? First, my wife, Susan, and children, Janey and Stuart—they are the real diplomats in our family and they have served America as true ambassadors at every stage of what has truly been "our career."

May I also point out that I am pleased to be joined by my Uncle, former Congressman Jim Symington, and my brother, Doctor John Symington; I thank them as well as those friends and colleagues who have joined us here today. Finally, I'd like to thank Chairman Ike Skelton for the inspiring challenge he put to me years ago. He said that our greatest strengths as a nation were our people and our principles, and that one of our greatest challenges was to act jointly, with a common purpose, across agency and service lines, to achieve our national objectives. If confirmed, that is what I will seek to do in Rwanda.

Mr. Chairman, the people of Rwanda have a remarkable opportunity today to show that it is possible for a people to forge a common future in a land that was consumed by the horror of genocide just 14 years ago. It is vital that they succeed. The Rwandans (and the rest of the world) must ensure that the genocide is never forgotten and that it will never be repeated.

Rwandans know that the best way to honor the genocide victims is to look forward and unite, after looking back to remember the terrible cost of division and hatred. Rwandans recognize today that they must work together to realize their promising future. Over the last decade, they have improved education and health care; they have advanced reconciliation and made progress meting out justice. They have countered security threats and cared for genocide victims. They have created economic growth and improved the investment climate. They have achieved noteworthy progress, but they still face enormous challenges.

As the government and many Rwandans view their future, their call is for all Rwandans to see themselves as one people, with equal justice and opportunity under law. Their call is also a test. Rwanda faces the test of countering extremists, while vigorously protecting human rights; of improving governance and transparency; of strengthening democratic institutions, while delivering basic services; and of attracting investment, while promoting job and income growth. To create a shared sense of national identity and a positive climate for development requires instilling widespread faith in the fairness of governing institutions as well as permitting free access to information and to the work of a free, responsible, and independent press. Progress meeting this test is particularly important in the run-up to the September House of Delegates elections and to the 2011 Presidential elections.

If confirmed, I will work with all Rwandans to help them strengthen their democratic institutions and their economy in an unstable region and to advance transparency and respect for human rights.

We have a strong bilateral partnership with Rwanda, reflected in President Bush's visit there in February this year. Mr. Chairman, if I am confirmed, my goal will be to advance America's interests by synchronizing the efforts of all U.S. Government agencies and personnel working in Rwanda. We will also enlist the help of the American private sector and nongovernmental groups, working with Rwandans to achieve our shared goals. We will focus on fighting disease and hunger, promoting democratic prosperity and growth, facilitating national reconciliation, and advancing regional stability and global security.

Rwanda's commitment to regional stability is reflected in its role as a member of the U.S.-led Tripartite Plus peace process. Rwanda has been a constructive partner in those efforts to develop and implement a joint approach to increasing security in the Great Lakes region. The United States will continue to play a leading role pro-

moting good relations between Rwanda and its neighbors. If confirmed, I will work in concert with my U.S. colleagues in the neighboring countries to support together ongoing efforts to bring an end to the threat of armed groups in the region and to secure the safe and voluntary return of refugees. This remains essential, if the people of the Great Lakes are to live in peace and to train their sights on generating growth instead of resolving conflict.

No country on the globe has a greater reason to stop genocide that Rwanda. It is no surprise that Rwandan troops are the backbone of the African Union and United Nations peacekeeping force in Darfur. Just last week, that Rwandan force suffered five casualties while successfully repelling a largescale attack in Darfur. Today, some 2,500 Rwandan peacekeepers are on the frontline against genocide in Darfur.

At home, Rwandans recognize that their lasting security depends on generating economic growth and creating jobs. Rising prosperity will help to underpin reconciliation and may aid efforts to ensure equal treatment under law, and political transparency. Today, Rwandans see significant economic progress. Those gains are particularly remarkable given the devastating losses from the genocide. While most Rwandans continue to live in poverty, the government has embarked on an ambitious plan to improve the standard of living through higher education and infrastructure development. If confirmed, I plan to seek ways to contribute to that effort, especially by encouraging opportunities for private sector investment and job training to prepare Rwandans for new jobs. Rwanda is opening its business environment. The Trade Investment Framework Agreement helped propel a 32 percent increase of United states-Rwanda trade in 2007, and the Bilateral Investment Treaty signed by President Bush and President Kagame in February will help attract new U.S. investment. Our extensive program to construct coffee washing stations has been a singular success, with Starbucks and other major coffee chains clamoring for Rwanda's world-class specialty coffee.

Increased prosperity will help Rwandans focus on working together to shape a better, united future, but the cleavages caused by genocide will take years to heal. Rwanda has a national policy favoring reconciliation and deemphasizing ethnic identification, but this will be the work of generations. Therefore, ongoing efforts to promote reconciliation are essential, both at the grassroots and in the capital. On the national level, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), may play a central role. The newly approved $24.73 MCC Threshold Country Plan will fund justice sector initiatives designed to strengthen democratic governance and the capacity of civil society organizations. At the grassroots level, the Peace Corps is sure to have a very positive impact. The first volunteers are slated to arrive in Rwanda this year.

In Rwanda, investments of development resources have been shown to have great impact due to the Government of Rwanda's focused leadership. As a priority country for PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief) and PMI (President's Malaria Initiative), the United States has been in the forefront of combating HIV/AIDS and malaria pandemic in Rwanda. Through our USAID mission, we also fund programs in democracy and governance, economic growth, food security, and healthcare.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is making a difference in Rwanda and Rwanda has, and will, make a difference in the world. If confirmed, I will work to build on that success. I am convinced that Rwanda's democratic development, economic growth, and security are essential for its citizens and critical to the stability of much of Africa. I look forward to working closely with you, Mr. Chairman, and with the committee in this most important endeavor.

Thank you again Chairman Feingold, Senator Isakson, and the members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions that you might have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Mr. Eastham?

STATEMENT OF HON. ALAN W. EASTHAM, JR., NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Ambassador EASTHAM. Mr. Chairman, I would like to echo Stuart Symington's gratitude to you and the committee for holding this session on such a timely basis, although it did require me to come back here from my present post in Malawi on very short notice and to prepare for this in a compressed period of time. I do appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and appreciate the nomina-

tion by the President to take up my position in the Republic of Congo, or as we call it in the shorthand, Congo-Brazzaville.

This is the second time that I have appeared before the committee. I was here 3 years ago as a candidate for confirmation as Ambassador to Malawi, and I have had that position for the last 3 years.

If I may, before beginning my testimony, I would like to introduce my family members who are here. My wife, Carolyn, and my sons, Mark and Michael.

Senator FEINGOLD. Would you please rise? Thank you very much for being here. Welcome.

Ambassador EASTHAM. Carolyn and I have been together for longer than my Foreign Service career has lasted and probably for longer than she would like me to say in public session. [Laughter.]

Mark is at Elon University in North Carolina and will be in his second year this year, and Michael will be starting at James Madison University in Virginia next month. Michael also happens to be our African connection since he was born in Nairobi, Kenya during our first assignment in Africa.

If confirmed, this will be my fourth African post. I have served in Nairobi, Kinshasa, and my present post in Lilongwe.

I have had other professional responsibilities relating to Africa which I think serve as qualification. I spent a year as the U.S. Representative to the Kimberley Process talks on conflict diamonds, which gave me an introduction to resource management and the misuses to which resources can be put in extreme cases. I think that will serve me well in Congo.

I also served for 3 years as the Director of Central African Affairs in the State Department and had occasion to visit Brazzaville a couple of times during that service.

If confirmed, my top priority will be to promote and protect United States interests in the Congo. That includes U.S. citizens, U.S. interests and investments, and not least important, U.S. values. These values include promoting human rights and democracy, promoting economic good governance, and also supporting efforts by the Congolese leadership to play a positive and leading role in the resolution of conflicts in the Central African region.

On the economic front, we have to ensure that American commercial interests can operate in a free, lawful, and orderly economic and regulatory environment, which I believe involves encouraging the Congolese authorities to combat corruption, to account for revenues, to invest those revenues in human and social development, and to manage and protect the economic resources with which the Congo is blessed.

Our political goals include supporting the country's democratic institutions and encouraging their further development and promoting civil and political rights including, when necessary, talking about and intervening in particular cases relating to human rights abuses. This includes also support to civil society, as well as encouraging the Republic of Congo to protect its most vulnerable populations, including victims of child labor exploitation, child and human trafficking, and violence against women. It is important to support efforts to encourage timely, free, fair, and transparent elections for the presidency which will occur in 2009.

At the regional level, President Sassou-Nguesso was recently appointed as a co-mediator in the Chad-Sudan conflict, and he has recently been involved in the contact group process and hosted the most recent meeting in Brazzaville. We appreciate the Republic of Congo's role in the Chad-Sudan mediation and urge them to work diligently with regional partners to facilitate a resolution of that conflict.

It is important to note, as you did, Senator, in your statement at the beginning, that in both program and operational terms, the United States mission in Brazzaville is rebuilding. The embassy was closed for several years. It was followed by a difficult period when staff of the embassy were based across the river in Kinshasa and were obliged to travel across the river to do their work. There is a new building under construction which will be, I hope, occupied early next year.

In addition, the process of rebuilding the professional staff and procedures is underway. I hope to be able to continue to strengthen the U.S. diplomatic platform, if confirmed by the Senate.

At present, the major tools available to pursue United States interests in the Congo are diplomacy and close engagement with the people and the government. There are also public diplomacy initiatives that we can take that further our goals and strengthen mutual understanding between our two countries. It is my intention, if confirmed, to examine our programs currently active in Congo and I will definitely be recommending changes and proposing some new initiatives to support our objectives. In particular, I hope to be able to attract additional resources and attention, both public and private, clearly linked to United States policy objectives and to positive actions by the Government of the Republic of Congo to add to our tool kit in Brazzaville.

I appreciate very much, Mr. Chairman, the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy, of course, to respond to any questions that you might wish to pose. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Eastham follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ALAN W. EASTHAM,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a privilege and a distinct honor to appear before you for a second time as the President's nominee to serve the United States in Africa. The first time, over 3 years ago, was as Ambassador to Malawi, a post I will be relinquishing next month. At present, I am seeking confirmation as United States Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo (ROC).

If I may, I would like to introduce my wife, Carolyn, who has been at my side for 34 years. She has also served our country in seven of the eight foreign posts to which I have been assigned. She is looking forward to seeing the Congo River for the first time, as no family members were allowed to live in Kinshasa during the 2 years I served there. I have to say that she works as hard as I do to support United States activities in Malawi, and she will do the same in Brazzaville, if I am confirmed by the Senate. Let me also introduce my sons—Mark, who attends Elon University in North Carolina, and Michael, who will begin his studies at James Madison University next month. They have grown up in the Foreign Service and I expect that there is a good chance you will see them serving the United States abroad in some capacity in the coming years.

If confirmed, Brazzaville will be my fourth Africa post overseas. I have served in Nairobi, Kinshasa, and Lilongwe. I have visited 20 African countries in an official capacity, and I have had other professional responsibilities relating to Africa, including a year as the U.S. representative to the Kimberley Process talks on conflict diamonds and 3 years as Director of Central African Affairs in the State Department.

As Director, I had responsibility for the Republic of Congo. I have visited the country several times, both before and after the destructive civil war.

United States policy in the Republic of the Congo centers on promoting human rights, democracy, and good governance in the country. We also support efforts by the Congolese leadership to play a positive and leading role in the resolution of regional conflicts.

If confirmed, I will fully exercise my mandate to promote and protect U.S. interests in that country, including U.S. investments, U.S. citizens, and U.S. values.

Economic governance is a strong priority for the United States. We must ensure that American commercial interests can operate in a free, lawful, orderly, and transparent economic and regulatory environment. This involves encouraging the authorities to combat corruption, invest oil revenues in human and social development, and manage the country's precious environmental resources.

Our political goals include supporting the country's democratic institutions, and promoting civil and political rights. This includes support to civil society as an effective mechanism of checks and balances to promote government accountability and transparency as well as encouraging the ROC to protect its most vulnerable populations, including victims of child labor, child trafficking, and violence against women. It is also important to note that Congo will be holding presidential elections in 2009. It is important to support efforts to make those free, fair, and transparent.

There is also important work to be done to further the implementation of the 2005 Peace Agreement between the government and the last remaining rebel group, in order to create a positive atmosphere for free and fair presidential elections in 2009.

Following the Republic of Congo's tenure as President of the African Union and nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council in 2006, the ROC has enhanced its role in regional and multilateral issues. President Sassou-Nguesso was recently appointed as a comediator in the Chad-Sudan conflict, and has been actively involved in the contact group process, and hosted a meeting in Brazzaville. We appreciate the ROC's role, and urge them to work with regional partners to facilitate a resolution of the conflict.

The ROC is increasingly becoming a partner in the area of security cooperation. Last October, the Government of Congo hosted a United States Navy ship visit. We continue to support capacity building efforts to enhance the country's maritime security awareness. Our training of the Congolese military will also support the country's efforts to contribute to future central African peacekeeping efforts and promote awareness for human rights in the country's armed forces.

It is important to note that in both program and operational contexts the United States mission in Brazzaville is in a rebuilding phase. The embassy was closed for several years, followed by several difficult years of coverage by personnel under severe security strictures and based across the river in Kinshasa. The embassy building was destroyed during the civil war, and a new building under construction is expected to be ready for occupancy early next year. This building is necessary to support our efforts in the ROC and will provide a strong visible indication of our commitment to strong relations with the country. The process of rebuilding professional staff and procedures is well under way. I hope to be able to continue to strengthen the U.S. diplomatic platform if I am confirmed by the Senate.

If confirmed, I would support these policy efforts through diplomacy and close engagement with the government. I would also support public diplomacy initiatives that further our goals and strengthen the mutual understanding between our two countries. I also intend to examine our programs currently active in Congo, and recommend changes and propose new initiatives to support our objectives. In particular, I hope to be able to attract additional resources, clearly linked to United States policy objectives and to positive actions by the Government of the Republic of Congo, to add to our toolkit in Brazzaville.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to respond to any questions you might choose to ask, and I look forward, if confirmed, to serving the United States in Brazzaville.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Mr. Eastham.

Mr. Swan.

STATEMENT OF JAMES CHRISTOPHER SWAN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

Mr. SWAN. Mr. Chairman Feingold, Ranking Member Isakson, Senator Lugar, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee for chief of mission at Djibouti. I have a very brief oral

statement and would ask that my written testimony be included in the record, if possible.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Mr. SWAN. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer.

First, Mr. Chairman, if I may acknowledge several family members and colleagues who are here today. My wife, Daphne Michelle Titus, please stand up. Daphne is also a Foreign Service officer with extensive experience in Africa. I would also like to mention our children, Mitchell and Garner, who are not able to be here today but who are here with us in spirit, and also to note the presence of our goddaughter, Kiama Alexis, who is visiting from Los Angeles.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome.

Mr. SWAN. Let me please also recognize several Africa Bureau colleagues, including of course, chief of staff, Ruth Davis, who has already been mentioned; desk officer Sarah Skerubsky. And let me also say that I am honored to appear today with other friends and colleagues working on African issues.

Mr. Chairman, during more than 20 years at the State Department, I have devoted my career to the challenges of developing countries in transition, especially in Africa. Since 1992, my overseas assignments have been all in Africa, including work in Cameroon, Somalia, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the last two posts as deputy chief of mission. I currently serve as Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs with broad policy and program responsibility for Central and East Africa, including Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy Djibouti's dedicated team of Foreign Service, Civil Service, military staff assigned to the embassy, and Foreign Service national employees in advancing the interests of the United States. In Djibouti, these interests are primarily in the areas of peace and security, good governance, and economic development.

First, with respect to peace and security, Djibouti has long been a pocket of stability in a turbulent region and is an important partner in the fight against terrorism. As has been mentioned, Djibouti hosts the only United States military base in sub-Saharan Africa, Camp Lemonier, headquarters for the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, with some 2,200 personnel. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to build our close relationship with the Government of Djibouti on regional peace and security issues.

And in view of the importance of CJTF–HOA, let me also state that I am committed to close coordination and cooperation between embassy personnel and CJTF–HOA and to ensuring that all CJTF–HOA programming in Djibouti fits within overarching United States Government priorities for the country.

With regard to democracy and governance, Mr. Chairman, Djibouti is a nascent democracy, independent only since 1977. We have been encouraged by the results achieved by U.S. engagement on human rights issues, for example, progress on trafficking in persons, and we will continue to seek to enlarge space for private

media and civil society groups that at times have faced constraints. If confirmed, I will work with our Djiboutian partners to support and deepen their democracy governance reforms.

On the economic front, Mr. Chairman, Djibouti is seeking to become a center for regional and international trade, financial services as well. Nonetheless, the country remains very poor, ranked 149 out of 177 countries, according to the UNDP Human Development Index. The United States, consequently, has a small but active aid mission in Djibouti focused on health and education and on responding to urgent humanitarian requirements. If confirmed, I will continue to make support for economic development in Djibouti a priority.

Finally, but most importantly, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the safety and well-being of Americans living in or visiting Djibouti. With only a few hundred private American citizens in the country, I would expect, if confirmed, to remain in frequent contact with them, most importantly on consular and security issues, but also to benefit from the wisdom of longtime residents, aid workers, and others with expertise on developments in Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the honor to appear before you today. Of course, we welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Swan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES SWAN,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

Chairman Feingold, Ranking Member Isakson, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee for chief of mission Djibouti. Thank you for convening this hearing so quickly during a very busy season of Senate business and campaign preparations. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position, and particularly for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer in this appointment.

First, Mr. Chairman, let me mention several family members and colleagues who are here today. My wife, Daphne Michelle Titus, is here, and I would also like to mention our children, Garner and Mitchell, who are not present in this room, but are with us in spirit. Daphne is also a Foreign Service officer with extensive experience in Africa. We have been full partners not just in the home, but also as we've worked in embassies abroad and in public service here in Washington. Let me also add that I am honored to appear before you on this panel with my two friends and colleagues, Ambassadors Eastham and Symington.

Mr. Chairman, during more than 20 years at the State Department, I have devoted my career to the challenges of developing countries in transition, many involving unsettled security environments and complex political reforms. My overseas assignments have included service as political officer in Cameroon during its first multiparty Presidential elections, as "Somalia Watcher" in Nairobi during the final pull-out of U.N. forces in the mid 1990s, and as deputy chief of mission in both the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo during efforts to bring an end to conflicts and humanitarian crises in those countries and to promote democratic reforms. In Washington I have served as Director for African Analysis in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and most recently as Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs with broad policy and program responsibility for Central and East Africa, including the Horn of Africa and Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading Embassy Djibouti's dedicated team in advancing the interests of the United States. This team of over 200 consists of Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel, military staff assigned to the embassy, and of course our invaluable Foreign Service national employees. Our interests in Djibouti are primarily in the areas of peace and security, good governance, and economic development.

PEACE AND SECURITY

Djibouti is a small but important country on the Horn of Africa. It occupies a strategic position at the Bab el Mandab Strait, which joins the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. These waters are used by some 40 percent of the world's commercial ships. Djibouti hosts the only United States military base in sub-Saharan Africa, Camp Lemonier, headquarters for the Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa (CJTF–HOA) and its approximately 2,200 personnel. Djibouti has long been a pocket of stability in a turbulent region, and is an important partner in the fight against terrorism. It borders Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia/Somaliland, and faces Yemen less than 18 miles across the strait to the east. Djibouti has often used its close relations with all of its neighbors to promote peace and understanding in the region. It is the regional headquarters for the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. In June, Djibouti hosted an important meeting between Somalia's Transitional Federal Government and the opposition Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, which led to an agreement that both sides have now initialed. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to build our close relationship with the Government of Djibouti on regional peace and security issues.

In view of the large and important CJTF–HOA presence, let me underscore my commitment, if confirmed, to continue close coordination and cooperation between embassy personnel and the CJTF–HOA contingent. If confirmed, I will also ensure that all CJTF–HOA programming in Djibouti fits within overarching United States Government priorities to advance our key interests in the country.

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

Djibouti is a nascent democracy. It has been independent only since 1977 and faced a limited but persistent internal rebel movement in the early 1990s. With the negotiated conclusion of the rebellion, a "grand coalition" was formed that effectively rules the country. Presidential elections in 2005 were determined by international observers to be free and fair. Recent parliamentary elections in February returned all of the seats to members of the ruling coalition. At the regional level, however, other political groups obtained greater representation. We have been encouraged by the results achieved by active U.S. engagement on governance and human rights issues—for example on trafficking in persons. Djibouti's rapid passage of a new antitrafficking law and followup implementation were reflected in an improvement in Djibouti's trafficking in persons ranking from Tier II Watch List to Tier II. If confirmed, I will work with our Djiboutian partners to continue their democracy/governance reforms—including to enlarge space for private media and civil society groups that at times have faced constraints.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

On the economic front, Mr. Chairman, Djibouti's leadership is seeking to embrace the opportunities of globalization. Capitalizing on its location and excellent deep-water port, Djibouti has privatized its port and airport and has embarked on construction of a new port facility that will dramatically increase capacity. This privatization has reduced corruption and increased revenues flowing to the government. Djibouti is also emerging as a regional banking center, albeit on a modest scale. Making Djibouti an attractive place for investment and a center for regional and international trade will be critical to its economic development. Djibouti remains very poor, ranked 149 out of 177 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index. Nearly 90 percent of Djiboutian land is desert. The United States has a small but active AID mission in Djibouti, focused on health and education, particularly to combat low life-expectancy, maternal and under-5 child mortality, and transmission of infectious diseases. The United States also responds to the current regionwide problem of food insecurity through support for the Famine Early Warning Network office in Djibouti, as well as Food for Peace and Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance programs. If confirmed, I will continue to make support for economic development in Djibouti a priority.

ERITREA/DJIBOUTI BORDER

Mr. Chairman, as you can see, we have important interests in Djibouti. Djibouti's role in regional peace and security, its democratic and governance reforms, and its economic prospects merit support and encouragement from friends of Djibouti. Yet, one of its neighbors—Eritrea—has instead sought to foment instability, creating a potential new border conflict where before none existed. The establishment of Eritrean military positions just over the Ras Doumeira ridge on the Djiboutian side of the border represents a worrying threat to Djibouti. The Eritrean Government has

rebuffed efforts by the African Union, League of Arab States, and bilateral partners of the two countries to negotiate resolution. Now the United Nations Secretariat, at the behest of the Security Council, is sending a team to gather further details of the border standoff and report back to the council. In view of Eritrea's destabilizing role elsewhere in the region, this move against Djibouti can only be seen as yet another deliberate threat by this dangerous spoiler on the Horn. If confirmed, I will give my full support to international efforts to resolve this incipient conflict peacefully and restore the border to the status quo ante.

AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my first, most immediate priority will be the safety and well-being of Americans living in or visiting Djibouti. With only a few hundred private Americans in-country, I would expect, if confirmed, to remain in frequent contact with them, most importantly on consular and security issues, but also to benefit from the wisdom of long-time residents, aid workers, and others with expertise on developments in Djibouti.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the honor to appear before the Committee today. I would be happy to take any questions you may have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Mr. Swan.

Mr. Simon.

STATEMENT OF JOHN A. SIMON, NOMINEE TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE AFRICAN UNION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. SIMON. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I would like to echo the thanks of my colleagues for the opportunity to testify before you here today. And in particular, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and your staff for allowing me the opportunity to join my colleagues.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you in consideration of my nomination to serve as the United States Ambassador to the African Union. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have shown in nominating me for this position.

I have submitted written comments for the record, and with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will summarize them here.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Mr. SIMON. Mr. Chairman, first I would like to acknowledge my wife, Laura, who is here with me today.

Senator FEINGOLD. Welcome.

Mr. SIMON. Without her love and sacrifice and that of my children, Will, Leo, Maya, and Jayne, my career in public service would not have been possible.

I would also like to thank the African Union desk in the State Department and the many offices and bureaus that worked overtime to prepare me for this hearing today.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have spent the past 6 years working on global development issues. The primary focus of this work has been in Africa. Over that time, I have had the extraordinary honor and privilege to serve our country as an official of the U.S. Agency for International Development, as Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization, and Development on the staff of the National Security Council, and most recently, as executive vice president for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. In these capacities, I have helped to support the President's international development agenda at a time of dynamic economic and political change around the world.

Nowhere has this change been more profound than in Africa. The United States has been an active partner in helping Africans along this journey, with far-reaching initiatives on the continent, including the Millennium Challenge Account, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the African Education Initiative, the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the African Mortgage Market Initiative, and the African Financial Sector Initiative. I have been honored to have played a role in every one of these efforts.

The African Union is the most prominent manifestation of the new era on the continent. Founded in July 2002, the African Union heralded a change from its predecessor's focus on noninterference to one, in the words of its first chairman, Alpha Oumar Konare, of nonindifference.

Over the last 18 months, the breadth of the AU political initiatives has dramatically expanded. It has registered some significant successes, including stabilizing Comoros and Burundi, establishing the Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit, and adopting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance.

Although making significant progress, the African Union still faces considerable challenges. Capacity gaps, understaffing, and regional conflict, such as in Zimbabwe, Somalia, and Sudan, all threaten the nascent strides the African Union has made. These challenges on the one hand and the increasing vitality of the AU on the other provide the United States with a unique opportunity to engage the AU, which is looking to the United States for support.

For instance, given the recent elections in Zimbabwe and others that have suffered from serious irregularities, it is imperative that the United States and other donors assist the African Union to develop institutions that ensure the standards enshrined in the AU charter function to guarantee free and fair elections that are respected throughout the continent.

Building upon our historic ties, shared culture, and deep appreciation of the African continent's strategic significance, the United States in August 2006 became the first country to establish a separate diplomatic mission accredited to the AU. USAU was established with the intention to forge a strategic partnership between the United States and the African Union by building upon the AU's capacity to strengthen democratic institutions, promote peace and security, improve the lives and health of all Africans, and support sustainable economic development through increased trade and investment. If confirmed, I will strive to forward this agenda. I will also use every opportunity to press AU to live up to its own standards of nonindifference, especially in promoting human rights and democracy.

I would look forward, if confirmed, as the U.S. Representative to the AU, to working closely with you, Mr. Chairman, your staff, and other Members of the Congress to ensure that United States interests, policies, and assistance to the African Union achieves maximum impact.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this hearing. I would be pleased to answer any questions you and the members of the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Simon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN SIMON,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE AFRICAN UNION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today in consideration of my nomination to serve as the United States Ambassador to the African Union. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for the confidence and trust they have shown in nominating me for this position.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge the members of my family who are here with me today. First, my wife, Laura, and my daughter, Maya. My two sons, Will and Leo, and my other daughter, Jayne, could not be here today. I would also like to thank my parents, Barry and Hinda Simon, for their generous and unfailing love and support. Without my family's love and sacrifice, my career in public service would not have been possible.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have spent the past 6 years working on global development issues. The primary focus of this work has been in Africa. Over that time, I have had the extraordinary honor and privilege to serve our country as an official at the U.S. Agency for International Development; as Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization, and Development on the staff of the National Security Council; and, most recently, as executive vice president of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. In these capacities, I have helped to support the President's international development agenda at a time of dynamic economic and political change around the globe.

Nowhere has this change been more profound than in Africa. Thanks to improved governance, balanced fiscal and monetary policies, and investments in health and education, Africa as a whole is experiencing its most significant economic expansion since independence, with 10 years of uninterrupted growth, the last 5 at rates in excess of 5 percent. Africans have also experienced a growth in freedom and democracy, with more countries classified as free by the nongovernmental organization Freedom House than at any time in the continent's history.

The United States has been an active partner in helping Africans along this journey. Through the groundbreaking Millennium Challenge Account, with firm bipartisan backing from Congress we have supported the rule of law, sound economic policies, and investments in people. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative, Americans have helped Africans make unprecedented strides against two of the most deadly diseases on Earth. Through the Africa Education Initiative and the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, the United States has worked to educate and empower Africans from all strata of society. And through the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the African Mortgage Market Initiative, and the African Financial Sector Initiative, we have helped to lift the staggering burden of debt and develop the institutions of a modern economy. I have been honored to have played a role in every one of these efforts. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will work with the African Union (AU) to highlight these initiatives as important developmental issues for the AU to pursue.

The African Union is the most prominent manifestation of the new era on the continent. Founded in July 2002, the African Union heralded a change from its predecessor's focus on "noninterference" to one, in the words of its first Chairman, Alpha Oumar Konare, of "nonindifference." This was a highly significant change and a recognition that Africa not only can, but must take charge of its own destiny if it is to compete and prosper in the 21st century. The creation and success of the African Union is not only critical to the continent, but to the international community and to the interests of the United States.

The African Union is an active, multilateral organization orchestrating complementary agendas for change and development. The permanent representatives of its 53 member states are setting political directions in areas as disparate as election monitoring and climate change. The African Union Commission, effectively the AU's Executive Secretariat, is implementing the policies endorsed by the AU's Assembly of Heads of State. Over the last 18 months, the breadth of AU political initiatives has dramatically expanded, and it has registered some significant successes, including stabilizing Comoros and Burundi, establishing the Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit, and adopting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance.

Although making significant progress, the African Union still faces considerable challenges. Capacity gaps, understaffing, and regional conflict, such as in Zimbabwe, Somalia, and Sudan, all threaten the nascent strides the African Union has made. These challenges on the one hand, and the increasing vitality of the AU on the other, provide the United States with a unique opportunity to engage the AU, which is looking to the United States for support.

For instance, given the recent elections in Zimbabwe, and others that have suffered from serious irregularities, it is imperative that the United States and other donor partners assist the African Union to develop institutions to ensure that the standards enshrined in the AU charter function to guarantee free and fair elections are respected throughout the continent. Despite its shortcomings, the AU sent an observer mission to the June 27 Zimbabwean runoff, and that mission concluded that the election had fallen short of AU standards. The June 30-July 2 AU summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt issued a statement stating that they were deeply concerned with the prevailing situation in Zimbabwe and called for negotiations between parties and recognition that some form of transitional government would be necessary.

Building upon our historic ties, shared culture, and deep appreciation of the African continent's strategic significance, the United States, in August 2006, became the first observer country to establish a separate diplomatic mission accredited to the AU. USAU was established in 2006 with the intention to forge a strategic partnership between the United States and the African Union by building the AU's capacity to strengthen democratic institutions, promote peace and stability, improve the lives and health of all Africans, and support sustainable economic development through increased trade and investment. If confirmed, I will strive to forward this agenda. I will also use every opportunity to press the AU to live up to its own standard of "nonindifference," especially in promoting human rights and democracy.

I would look forward, if confirmed as the United States Representative to the AU, to working closely with you and other Members of Congress to ensure that U.S. interests, policies, and assistance to the African Union achieves maximum impact.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this hearing. I would be pleased to answer any questions you and the members of the committee may have.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Simon. Thank you all.

We will begin our first round of questions. I will begin it. We will do 7-minute rounds.

Ambassador Symington, you spent the last 3 years as United States Ambassador to Djibouti. What lessons do you hope to bring with you from your experience in Djibouti?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Mr. Chairman, thank you for asking me the question that I focused on every day as I prepared for this hearing.

I think that there are three important lessons. The first is the one that I mentioned inspired both by Chairman Skelton and by you of working together jointly. I think that it is synchronizing not just what government does but what government does to enable the private sector to do more. So to continue to focus on what every agency of our Government does and then to push forward on the economic development side by creating conditions that can help the people of Rwanda not only find peace but a path to prosperity strikes me as the very first and most important.

The second thing is that I am keenly aware, in an insecure part of the Horn, how important security is, and so I will, with the help not only of the rest of the United States Government, but with the continued help and support of you and the Senate and the House funding our efforts, to not only have boots on the ground, but also to have seats at the table with that kind of support in development, with that kind of resource required to not just talk about security, but to be in a position as we have been in Rwanda, training folks to then deploy in Darfur, do something about it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Now, similar to Djibouti, Rwanda faces a major violent conflict in a neighboring country. In fact, the extreme violence that has plagued the Kivu Region of Eastern Congo can be, of course, directly traced to the legacy of the 1994 genocide and the continuing Hutu-Tutsi tensions. In response to the presence of the FDLR and former members of the Interahamwe in Eastern Congo, the Rwanda Government funded Tutsi insurgents until at least 2003.

Now, do you see, sir, a potential to resolve this crisis, and how do you intend to work with President Kagame and others in the region to do so?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There is clearly a potential to resolve it. The magnitude of the problem, while still considerable, has diminished, thanks to the efforts not only of other American ambassadors in Rwanda, but also the considered efforts of the Tripartite Plus process and the conversations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda and other leaders at very many levels pushed forward by a meeting last year that the Secretary of State chaired in Addis to bring the Tripartite Plus together in which the Minister of the Interior of the Democratic Republic of Congo and President Kagame got together and talked about the way forward.

There is a tremendous opportunity to address this problem by focusing, I think, on three things.

The first is getting together to talk about the common interests in a lasting peace. And they are doing that more regularly.

The second is to focus explicitly on the security concerns, and all the parties share a desire to make sure that there are not groups operating in the area that threaten the stability of law.

But the third element is to turn this part of Africa from a place of troubles to a place of promise, and that means going beyond the focus on security to focus on the sort of opportunities for economic integration represented by Rwanda's recent joining of the East African community and its membership in COMESA. We need to take some of that growth that I saw in Djibouti that is coming across the Indian Ocean and reach into the heart of Africa so that they can cooperate together.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Ambassador.

According to the State Department's country reports on human rights practices for 2007, extrajudicial killings by security forces increased, as well as restrictions on freedom of speech, association, and press.

How would you assess the challenges of building democracy in Rwanda and the current state of democracy there?

Ambassador SYMINGTON. As we were discussing earlier, one great test for their commitment to multiparty democracy will be the multiparty elections that are about to take place in September. And so this is a perfect time to see whether or not Rwanda continues to make progress towards that goal.

In the course of the last year, I was pleased to see progress in a couple of those areas, particularly in that relating to extrajudicial killings. Another very significant issue that has plagued them in the past has been both the crowdings and the conditions of their prisons, and they continue to make progress there.

But there are genuine human rights concerns in Rwanda today, and as I see our efforts, I am reminded of a very simple truth that I learned which is that when I swear an oath to serve as your ambassador in Djibouti, I swear that oath to preserve and to protect the Constitution, a body of ideas. What we have at the core of our being is those principles, and it is what holds us together and gives us our strength in the world.

If Rwanda is to realize its promise of a single united Rwanda playing a positive role in Africa, it must show the same adherence to principles that we do and not because we tell them to, but because those principles are their principles and they work for them. And that test is one they must pass every day, but it will be a great challenge to work with them as they try to make progress in that area.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Symington.

Mr. Eastham, since ending its civil war, oil production in the Republic of Congo has increased significantly and it continues to do so.

What United States companies, petroleum companies, are active in the country, and do you expect that Congolese oil exports to the United States will increase in the coming years?

Ambassador EASTHAM. On the second question, Senator, I do not—I think the market will determine whether imports to the United States will increase. I would anticipate that they will simply because there will be more Congolese oil available. There is an expectation that when a new field comes on line next year, that there will be an additional 90,000 barrels a day of production, bringing Congo up from its present level of approximately 240,000 barrels a day, up to around 330,000 in the coming year. At present, Congo is the fifth largest producer in Africa. I do not think that that will change the ranking for the additional capacity to come on line.

Operating in the Republic of Congo at the moment, there are several United States oil exploration and production companies, as well as a number of other companies that support them. I believe that the exploration companies are Chevron, Congo SA, the Murphy West Africa Limited, and Neighbors Offshore. Supporting services companies include Halliburton, Baker Oil Tools, Schlumberger, and Trac d'Afrique. There are a couple of other American companies also engaged in Congo, one in bauxite and another in milling of flour for consumption in the Congo.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Eastham. When I have my second round, I will return to this subject, but I will just simply comment in all this debate about energy and oil, there is insufficient attention to the role of African oil supplies, both the positive aspects and the challenges. I know that the ranking member has talked about it, but this is something the American people have, I think, a limited awareness of. And I am hoping that through our work together we can let people know that there are not simply Middle Eastern sources of oil.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On that subject, I want to acknowledge that Ambassadors Symington, Eastham, and Swan all made reference in their state-

ments to the important role of supporting the private sector in each of those countries. And with the chairman mentioning oil and the resources of Africa, I think it is important to note, Mr. Eastham, that not far from your positing is Equatorial Guinea where the United States left some years ago and did not have an embassy, but has come back and brought Ambassador Johnson. U.S. companies, Marathon in particular, but also Hess, Formed a joint venture with that government, discovered a huge reserve of natural gas in the Gulf of Guinea and Marathon invested $1.5 billion in a liquefication facility which is now operating.

And as a result of that, two things happened. One, the economy of Equatorial Guinea and the money it is raising, is being invested in hospitals and schools, and is helping the populace, but also as recently as last month, President Obiang released 37 political prisoners we have been trying to encourage him to release for a number of years. I think that shows that if we can help empower the private sector to participate in joint ventures on the continent of Africa, particularly in energy, but in other areas as well, the result is not only wealth for the people of Africa, but also a more democratic government emerges from that prosperity.

I am making a speech, not asking a question, but I thought it was important to note that all three of you voluntarily noted that point.

Mr. Eastham, in your printed testimony and verbal testimony, you talked about American interests being able to operate in free, lawful, orderly, and transparent economic and regulatory environments, in particular, you mentioned the problem of corruption and making sure that we do everything to have honorable dealings.

What is in the Congo as far as corruption? How is it? Is it a major problem? Is it improving?

Ambassador EASTHAM. Thank you for the question because that is one of the most important things that I believe I will be addressing, if I am confirmed and go to this post.

My impression from my preparations here is that I would rather call it lack of accountability is getting in the way of a lot of things that Congo would like to do. For example, they have gone off track with the International Monetary Fund after a promising start about 2 years ago because of a problem of overexpenditure that caused them to miss their targets to continue on their poverty relief and growth facility program.

Similarly, their progress toward debt relief under the HIPC program has gone off track, largely as a result of being off track with the IMF because, again, of a lack of accountability.

There are nongovernmental organizations that are extremely credible on this subject, such as Global Witness, that have noted in public the problems of accountability with regard to the revenues from petroleum that is exported from the Republic of Congo.

Now, I am not the ambassador yet. You will determine that, but I think that at this stage in my preparation for this post, I would prefer to look at it as a glass a quarter full rather than characterizing it as corruption. So let me just assure you that I think that that is an issue that cuts across through the Congo and Congo's governance. The question of how they account for the money and how they spend it in terms of—well, I will go back to your example

of Equatorial Guinea—spending on hospitals and infrastructure projects that benefit the population of the country, I have a feeling that is going to be a core aspect of my mission there, if I am confirmed.

Senator ISAKSON. I really appreciate not only the answer, but the way in which you answered it because "corruption" is a word that gets thrown around a lot. I think the reference to transparency and accountability is the key because with a transparent and accountable economic and regulatory system in a country, the United States can compete most favorably, but when it lacks that it benefits other countries who might want to come benefit from the resources in the country but not necessarily do it in a transparent or accountable way. And I think you are right on target. I will not mention who I am talking about on that, but I think it benefits the United States for that to exist.

Mr. Swan, I had the privilege of visiting Ambassador Symington in Djibouti earlier this year, and I appreciate in your remarks that you addressed Camp Lemonier and what the United States is doing in concert with other countries at that tremendous military facility, but acknowledge that it is—and you correct me if I am wrong, Mr. Symington, but when I was there, I was not only astounded, but I was pleased to see the tremendous role of helping people in Africa. Those personnel there are drilling wells and building bridges. They are ambassadors of the United States. Camp Lemonier is of tremendous value, I think, to our country and to the Horn of Africa as well, so I commend you on your mentioning of that and I hope you will be very committed, as Ambassador Symington has been, to coordinate and cooperate with the personnel there.

Ambassador SWAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Yes, indeed, sir. As I mentioned in my remarks, I think this is going to be a key priority to ensure that we have a very close relationship with the leadership and, indeed, the other personnel of CJTF–HOA. I think there has been an excellent base already established—a base of collaboration, I should clarify I suppose—already established in terms of our relationship not only with the leadership, but in terms of our embassy personnel working directly with a number of CJTF–HOA officials as well to coordinate activities.

I think it is important to remember, Senator, that although based in Djibouti, CJTF–HOA has an area of responsibility that currently extends to some 13 countries, including Yemen. So it is a matter of coordinating our activities with CJTF–HOA not only as it relates to Djibouti, but more broadly in terms of its activities elsewhere on the Horn of Africa and extending into Yemen. With the transition to AFRICOM on October 1, we expect CJTF–HOA's assets will, in fact, be available for programming even outside its existing area of responsibility.

There is no doubt that its civil affairs activities have been very important in terms of helping people who desperately need help in the Horn of Africa and have also been very helpful in terms of putting a more positive light on the role of the United States military and what kinds of contributions it can make in contributing to improvements in those societies. I think we do see, however, that what CJTF–HOA has as a critical asset is its ability to engage on

security cooperation issues, as well as traditional military-to-military activities. So we see CJTF–HOA as a critical component, one of an array of instruments of U.S. security influence, including diplomatic elements, informational elements, economic elements, development elements, and also this military component. So coordination will be key.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, my time is up, but I do remember when I went to Camp Lemonier and walked in to meet with—was it Admiral Hart? Is that correct? Who was commanding officer, and he introduced me to the British general and the French general that were there with him, and I realized there is a very diplomatic role in that camp with other countries in Europe and around the world. You have a very important posting, and that is a very important facility for the people of the United States, as well as the people of Africa.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In 2006, our committee commissioned a report which was entitled Embassies as Command Posts in the Anti-Terror Campaign. But specifically a lot of the emphasis came to special challenges for our embassies in Africa. So I am going to ask you, Ambassador Swan, and you, Ambassador Symington in order, first of all, to describe from your experiences in that report what we have learned about coordination in our embassies of all the various facets of the United States Government—civilian, military, somewhere in between—in very challenging circumstances where special responsibilities come to the ambassador. And likewise, to what extent have we utilized the lessons learned, providing information for future ambassadors or, for that matter, to young Foreign Service officers who are coming into service posts in the way that you have over the last two decades in both of your careers? Can you, Ambassador Eastham, give us some outlook from the position you have had back in the State Department on this? And then I will ask Ambassador Symington for his views out in the field.

Ambassador SWAN. Certainly, Senator, there is no doubt that having a coordinated U.S. Government policy that includes, as I mentioned, all the instruments of power and all of the interagency elements is critical to achieving our objectives. In most posts, as you may know, Senator, we have what is effectively a country team, led by the ambassador and the deputy chief of mission, which brings together all of the agencies at post to ensure that there is a common message to ensure that there is a collective and collaborative and coherent effort aimed at achieving the objectives that are established, both through the interagency process in Washington and by the chief of mission on the ground. And that certainly, if confirmed, would be the approach that I would intend to take in Djibouti.

I think in Djibouti, there is, of course, also this special issue of the relationship with CJTF–HOA. This is also the case for other missions on the Horn of Africa in which CJTF–HOA has relations. But there is, in fact, quite an established framework already to ensure good coordination.

For example, within the country team at the embassy, there is a coordination element, a representative of CJTF-HOA who participates in those discussions to ensure that there is good coordination. There is also at CJTF-HOA a senior State Department political advisor, a POLAD, to ensure that messages are well transmitted. And recently there has been the addition of a development advisor from USAID to CJTF-HOA. So I think there is a serious effort to ensure close collaboration and coordination.

With respect to lessons learned on coordination, I think more and more we are seeing an emphasis on training at the State Department at all levels of leadership and management. Much of this is, in fact, due to Ambassador Davis' initiatives when she was the Director General of the Foreign Service. But we see in each of those elements an emphasis on the need for coordination in terms of maximizing the impact on the ground.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Symington.

Ambassador SYMINGTON. Senator Lugar, thank you for that question.

I learned three lessons. The first is that you need to coordinate at the level of the sergeants and at the level of the admirals and at the level of Washington. The second is that you need to do that every day, and the third is that you need to do that in every country.

If you do those three things so that you are constantly syncing up your goals and your assets and working together, and if you do that in a spirit that ultimately says this is not about what the United States is doing alone, but what we can do with the partner nations and the people there, then you have a chance to succeed. If you drop any part of that, if you think it is about us and not about them, if you think it is about me and not about you, then it does not work.

But I would also add one other thing that you and the chairman have been working for for much of your public life, for which I am extraordinarily grateful. We cannot have effective interagency cooperation around the world if the civilian agencies are not funded sufficiently well to do their part of the job. And I know that in the current budget, with the prospects looking ahead, this is very difficult. But I applaud your efforts and those of your colleagues to bring us those resources. And I just hope that we will continue to do it.

One area, for example, is some of these young diplomats who are now, frankly, much better trained in working in sync with the military than I am—I got 90 days once working in an intensive operation with them, and I have worked with military personnel throughout my career on civil affairs work. Many of my young colleagues, whose files we are reading today to decide on promotions, have served one and two and sometimes three tours in places like Afghanistan and in Iraq and out in a PRT. They know more about it than I know. And I am looking forward to learning from them as they come back.

But in every case, it helps to have, for example, discretionary funding. That is as much true for your ambassadors as it is for your generals and admirals. And those commander's funds that

they have are wonderful, fast dispensing, get a target of opportunity chances to do some good.

So those are my lessons and those are a little of my thanks to you for your leadership over the years in getting us the resources.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I appreciate your comments, and in a diplomatic way, you have raised an important issue for this committee and for the Congress. We have had a lot of testimony about the disproportionate funds available to the military as opposed to our civilian or diplomatic components. And Secretary Gates, our Secretary of Defense, has recognized this publicly and indicated that we are going to have to have some leveling up. Or if we have urgent military needs, we will need to rebuild the funds that are available for American diplomacy if this type of coordination that we have been talking about is to be more satisfying.

But finally, I appreciate likewise your recognition that sometimes, in the course of fighting the war on terror, we have had military expeditions or even intelligence expeditions that were not altogether known by our ambassador or at least the briefings were incomplete.

Now, one of the reasons for this coordination in effect is to make certain we are all on the same page. Each of you as professionals recognize the importance of that. Likewise, as ambassadors, just the essential aspect of knowing what is going on in the country for which you have responsibility.

I think we are making headway, but I wanted to raise this question at this hearing just to have testimony from two veterans of the trail. And I appreciate that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Nelson.

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to come by since these professionals are going to a very important part of the world with regard to our relations and since our relations are really on the up-tick with each of these posts that you are going to, indeed, over most of Africa.

Mr. Chairman, for example, the Ambassador in Tanzania told me a couple of weeks ago that he thinks our favorable toward the United States is now at about 60. In Kenya, I was having dinner with a group of Kenyans, both in the government and in the business sector, and they said that the good will toward America was upwards about 85 percent. And of course, we were laughing, depending on the turnout in the election, that it might go to 99.9 percent.

But all over Africa, you give credit where credit is due to the President with his PEPFAR program, the fact that we have now tripled it in the Senate, for not only that, but malaria and AIDS. The fact that in Zanzibar this coming year they expect malaria to be zero. These are some incredible things, and since the United States is, in fact, initiating a lot of this, that good will is being extended there.

Of course, the very emotional experience that we have seen how President Kagame in Rwanda over the course of 14 years—14 years ago, April 6, 1994—when as general of the rebel army that he enters the capital city and sees the city strewn with corpses, with dogs eating their flesh, and how he held that army together with discipline so that they would not all go out, as some of them individually did, taking retribution into their own hands, but that he could work with reconciliation after that slaughter of a million within a 100-day period of the Tutsis. That right there is just a wonderful story of reconciliation and healing that the whole world would do well to understand.

So, Ambassador Symington, you, along with the others, are all professionals, career service. You go to a very important part of the world for them and for us.

Now, it is going to be interesting to see, as we take the first little, timid steps into this Africa Command, how that works, but it has a great deal of promise. We are already seeing it happening in South America in Southern Command because the commander, Admiral Stavridis, is not only a warrior, he is a diplomat. So too as we set up in Africa, the military can do a lot of things that other agencies cannot, but the military has got to be in the proper place reaching out with coequals, with State, with USAID, with Agriculture, with Health, and on down the line. And that is going to be a very important part.

I will just conclude by saying that I am seeing in just a few minutes General Zinni. He was the commanding general of Central Command some 10–12 years ago, but he was very visionary because he said in third world countries, the United States military has got to take exactly this kind of approach if we are going to be successful.

So you all are on the front lines. Thank you for your public service, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Nelson. I can confirm, having served on this subcommittee for 16 years, this is the highest level overall of senatorial interest in Africa that I have witnessed. The subcommittee is used to being a little lonelier. And it is a very good sign, and it is bipartisan. So this is a good sign. I appreciate Senator Nelson's very strong interest in Africa and his demonstrated willingness to make the trips there and make the contacts. It is very helpful.

Let me return to Mr. Eastham on the oil issue. Earlier this year, the Republic of Congo was accepted as a candidate country for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. What does EITI implementation consist of, and how can the United States best contribute to that process?

Ambassador EASTHAM. It is important to note, Senator, that EITI is a voluntary scheme of transparency and accountability. The Republic of Congo has just begun its implementation of the scheme. They have set up the committee that is going to implement the requirements for joining. They are at present a candidate country for EITI.

I do not think that very much progress has been made in actually producing the documentation and the procedures that will have to be followed.

I think that, in the first instance, their voluntary submission to the process, which has been going on for a couple of years now, is an important indication of their willingness to be more transparent in the publication of the actual revenue side.

It is also important to note that it does not address the budget side. What happens to those revenues, once they come into the government treasury or the government coffers, is not addressed by EITI.

I have met with the folks in the State Department who are charged with monitoring EITI, and they have noted to me that as a candidate country, Congo has nearly 2 years to complete the process. So there is a deadline out in early 2010 by which this must be completed or they will no longer be a candidate.

I am hopeful that when I get there, if confirmed, that I will be able to push this along. I noted earlier that I think that this issue of accountability is going to cut across everything I do in Congo, accountability on the oil revenue side in the first place, but also accountability on the expenditure side, as well.

I would note that at my present post, the Malawians were fortunate enough to be able to qualify for Millennium Challenge threshold funding, and one of my major jobs in Malawi has been overseeing a program that did a great deal to improve their ability to monitor their revenues and expenditures within the government side in the interest of transparency and in the interest of accountability on the government side. We do not have that kind of resources available for Congo, but I hope to use our diplomatic tools to be able to push that forward.

It seems to me that accountability is an issue that gets in the way of just about everything that you want to do that is right in Congo and the EITI is one part of the piece.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Eastham.

Mr. Swan, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, Djibouti is a small country in a rough neighborhood. If confirmed, how do you envision your role in the wider region? How do you intend to coordinate with other ambassadors and actors in the region to work toward peace and stability?

Mr. SWAN. Thank you, Senator.

Yes, indeed, Djibouti's role historically on the Horn of Africa has been as this small place of stability in what you aptly term a rough neighborhood, to the north, Eritrea; to the west, Ethiopia; to the south, Somalia and Somaliland. And just 18 miles across the Gulf of Aden is Yemen. So it has in many ways defined its national mission as being that pocket of stability in the turbulent neighborhood.

And Djibouti has played a helpful role in terms of seeking to promote stability in the region in the past. It is the headquarters of the international organization for drought and development in the Horn of Africa. It is a member country of the League of Arab States. It recently played host to an important piece, negotiation, between the transitional federal government in Somalia and the opposition alliance for the reliberation of Somalia, and while not directly involved in the talks, which were led by the U.N., the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, nonetheless, Djibouti played an important role as a neutral venue for these discussions to take place.

In terms of coordination with other missions in the region, if confirmed, Senator, I would obviously maintain regular contact, frequent contact with the other chiefs of mission on the Horn of Africa and in Yemen through sort of day-to-day e-mails, telephone calls, and other efforts to stay in constant contact.

Second, there are some institutional means already in place in terms of ensuring regular contact. Under the rubric of our counterterrorism efforts, there are twice yearly meetings of the East Africa Regional Security Initiative, with a particular focus on counterterrorism. At the annual chiefs of mission conference, there is typically a session devoted explicitly to Horn of Africa issues as a means of institutionalizing this coordination. And then clearly, sir, I would, of course, have to take reference regularly from the State Department in Washington and the interagency here in Washington in terms of the overall direction of our policy with respect to the Horn of Africa.

Senator FEINGOLD. As you mentioned in your testimony, Djibouti and Eritrea have been engaged in border skirmishes over recent months at the mouth of the Red Sea. What progress has been made to mitigate these tensions, and what role could the United States play in resolving this kind of border dispute?

Mr. SWAN. Certainly, sir. The dispute really arose as a consequence of an Eritrean incursion across the border into Djibouti. It is a remote area in the north of Djibouti, the south of Eritrea with no physical demarcation of the boundary, but with an agreement that the ridge line between the two countries constituted the border. And Eritrean forces moved across that ridge line in April and took up positions. There was, indeed, exchange of fire between the two sides, most recently in June, but there has not been further exchange of fire between the two sides since June.

In response to this situation, the United States played really a leading role in terms of bringing this matter to the attention of the U.N. Security Council, which issued a very strong presidential statement, and then followed up with a determination to send an official of the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping—I am sorry—of Political Affairs to meet with the two sides and seek a way forward in terms of resolving this peacefully.

I think the challenge, sir, is going to be, once again, obtaining Eritrean support for a solution. The Eritreans rejected earlier initiatives by the League of Arab States, by the African Union, and by some bilateral partners to try to achieve a negotiated settlement. I think, unfortunately, this is an example once again of Eritrea playing an unhelpful role as a spoiler in the region. If confirmed, however, I would obviously continue to support international efforts to resolve this peacefully and return to the status quo ante on the border.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Swan.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One, as a hometown boy, I have to say this to all of you. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta, GA and they have a significant number of people on the ground in Africa and have had, even before PEPFAR, working on the African AIDS problem. I know you will be in Addis Ababa, Mr. Simon. They have a significant group there,

as well as probably in each of the other countries, or near them. So any support you can give Dr. Gerberding and always look out for the CDC people, I would appreciate.

My one question remaining. It really is for Mr. Simon. I appreciated the fact that you remarked on the progress of the African Union, but also the significant challenges, particularly Zimbabwe, Somalia, and the Sudan.

And in particular, I have grave concerns over the Darfur issue. I know the African Union is managing or has been selected to be the group to try and go in there and end the killing, but I also know there has been a short supply of things like helicopters and other equipment that are absolutely necessary. I know some of our other world powers are not as interested in Darfur becoming a safe, civilized place again, but I am and I think every Member of this United States Senate is.

As the representative to the African Union, it would seem to me that Darfur would have to be mission one or certainly on the priority list, so I would appreciate your discussing what you know about the situation as far as the African Union and Darfur and what progress they are making, and also if you will be a source for us to know what we need to do as a country to help facilitate that becoming a reality rather than just a hope.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Senator.

Darfur is clearly going to be a priority not only of this mission, the United States mission to the African Union, but is a priority obviously of Congress and of the President.

The African Union has had troops on the ground in Darfur since 2004. They went in early. They are the core of the 11,000 U.N. personnel there under UNAMID, and 10,000 of those personnel come from the African Union. And they are in harm's way and recently they have been taking casualties. So the African Union has played a very important and very constructive role in Darfur in terms of trying to create an environment for peace and security.

The African Union has said—and we believe as well—that there needs to be a strong U.N. presence to supplement what they are doing, and that is why we argued strongly for a dual-hatting of the mission in Darfur with U.N. support, as well as AU support.

Also, the size of the force needs to be more than the 11,000 that exist today, as high as 26,000. And critical to getting the forces up to that level is both increasing the number of troop-contributing countries and the Government in Khartoum allowing countries that are non-Africans to provide troops to the forces that exist there on the ground. There has been some progress on that latter point recently. Khartoum has allowed Nepalese and Thai troops to join the UNAMID forces in Darfur.

And then the other major challenge that the African Union faces is having its troops, as you mentioned, Senator, brought up to the standards of the U.N. and of the U.N. peacekeeping mission. In that regard, the United States has spent $450 million, increasing the capacity and the equipment of the African Union forces in Darfur that are part of UNAMID.

If confirmed as ambassador, I will continue to work to ensure that the African Union forces get the resources they need to meet the standards of the United Nations and of UNAMID and work to

increase pressure within the African Union for the Government in Khartoum to allow more troop-contributing countries that are non-African to add the necessary forces to reach the 26,000 number that was approved by the United Nations.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I think that is important. I cannot remember his name. I think it was the White House liaison to Darfur. He testified before our Foreign Relations Committee and talked about—Williamson, yes—they still have problems with security for the convoys of humanitarian aid going into Darfur. If they cannot even protect those convoys going in, then it seems to me that any hope of that bringing us some resolution is unlikely. Anything we can do to help be a constructive player in supporting getting to the 26,000 and encouraging anybody in the U.N. that is maybe reluctant to do so, I would appreciate your information on what we can do as the United States Senate to raise the visibility of that issue here.

Mr. SIMON. As you asked, Senator, if confirmed, I will be conveying information to you on where the challenges stand in reaching that 26,000 number.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Simon, in addition to Darfur, you mentioned in your testimony, or we did, problems with Zimbabwe and President Mugabe. Now, at least the press accounts following the African Union meeting were that President Mugabe got a free ride out of the situation. In other words, he defied the other people sitting around the table of the African Union on the basis perhaps that some of you gentlemen got to where you are likewise through either strengthened methods that were not necessarily democratic and who are you to be criticizing me on that basis—and sort of stood them down.

Not only that, but there are inferences in the press that the United Nations, in terms of its activity, was somewhat stymied by the fact that some leaders in Russia and China also were reticent to get involved in discussions of democracy and the purity of the election methods in Zimbabwe and did not necessarily give a free pass, providing some criticism perhaps, but nothing stronger than that.

I raise that because that was then. This is now. On the front pages of national papers today, you see four people seated, including the two major candidates for the presidency, and apparently they are visiting about life and the times and the future.

Can you give us some idea of what progress the African Union may have brought about in this, or is this entirely an internal negotiation within Zimbabwe without reference to the neighbors?

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Senator.

The situation in Zimbabwe, obviously, is very dynamic and changing very quickly.

Where we stand today is there has been an MOU signed between the ZANU–PF and the Movement for Democratic Change, the opposition, although by rights perhaps it should not be the opposition. That MOU is basically a process for starting negotiations. It is

really not much more than that. It does include an expanded role for the African Union as part of an expanded mediation group, and from our perspective, that is a positive development. However, there are a lot of open questions about how this MOU and this process will go forward.

From our perspective, our focus is on the outcome, and the outcome must be a Zimbabwe Government that is representative of the will of the people of Zimbabwe that will stop the intimidation and the killing and the long suffering of the people of Zimbabwe and lay the foundation for the prosperity that that country so rich in human and natural resources should be able to enjoy. That is the outcome that we as a government are focused on. And if confirmed as an ambassador, that is the outcome that I will try and focus the African Union on.

The African Union has within its charter embedded the principles of democratic governance and, like I said, the principle of nonindifference, and it is by stressing those principles that we need to focus the African Union on achieving an outcome that truly represents the will of the Zimbabwean people.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I appreciate that last comment that there is some progress—the African Union is there and there is this pledge to work toward democratic solutions—to recognize that is important. I suppose some could say in the past, prior to the African Union's intervention in all these affairs, that this was the way the world works. The Zimbabwe election and various others might have gone without further ado.

But the promise of the African Union is I think what you have stated. There is at least a principle there that hopefully nations are struggling to fulfill, and our role in that and your role as ambassador from the United States can be a very important one in trying to refine this, give support to it. So we wish you well on that mission because your work is cut out for you there.

Mr. SIMON. Senator, I would note that there are many voices within the African Union that have been very public about their condemnation of the current situation in Zimbabwe, including the Pan-African Parliament, which is an organ of the African Union, including the observer mission that the African Union went to observe the runoff which commented that the standards of the runoff did not meet the standards of the African Union, and including, of course, several African leaders who have been very vocal about their concern about the situation in Zimbabwe. I think, if confirmed as ambassador, my role will be to try and encourage those voices to be the voices that are heard and to ultimately be the voices upon which action is taken.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you for recognizing those voices, and really credit should be paid to those persons who were with the observers and others who assisted them. Thank you.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

We will begin a third round.

This is for Mr. Swan again. According to the State Department's country reports on human rights practices for 2007, women in Djibouti face specific challenges, including domestic violence, prostitution, and female genital mutilation. What measures, if any, have been taken by the Djiboutian Government to combat these

problems and protect women's rights? If you are confirmed, how will you draw attention and U.S. resources to this area?

Mr. SWAN. Senator, for a variety of cultural and historical reasons, the status of women has been low in Djibouti, historically. I think we have seen some movement on this front in recent years, however, including in terms of their political participation. There are seven women in the 65-seat parliament, for example. There are two women in the cabinet. The President of the Supreme Court is a woman. So I think we are beginning to see more positive movement at this point in terms of the role of women.

You drew attention to a very important continued challenge, Senator, and that is female genital mutilation, which regrettably is practiced on an estimated 98 percent of the female population, including frequently some of the most severe forms, the so-called infibulation.

The Djiboutian Government has adopted legislation that, indeed, outlaws that practice. That legislation is on the books, although my understanding is that, as yet, there have not been any convictions in regard to that. But I think it is testimony to the increased awareness on the part of Djiboutian authorities of these challenges and of the need to respond.

If confirmed, Senator, this would certainly be an important priority as well for me and for the team at the embassy in terms of continuing efforts to raise awareness of these issues and to seek change and government follow-up in terms of taking action.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you for that answer, Mr. Swan.

Mr. Simon, if you are confirmed, this would be your first diplomatic post in Africa as well as at a multilateral institution. What do you think qualifies you for this posting, and how will you apply your previous experiences to the challenges of the African Union?

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Senator.

It is a question that I have asked myself many times when the suggestion first arose that I be nominated to this position.

For the last 6 years, I have worked on development and international issues and have worked in multilateral fora, whether that is involvement in the G–8 conferences, the G–8 summits, both Gleneagles and the Sea Island Summit that we had here in the great State of Georgia, whether it was working with the U.N. finance for development process, or whether it has been working with the international financial institutions here in Washington.

As part of those efforts, I have been heavily focused on development in Africa. That was the focus of our work in Scotland for the Gleneagles Summit. That has been the focus of much of the President's development agenda over the past 6 years. And as part of that work, I have worked closely, whether it was at the United States Agency for International Development, whether it was at the National Security Council, or whether it was in my current position at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation with the other agencies involved in development in the United States Government.

Almost all of the initiatives that I referenced in my testimony are multiagency initiatives that involved several different parts of the U.S. Government working together to accomplish a positive result. And I think the result that we have achieved on the African con-

tinent, through things like the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief or the President's Malaria Initiative or the Millennium Challenge Account, really indicates how that type of work can credit both the United States and the Americans who are helping to fund it and help the Africans themselves and help the Africans realize the opportunity that the current era presents for them.

If confirmed at the African Union, I would see a major focus of my efforts being to marshal all of the resources that the United States Government has and has committed to the continent together to help build the capacity of the African Union and help it truly achieve its goals which are very closely aligned to our goals for the continent of Africa.

Senator FEINGOLD. I am pleased to hear about the range of Africa issues you have worked on over the last 6 years, but I do have to note a lack of specific peacekeeping or security-related experience, both of which are a priority for the African Union right now. Please describe the tools and the expertise you would bring to the table when you are working on these kinds of issues.

Mr. SIMON. As Senior Director for Relief Stabilization and Development, the Director for Stabilization reported to me. So the Director for Stabilization on the National Security Council was the official of the National Security Council in charge of peacekeeping issues and basically everything that he did was something that I was apprised of and kept in the loop.

Now, I happen to have an excellent Director for Stabilization, Clint Williamson, who is now the U.S. Ambassador for War Crimes. And so I can honestly say that my involvement in that was less than maybe some of these other issues because he was so good. But I was involved in all of the initiatives in that area that we engaged in, including the Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative, including the SCRS, the conflict and reconstruction coordinator's position that was created at the State Department, and including the creation of a civilian reserve.

Part of what we recognized in putting the Director for Stabilization or part of what Steve Hadley, the National Security Adviser, recognized in putting the Director for Stabilization in the Relief Stabilization and Development Directorate instead of in the Defense Directorate was that ultimately stabilization is not purely a military matter. Ultimately it is a matter that must involve the military working together with the civilian agencies to create an environment for economic growth and prosperity to basically win the confidence of the people that putting down their weapons and picking up their plowshares and picking up their computers and picking up the other elements of economic growth can ultimately lead to a better result for them and their families than continued conflict and continued trying to play the zero sum game of getting more of what other people have.

So like I say, peacekeeping was always something that was part of what I did at the National Security Council even though my personal focus was largely on many of the economic issues.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

And finally, Mr. Simon, in the realm of counterterrorism, what are the African Union's chief concerns, and to what extent do the United States and the AU engage in counterterrorism cooperation?

Mr. SIMON. The AU has a small counterterrorism cell in Algiers and it is only now being built up. The capacity there clearly could be enhanced, and if confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to the African Union, that is certainly an issue that I would take on.

However, the United States itself has several counterterrorism initiatives throughout the continent, including the counterterrorism program, including the East African security program that Mr. Swan mentioned. And part of the role that the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union should play, and if confirmed, part of the role that I would play, would be to connect the AU to these other initiatives so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. And that would be a major role that I would look to play, and frankly, I would hope that the AU itself would look to find ways that it could increase its capacity by working with the other initiatives that exist on the continent.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, sir.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman, I do not have any more questions. I just want to end by thanking the families of these four gentlemen for all the support they give to them to allow them to do a very important job for a great country. Thank you for what you do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join my colleague, Senator Isakson, in thanking not only the nominees for your service but the families, and their presence today is very meaningful I think to all of us. But I appreciate your responses and we look forward to supporting each one of you.

Senator FEINGOLD. I thank my colleagues especially, but I thank all the nominees for your patience. It was a longer hearing, but I think it is a good sign. It is a sign of great interest in these matters and great hope that, should you be confirmed, things go well for you and for our country as you represent us. Thank you very much. And we will do what we can, as we are doing today, to try to expedite these nominations.

That concludes the hearing.

[Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF JOHN SIMON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What, in your view, are the most pressing human rights issues in facing the African Union (AU)? What are the steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy among members of the AU and within the body as an institution? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The African Union faces a wide array of human rights challenges, including advancing peace and security and protecting basic human rights in Darfur, Somalia, Eastern Congo, and other parts of Africa where there is insecurity and instability. The AU also faces the daunting challenge of fighting poverty and disease while creating economic opportunities, which will help Africa's poorest develop the educated and middle class constituencies that are the strongest local advocates of human rights.

These challenges require institution and capacity building at the AU and education and support for dialog between government and opposition as well as greater participation by civil society groups.

If confirmed, I will devote my energy and focus to work with the commissioners of the African Union and the member states to better understand their needs and how the United States, in partnership with international institutions and other interested parties, can mobilize the resources and expertise necessary to help the AU take a leadership role on the continent in addressing these issues.

In this context, it is clear that as a strong partner of the African Union, we can and must work together to promote peace and security, a fundamental priority if we are to advance human rights and democracy on the continent. The AU and the United States stand together in support of the AMISOM troops in Somalia and the need for a greater international response to stabilize the conflict there and advance reconciliation. We are in strong partnership in support of forces in Darfur. Further, we are working together to promote political reconciliation and respect for human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe. If confirmed, I will work to maintain and strengthen cooperation with the AU in these critical areas.

To further promote human rights and democracy within the AU, the USAU must also expand its engagement with the Commission for Political Affairs, the Commission for Social Affairs, and the Division for Women and Gender, among others. If confirmed, I will work through the AU permanent representatives to express the United States interest in the signature and ratification of the Charter on Democracy, Governance, and Elections and support United States Government efforts to request observer status to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). As an observer, the United States will be able to both highlight issues of concern with and express support for the ACHPR in the African Union's plenary sessions.

Through a very coordinated and cooperative relationship with the AU, member states, and donors, I believe we can accomplish greater dialog among diverse groups, between government and opposition, civil society and bureaucrats, and transparency, which will allow all people to be a part of process that creates more open, free, and democratic states. We must work with the AU to ensure the continent's people have the opportunities for democracy and human rights promised in the AU charter. If confirmed, I will work to see that opportunities are created, but more importantly, support the ability of African States to advance human rights and democracy.

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

Answer. The obstacles include the persistence of conflicts that plague parts of Africa from Somalia to Sudan to Cote d'Ivoire, the resistance of a minority of leaders in Africa, like Mugabe in Zimbabwe and Bashir in Sudan, and inaction of the international community to some of the pressing stabilization needs on the continent. Some leaders have argued, as President Isaias in Eritrea, that you cannot have democracy without economic advancement. I submit that we can have both and must do both. Democracy feeds the soul while economic advancement meets the needs of the people. The success of Liberia, Burundi, and other countries underscore that we can resolve conflict in the current environment in Africa. Mauritius' political maturity underscores that people can have a voice in the affairs of their government.

Our challenge is to build on these successes. This requires building political will within the AU for just and sustainable settlements of current conflicts, capacity within the AU to implement such settlements, and international support to provide the necessary assistance to the AU. It will not be easy, but if confirmed, I will work with our partners in Africa, and those interested in Africa, to forge the commitment required to make a difference.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. As an official at the United States Agency for International Development and the National Security Council, I helped design the selection criteria for the Millennium Challenge Account, which emphasized the importance of democracy and political and human rights in its "ruling justly" category. These criteria have proven a powerful incentive for democracy and good governance in Africa, as documented in academic statistical studies and by particular cases. For instance, in 2006, the prospect of an MCC Compact helped ensure free and fair election in the Republic of Benin.

As Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization, and Development at the National Security Council in 2005, I helped secure funding and support for the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative, a Presidential initiative launched prior to the G–8 Summit at Gleneagles that works with African partners to strengthen the capacity of local justice systems to protect women from sexual violence and abuse and punish perpetrators, as well as provide victims access to shelter, counseling, and healthcare. The initiative is now active in four countries—Benin, Kenya, South Africa, and Zambia.

More generally, over the past 6 years, I have been integral to a series of development initiatives, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the African Financial Sector Initiative, and post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia. By increasing the health and welfare of Africa's people and the opportunities for employment and economic growth, these efforts reinforce the positive trends occurring on the continent in the realm of democracy and human rights.

If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize democracy and human rights as a fundamental pillar of United States engagement with African Governments, leaders, and people. I will also encourage investment to create economic opportunity to provide jobs that are sustainable and enable people to invest in their own futures. Addressing economic development is a critical component in promoting human rights and democracy.

Question. Peacekeeping is one of the foremost functions of the AU at this time. What are the key limiting factors on the effectiveness of AU peacekeeping operations? What are the strengths of previous or ongoing operations? If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to enhance these capabilities?

Answer. The African Union has taken the lead role in several critical peacekeeping missions across the continent despite suffering from a number of deficiencies in this area. The United States, through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, has helped equip and train AU peacekeeping troops with great effectiveness in places like Burundi and Congo.

Yet challenges remain on sustainability, including paying and supporting troops in the field, mission planning and financial management, and attracting additional troop contributing countries to the current AU missions on the continent. More importantly, the AU needs to secure international financial and political support for the missions it currently has in the field, including the AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the AU contribution to the UN–AU mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

The AU has proven that, with sufficient donor assistance, it can respond to conflicts on the continent when the U.N. is either unwilling or unable to act. In several instances, including Burundi, Comoros, Darfur, and Somalia, the AU has led the way when the U.N. was unable to react to a crisis, whether because of its own deliberative process or because of restrictions levied by host governments. Yet the AU cannot and should not bear the full burden of long-term, complex missions on its own.

As ambassador, I will, if confirmed, build on our engagement with the AU through ACOTA to encourage the AU to work with the United States, U.N. and other key donors to enhance its capacities at the headquarters level, particularly in the areas of financial management, human resources and mission planning. I will also seek to ensure that our ongoing capacity-building efforts continue, and that we pursue new opportunities for collaboration with the AU. In particular, I will, if confirmed, work with the U.S. mission at the U.N. and U.S. ambassadors to our allies to get the AMISOM and UNAMID the international assistance they need.

Currently, the United States is supporting the Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMU) of the AU by providing funding for equipment and a logistics advisor through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). The United States is also providing peacekeeping equipment, training, and logistics support to the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The United States is supporting long term efforts to build the capacity of the African Standby Force (ASF) through the bilateral and multilateral peacekeeping training activities of ACOTA program, as well as support for subregional components of the ASF like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Standby Force (ESF).

RESPONSES OF W. STUART SYMINGTON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. While making admirable advances over the last decade in economic development and making significant progress in the adjudication of an enormous backlog of genocide cases, Rwanda continues to face challenges regarding reconciliation, human rights, and democratization as it continues its efforts to rebuild a society torn asunder by ethnic hatred, war, and genocide. The 2007 Human Rights Report cites the Government of Rwanda's demonstrable efforts to address human rights, however significant human rights abuses occurred. Principal human rights problems include restrictions on citizens' right to change their government peacefully and freely; the security forces' use of extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary arrest and detention; lack of judicial independence; harsh prison and detention center conditions; prolonged pretrial detention; limits on freedom of expression and association; limits on freedom of press; and limits on civil society.

If confirmed, I will engage at every level in Rwanda to help them strengthen democratic institutions and to advance transparency and respect for human rights. Leading up to the September Parliamentary elections and 2011 Presidential elections, I will support efforts by Rwandans to improve platform development and increase the channels of communication open to all parties. Our key goals are to work together to open political space, increase civil liberties, and to strengthen the judiciary. The newly approved $24.73 MCC Threshold Country Plan will also be a key area for engagement. It will supplement other United States Government programs to address problems in the justice sector by seeking to strengthen democratic governance, build the capacity of civil society organizations, and advancing press freedom.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues that you have identified as most pressing?

Answer. Improving respect for human rights in Rwanda is an essential part of reconciliation and a key element needed for Rwandans to succeed in efforts to unite as a people and make progress for the future. Passions generated by the decades of misrule by previous governments have not disappeared; overcoming this difficult legacy of mistrust and violence is the work of generations. Rwanda's main obstacle in this period of reconciliation is to address the issues of governance and ensure that justice is not perceived as one-sided. Dealing with the sheer magnitude of the issues the country faces causes people to look at human rights through the prism of recent and awful ethnic division. It is essential in the pursuit of human rights in Rwanda, and in its pursuit for unity and prosperity, that the country be seen by its own people to provide equal justice under law applicable to all.

Question. In response to a question before your confirmation as Ambassador to Djibouti, you described how you have worked to advance human rights in the Sahel and Latin America. How has your experience as chief of mission further shaped your perspective on this issue? Specifically, how were you able to elevate the importance of human rights issues in the United States relationship with the Djiboutian Government and to engage with civil society and other groups to promote increased respect for human rights?

Answer. While I was Ambassador to Djibouti, embassy staff and I regularly engaged the Government of Djibouti, NGOs, and the private sector on human rights issues—through both public and private efforts. The embassy organized and hosted events to improve women's participation in and understanding of the political process. We brought members of the opposition party together with members of the ruling coalition party to address improvements in the electoral process. We engaged with police prosecutors and others on trafficking in persons, supporting Djibouti's successful efforts to draft and enact new antitrafficking laws.

As chief of mission in Djibouti, I have seen that significant and lasting improvement in human rights is tied to working in partnership at all levels with host government officials, private sector leaders, and civil society. This is needed to ensure that all progress in the promotion of human rights is effective and sustainable.

Question. Rwanda held its first local elections in over 30 years in March 2001 and Presidential and Parliamentary elections in 2003. What is your assessment of the state of democracy in Rwanda? Do you consider Rwanda to be tolerant of dissent

and democratic? Please describe the state of freedom of the press in Rwanda. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you see your role to help foster such freedoms?

Answer. The people and the Government of Rwanda have made democratic advances since the 1994 genocide, though Rwanda has much work to do before it can achieve democracy. Over the last decade, they have made notable progress, including a constitution which prohibits discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or creed; laws in place which prohibit torture; a decrease in the prison population; and the application of criminal penalties for corruption. Rwanda has advanced reconciliation and made progress meting out justice. While it has accomplished much, it continues to face enormous challenges. It continues to encounter obstacles in finding the right balance between the need to maintain internal stability and the requirement to instill fundamental democratic values including respect for a free and independent press. While the constitution provides for freedom of the press, press freedom in Rwanda remains limited, due in part to the active role of domestic media organs in the genocide and the resulting mistrust of the media by the government.

If confirmed, I hope to help the Rwandan's achieve progress toward a democratic system that they see as representative of and responsive to the wishes and hopes of all Rwandans. I think that continued progress toward this goal is both right and essential to underpin progress on the economic front. It will permit Rwandans to unite to achieve a shared vision for a more stable and prosperous future.

Question. The United States has played an important role in helping to create the possibility of greater peace and stability in the region through the Tripartite Plus process. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to build on this progress?

Answer. Significant progress has been made since the Tripartite Plus' inception. To highlight the priority for peace in the Great Lakes, Secretary Rice chaired the Tripartite Plus Heads of State meeting in Addis in 2007. Inside of this mechanism, member countries agreed to continue military and political pressure on the FDLR, the former Rwandan genocidaire rebel group now based in DRC, and to ensure that the FDLR fulfills its commitment to disarm and repatriate to Rwanda. Tripartite members also agreed to advance diplomatic relations and establish mechanisms for safe and voluntary refugee return. In concert with the international community and UNHCR, these initiatives are taking shape.

If confirmed as ambassador to Rwanda, I will encourage and facilitate Rwanda's full participation in the Tripartite. This facilitation will include diplomacy in Kigali with European Union, United Kingdom, French, Belgian, and MONUC representatives for implementation of international sanctions imposed on the FDLR and participation in the Joint Monitoring Group, established as the monitoring mechanism for the Nairobi Communique between the Government of Rwanda and the Government of the DRC. Such tangible acts and confidence-building mechanisms will keep Tripartite members, especially Rwanda, engaged in building peace through their own initiatives with the support of the international community.

RESPONSES OF JOHN SIMON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. What is your assessment of the performance of African Union peacekeeping missions including in Sudan and Somalia? What are the principal challenges the African Union faces in this regard?

Answer. African Union troops are performing with commitment to duty and dedicated service, particularly in Sudan and Somalia. There, troops are facing extraordinary challenges. In Somalia, over 2,500 troops from Uganda and Burundi serve under harsh conditions. Troop levels remain far below what is necessary to maintain peace in this volatile region. Financing, logistical support for supplies and equipment, and force protection issues pose the greatest challenges to AMISOM's objectives. The lack of troops, armored vehicles, and air assets makes it impossible for the AMISOM force to patrol and secure Mogadishu as well as monitor and secure areas outside Mogadishu, particularly in the highly dangerous lower Juba region where extremists, such as al-Shabaab operate. A political solution is key to enhancing stability. The recent Djibouti peace accord offers renewed hope for a framework to promote peace. The negative influence of Eritrea as well as threat from extremism from outside Somalia complicate the challenges facing the African Union in stabilizing Somalia.

In Sudan, the killing of seven UNAMID peacekeepers, including five from Rwanda, underscores the deadly situation the troops operate under. Challenges include the need for a political solution to resolve the instability, including the Sudanese Government engagement of the south in implementing the Comprehensive Peace

Agreement. The slow rate of deployment of additional forces and the lack of air and heavy transport assets makes it difficult to monitor the region and support UNAMID operations.

Question. What steps should the United States take to help the African Union build its capacity and resource base to carry out PKO missions?

Answer. The United States, as an observer mission, can play a crucial role mediating and facilitating coordination and cooperation among the donor community in providing resources to help the African Union build capacity and secure resources for its operations. The United States provides limited funding to the African Union, but this can be targeted at critical gaps and supplemented through the help of other donors for projects and programs of importance to the African Union. This includes enhancing its capacities at the headquarters level, particularly in the areas of financial management, human resources, and mission planning.

Currently, the United States is supporting the Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMU) of the African Union with funding for equipment and an "in-kind" logistics advisor through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). The United States also is providing peacekeeping equipment, training, and logistics support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In addition, we are helping long-term efforts to build the capacity of the African Standby Force (ASF) through the bilateral and multilateral peacekeeping training activities of ACOTA program. We also support subregional components of the ASF like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Standby Force (ESF).

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that our ongoing capacity-building efforts continue, and that we pursue new opportunities for collaboration with the African Union. In particular, I will, if confirmed, work with the United States mission at the U.N. and United States ambassadors to our allies to get the AMISOM and UNAMID missions the international assistance they need.

Question. What role should other donors play to help the African Union build its capacity and resources base to carry to carry out PKO missions?

Answer. The needs of the African Union in the peacekeeping arena cannot be met by one donor alone. The international community must work together to increase the planning, logistics, financial management, and training capabilities of the African Union. In addition, the African Union peacekeeping troops in the field need equipment, supplies, financial support for troop payments, and additional forces. In the case of the two African Union missions currently in the field, AMISOM and UNAMID, a more robust international response is necessary to reach the troop levels and capability required to stabilize those conflicts and promote reconciliation.

If confirmed, I will endeavor to create closer coordination among the donor community and work with the African Union to focus limited funding on key issues that will help advance cooperation as well as streamline operations.

Question. What is your assessment of the African Union's capacity to use effectively and account for donor funds provided to assist it in building its capacity and resource base to carry out PKO missions?

Answer. The African Union has limited financial management capacity, in general, and this applies to its peacekeeping operations as well. In addition, the African Union is still developing capabilities to coordinate among member states on equipment, resources, and information. It requires further expertise to establish competent fusion cells and centers to handle peacekeeping missions. These shortcomings explain deficiencies in recruiting, training, equipping, paying, and dispatching troops.

The new African Union chairman, Jean Ping, was elected on a platform of management reform and is working to strengthen these systems. If confirmed, I will work with the chairman and commission to assist them in making as much progress in the area of financial management and accountability as possible.

Question. What is the cost of moving the nominee to Djibouti? Will he be accompanied or unaccompanied?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be residing and working in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the seat of the African Union and the United States mission to the African Union. To date, no decision has been made as to whether my family will accompany me, if confirmed. If I travel to Addis alone, the Department estimates the total cost will be approximately $241,000. If I am accompanied by my wife and four children, the Department estimates the total cost will be approximately $321,000. These cost estimates include round-trip airfare costs, round-trip transportation costs for household effects, unaccompanied air freight, a personally-owned vehicle, and operating expenses in Addis.

Question. Please describe the circumstances of the outgoing Ambassador Cindy Courville's departure from the post?

Answer. It is my understanding that Ms. Courville resigned her appointment as the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union.

Question. Why was our ambassador to Ethiopia not selected to maintain U.S. representation at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa for the short term instead of selecting a new ambassador for the vacant post?

Answer. The establishment of the United States mission to the African Union was an important step in furthering our engagement in Africa. Its opening was received warmly across the continent and the European Union has followed our example and established a mission to the African Union. Reverting to covering the post part-time during this period of significant activity at the African Union on a number of fronts—peacekeeping in Sudan and Somalia, political crisis in Zimbabwe, greater vitality in health and development issues, initiation of management reforms—would undermine our success and decrease our opportunity to influence and assist the African Union just when it is looking to the United States for leadership and support.

Moreover, while Ambassador Yamamoto is currently maintaining diplomatic relations with the African Union, the significant workload of handling United States affairs with Ethiopia, including a large assistance program and meeting the difficult drought problems plaguing Ethiopia, limit the time he can spend on African Union issues. Therefore, the administration believes selecting a full-time ambassador to the African Union is necessary to reinforce our commitment to support the African Union and the region as a whole.

RESPONSES OF JAMES SWAN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

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

Answer. As we have catalogued in our annual Human Rights Report, despite recent improvements, Djibouti's human rights record remains poor. Problems include arbitrary arrest and detention, harsh prison conditions, executive branch influence on the judiciary, corruption, interference with privacy rights, and restrictions on freedom of the press, assembly, and association. Accordingly, human rights are part of our regular diplomatic dialog with the Djiboutian Government, including the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labor, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Embassy staff also meets regularly with individuals and groups affected by these problems, as well as minority political parties to gain a better understanding of obstacles they are facing as the decentralization process moves forward.

If confirmed, I will ensure that human rights and democracy remain a fundamental focus of all embassy activities. I will work closely with the Government of Djibouti at every level to ensure that government officials understand the importance of the promotion of human rights and democratization, and that they remain committed to improving the country's human rights record. I will encourage an acceleration of progress on these issues, and in addition to working with government officials, will make engagement with civil society, media, and other advocacy groups a priority.

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

Answer. The challenges and obstacles in advancing human rights and democracy in Djibouti are significant. Djibouti faces high unemployment, has a high degree of illiteracy, and is located in an unstable region. Opposition parties are still in the development stages, and still trying to find their voice in Djibouti. They face financial and organizational obstacles, and often get caught up in internal disputes. Few nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are present in Djibouti working on democratization and human rights issues.

Although President Guelleh ran unopposed amid an opposition boycott in Presidential elections in April 2005, international observers considered the election generally free and fair. In March 2006, Djibouti held its first-ever municipal elections, in which several new independent opposition parties successfully participated. Although the President's party won an overwhelming majority of seats, these opposi-

tion parties won several seats, including 12 in the capital. Legislative elections in February 2008 returned the ruling coalition, Union for a Presidential Majority (UMP), to all 65 seats in Djibouti's unicameral legislature. However, despite a boycott call from a rival coalition, voter turnout was over 72 percent, and international election observers did not report any irregularities. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Djiboutian Government to encourage an independent judiciary, the expansion of the political space, and respect for human rights.

Question. If confirmed in your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of the U.S. Embassy's activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. Human rights issues touch on every element of an embassy's work, and as such, if confirmed, I will ensure that the promotion of human rights is an integral component of each officer's portfolio. I will stress to all embassy employees that the promotion of human rights values should not only be a part of their formal work with the embassy, but also a part of their daily lives as they interact with Djiboutians at all levels. If confirmed, I will ensure that our human rights goals are formally recognized within the embassy, and that those members of the embassy team who best work to further these objectives are also formally recognized—both with award nominations and in their annual evaluations.

Question. What are the most significant actions you have taken in your career to promote human rights and democracy? Why were they important? What was the impact of your actions?

Answer. In my Foreign Service career, all of my assignments have been to countries where human rights issues were at the top of the agenda. I have personally drafted eight Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, and took pains to ensure that these reports were as thorough and accurate as possible. I believe that the promotion of human rights and democracy is integral to all U.S. policy objectives, and if confirmed, I will continue to prioritize effective promotion of our human rights and democracy goals.

In my current position as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, I have ensured that human rights concerns are high on our agenda in some of the most challenging political and security environments on the continent, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other Great Lakes states, and Somalia and other countries in the Horn of Africa. I have personally pressed host-country officials throughout central Africa and the Horn to address human rights problems.

While serving as deputy chief of mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, I ensured that human rights issues received high-level attention and coverage, including by increasing reporting from the rebel-held areas of eastern Congo. I focused attention on the grave challenges of sexual and gender-based violence, an area in which the embassy and USAID conducted a number of programs both to heighten awareness and to respond to the needs of victims. I also pressed to ensure inclusion of civil society and human rights groups as part of the Inter-Congolese Dialog that led to the transition government after the rebellion ended in 2003. As a sign of the high value I placed on human rights, I nominated our principal human rights reporting officer for the Department of State's worldwide human rights award, which she won in 2003.

While deputy chief of mission in the Republic of Congo, I drew human rights abuses to the attention of the Congolese Government during the 1998–1999 civil war and oversaw grants to NGOs focused on promotion of human rights. These included programs to address the needs of the marginalized pygmy population.

As chief of the political section in our embassy in Cameroon in 1992–1994, I organized election observers for the first ever multiparty, Presidential elections, oversaw grant programs to support human rights organizations, helped to train several human rights groups on international standards and investigative methods, and conducted extensive public outreach on governance and human rights. In Nicaragua, as the embassy labor and human rights officer, I worked with USAID and mission implementing partners to support independent trade unions and human rights groups in the aftermath of the National Opposition Union victory over the Sandinistas in 1990.

Question. Djibouti reportedly has one of the most serious corruption problems in the region. What is your assessment of the causes of corruption in Djibouti? What additional measures, in your view, might be needed to deal with corruption?

Answer. Djiboutian law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and the Government of Djibouti has increased its efforts to implement such laws and combat

corruption. However, the government has not yet been able to implement these laws effectively, and corruption remains a serious problem.

Djibouti's extreme poverty and popular frustration over unemployment, inadequate public services, and obstacles to political participation all contribute to corruption. However, Djibouti has recognized the opportunities provided by globalization, and in seeking to capitalize on its location and deep-water port, the government has privatized the port and facilitated significant private and international investment. This privatization has helped to reduce corruption. As investment grows and Djibouti's port capacity and need for commercial efficiency increase, the government incentive for reducing corruption will also increase. Additionally, USAID assistance programs in Djibouti for improving governance seek to promote a more transparent and efficient government at the national, regional, and local levels; advance Djibouti's decentralization; promote government accountability; and strengthen civil society. The fiscal year 2009 budget request includes $500,000 for democracy and governance programs, including an anticorruption component.

Question. If confirmed as ambassador, how would you seek to balance the growing U.S. military presence and security interests in the country with other U.S. priorities?

Answer. Camp Lemonier, our base in Djibouti and the only United States military base in sub-Saharan Africa, allows the United States Government to focus our efforts to deny safe haven, external support, and material assistance for terrorist activities in the Horn of Africa. The base is home to the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF–HOA), which is present in the region to counter the reemergence of transnational terrorism by providing security assistance in support of civil-military operations (CMO) to enhance long-term stability in the region.

Djibouti is a relatively stable country in a volatile region, and it provides a solid foundation from which to address several primary policy aims in Africa, including food security, regional stability and economic development. The Port of Djibouti is the primary conduit for United States food aid to Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Djibouti is a country with a 96 percent Sunni Muslim population that is pro-western and pro-American. As a moderate Muslim state and a member of the Arab League, Djibouti is a valuable international partner. Djibouti has the potential to play an important role in the economic and political revitalization of its neighbors, and it has played a significant role in the regional peace processes in Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Somalia.

If confirmed, I will ensure that Djibouti continues to function not only as a base for CJTF–HOA and our peace and security interests, but also as a base from which to promote democratization, human rights, economic development, and effective humanitarian response. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the partnership between CJTF–HOA and USAID; to ensure appropriate levels of United States assistance in support of democracy and governance, and health and education; and to ensure that all CJTF–HOA programming in Djibouti continues to fit within overarching United States Government priorities.

RESPONSES OF ALAN W. EASTHAM, JR. TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in the Republic of the Congo? What are the most important steps you expect to take, if confirmed, to promote human rights and democracy in the Congo? What do you hope to accomplish though these actions?

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues are the need for a credible electoral process and the prevalence of corruption. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that two goals are achieved: (1) That the country carries out free and fair presidential elections in 2009; and (2) the government makes progress in combating corruption.

Democracy in the Republic of Congo faces an important test in the presidential elections that are slated for 2009. President Sassou-Nguesso has announced his decision to delay the elections for 6 months. Having recently signed a peace agreement in 2005 with the last remaining rebel group in the country, the Congolese Government can demonstrate the progress it has made with respect to reform of the country's democratic institutions by holding free and fair elections. A failure to do so will exacerbate social and political tensions in the country, and harm our interests. If I am confirmed as ambassador, I will encourage Congolese authorities to work with the donor community to lay the groundwork for transparent elections. I will also recommend how the embassy and the State Department can best assist the Congo-

lese in these efforts, including opportunities to incorporate IFES other United States-based NGO groups in our initiatives.

The State Department Human Rights Report notes that government corruption is an infringement on human rights, recognizing that corruption deprives ordinary people of access to essential social services. Corruption also discourages foreign investment and hinders economic growth. American foreign investment can benefit from an environment that is free of the burden of government corruption. The embassy has done a great deal to highlight the concerns of corruption with its interlocutors. If confirmed, I will continue our dialog and advise Congo to implement the reforms necessary to address donor concerns about its commitment to transparency. The Republic of Congo must continue to make progress on fulfilling the validation process under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and must take steps to cooperate with the IMF and World Bank to implement substantial economic reforms and programs to encourage poverty alleviation.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues that you have identified as most pressing?

Answer. Still emerging from a post-conflict status, the Republic of Congo currently lacks the capacity to overcome its many human rights challenges. Congo must marshal its limited resources and overcome bureaucratic lethargy to train government personnel, improve government infrastructure, professionalize its security forces, and increase enforcement capacity. A professional bureaucracy and skilled security forces are necessary preconditions for maintaining internal stability and moving forward on long overdue legislative elections in the troubled southeastern Pool region.

The Congolese Government sometimes has difficulty taking the specific steps needed to fully implement planned reforms. One example of this is the government and U.N.-supported disarmament and demobilization program. The goals of the program are lofty, but the government must implement further reforms to strengthen the program's effectiveness. Similarly, while the Congolese have made some improvements on revenue transparency, additional actions, such as continuing to hire external auditors to review government records and independently assess Congo's progress, are necessary to make significant progress.

Question. In response to a question before your confirmation as Ambassador to Malawi, you described how you have worked to advance human rights in Central Africa and elsewhere. How has your experience as chief of mission further shaped your perspective on this issue?

Answer. As chief of mission in Malawi since 2005, I have been fortunate to work with a government whose intentions on human rights are generally good. On occasion, however, lack of resources has led to some cases of abuse, particularly with respect to the underpaid and poorly trained police. I attempted to bring the problem to the attention of the authorities, and, along with other like-minded colleagues, direct resources to improve the professionalism of the police. In addition, as the next election draws near, there is a tendency on the part of the Malawi Government to use government instruments and power in support of the incumbent president's reelection. I have attempted, through quiet conversations with both opposition and government, to defuse disputes and bridge differences, particularly in support of a recent mediation effort led by an ecumenical group of Malawi clergy. I have also sought out civil society and nongovernmental organizations to understand and attempt to put into action their suggestions for reducing the political temperature and therefore the possibility of politically-motivated human rights violations. My experience at chief of mission highlighted the important role a U.S. Ambassador can play in helping to transcend differences among political parties and incorporate civil society in the political process.

Question. The past several elections held in Congo were considered to be highly disorganized by opposition members and outside observers. What specific measures has the government taken to improve the electoral process? Do you view the democratic process as improving?

Answer. While the government has taken steps to consult with the opposition on the electoral process (including members of the opposition in the presidential cabinet), and while they have committed to supporting the country's electoral commission, they haven't done so. The government has the financial resources to develop a climate for free and fair elections in 2009 but has not shown the will to do so. I will be able to better characterize the status of the democratic process in the Congo when I go there, if I am confirmed.

In confirmed, I will encourage the Congolese Government to support the country's democratic institutions to ensure that the electoral process is free and fair. I will

also continue the embassy work in supporting initiatives to better inform members of the Congolese civil society on their role and responsibility in the electoral process.

Question. Congo is endowed with natural resources, including abundant rain forests, large deposits of oil, natural gas, magnesium, diamonds, and gold. To what extent are natural resources being responsibly and transparently managed? If confirmed, what role would you envision playing in helping to promote transparent, responsible, and sustainable resource management?

Answer. One of the chief concerns of the U.S. Embassy is conservation of the natural resources. I understand that the Congolese Government has expressed its commitment to transparently and responsibly manage natural resources. They are cooperating with initiatives by the Wildlife Conservation Society, Jane Goodall Institute, and Central African Regional Project on Environment (CARPE) representatives to promote sustainable resource management. In 2007, the Republic of Congo was permitted to reenter the Kimberly Process certification scheme after a 3-year suspension, which resulted from the government's inability to reconcile discrepancies between rough diamond exports and known production capacity. They have also expressed an interest in working with the embassy to prepare a comprehensive report on the life span of the Congo's resources. The report will focus on timber, iron ore, and bauxite.

If confirmed, I will continue to consider environmental resource management as a significant priority for the United States in the Republic of Congo. I will continue to encourage the Congolese Government to cooperate with NGO groups to ensure that the country's resources are managed properly. I will also encourage the Congo's compliance with all aspects of the Kimberly Process. Finally, I will work with United States and foreign companies involved in the extraction of natural resources to ensure that they consider resource management as a top priority. This will include working with our Chinese counterparts operating in the region.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2008, AFTERNOON

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

Gfoeller-Volkoff, Tatiana C., to be Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan
Olson, Richard G., Jr., to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates
Pearce, David D., to be Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Sison, Hon. Michele J., to be U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:32 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry and Coleman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. This hearing will come to order.

Thank you all very much for taking the time to be here. I think Senator Coleman is going to be here, but I thought we would just start and get going anyway.

Each of your testimonies will be submitted to the record in full as if delivered in full, and I assume you are prepared to deliver summary comments.

We want to thank each of you for your willingness to serve, for your distinguished records in various parts of the world, not all of them which are all that glamorous. And we certainly are exceedingly pleased to have such a professional group of ambassador-designees before the committee. I think a lot of members of the committee, because we deal with these issues, have particular respect for the careers you have chosen and for the sacrifices that go with it, both your own personally and those of your families. So I think this is a particularly qualified group, and we are very grateful for your willingness to serve yet further at a difficult time. Service abroad nowadays is, in most places, not what it used to be and, in many places, can be both a risky and demanding undertaking.

Let me just ask, if I can, do each of you have family members who are here? When you are called on, if you would introduce your support structure, we would appreciate it. That would be very nice.

Yesterday Ambassador Sison and I had the opportunity to be able to chat a little bit. Our nominee to be Ambassador to Leb-

anon—and we are fortunate to have someone who has already served in the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, India, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Benin, Togo, and Haiti. Ambassador Sison has already been serving as our Charge d'Affaires in Lebanon, and so comes to this posting with a real understanding of the situation there that will more than serve her well.

Mr. Richard Olson, the nominee to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, has also had a very impressive career, currently serving as the deputy chief of mission to the United States mission to NATO in Brussels. He has had previous postings to the UAE, as well as assignments in Mexico, Uganda, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Ethiopia.

I will also note we had the pleasure of confirming Mr. Olson's wife, Deborah Jones, as Ambassador to Kuwait in February. So the committee has confidence that you know where to go to get advice if needed. [Laughter.]

Mr. David Pearce, the nominee to be Ambassador to Algeria, has received a number of commendations for his exemplary service over the past 25 years. He comes to us now from Iraq where he has been serving as senior advisor to the ambassador. He brings extensive previous experience in the Middle East, having also served in Israel, Syria, the UAE, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

Ms. Tatiana Gfoeller-Volkoff, the nominee to be Ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic, has also had a distinguished career of over 20 years that includes postings in Russia, Poland, Bahrain, and NATO headquarters, and brings significant experience in the region, having served as the deputy chief of mission in Turkmenistan. Most recently she served as the consul general in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

As she knows, I was in Jeddah a few weeks ago and had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff's husband, Michael, who is doing an outstanding job as the deputy chief of mission and who I learned is a legend in the region. And I enjoyed enormously my conversations with him, I might add. He is a very intelligent fellow.

All of you have very challenging posts and challenging jobs ahead of you, needless to say. Our relationships with Lebanon, the UAE, Algeria, Kyrgyz Republic—all offer significant opportunities but also real challenges.

In Lebanon, the mounting tensions and the political stalemate between Hezbollah and the March 14 coalition that began in December of 2006 exploded this May for all of us to see on television, and the violence left over 80 people dead and hundreds more wounded. A full-blown civil war was averted by a Qatari-mediated accord in May that resulted in the election of Michel Sleiman as a consensus choice for President, and, in effect, gave Hezbollah some of the political power that they had been seeking.

On July 11, a new cabinet was finally announced, but this fragile coalition government will only last until the new elections are held early in 2009.

By all accounts, Syria continues to interfere in Lebanon's domestic affairs, supplying Hezbollah with weapons and support that have enabled it to act as a "state within a state." I was recently there and met with many of the various factions, parties, with obviously the exception of Hezbollah, though I met with their straw

people in the parliament and elsewhere. It is safe to say that Hezbollah has become more powerful than ever and has shown a greater efficiency in many cases than the government itself in its ability to deliver services funded, of course, by Iran and Syria.

Simply put, we need to do more to help the Siniora government to demonstrate it can deliver for the people, but obviously in a way that does not make it look like it is just doing so at our behest and sort of as our surrogate, which it is not. So there will be a requirement for significant economic assistance and continuing efforts to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces and the civil society. And I was struck in traveling around Lebanon how palpable the danger is. It is felt by every leader and by all those who are visitors. And no society should live under such danger in conducting its daily affairs.

There is much cause for concern about Hezbollah, but its continuing refusal to lay down its arms and recent developments may bring about new opportunities. The historic announcement that Syria and Lebanon intend to establish diplomatic relations may allow for meaningful movement on the vital issue of respect for Lebanon's sovereignty.

The Hariri Tribunal can also provide an opportunity to bring some closure to tragic political violence that has plagued Lebanon for generations now.

And Israel's offer to negotiate with Lebanon on all outstanding issues could be an opening for welcomed progress and improving relations after years of tensions.

In the Gulf, the UAE has been a very important strategic ally, hosting a significant United States Air Force presence at Al Dhafra Air Base and allowing us to use naval facilities that support United States operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have strengthened this partnership through the sale of major weapons systems, with significant new arms sales currently developing. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Olson about how the United States is enhancing its security and cooperation with the UAE.

At the same time, concerns remain, as they do in many parts of that region, on issues of human rights and human trafficking. And despite limited improvement on democratic reforms, including strictly controlled elections in 2006 by the Federal National Council, the State Department found that numerous restrictions remain on freedoms of speech and assembly. We're aware that the State Department has upgraded UAE's designation on human trafficking. We look forward to hearing how we can encourage continued improvement on this and other areas of concern.

U.S. relations with Algeria have improved in recent years, and we now enjoy a significant level of cooperation on several counterterrorism and security efforts, including information-sharing and participation in the NATO Mediterranean dialog and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. This is especially important given the emergence of terrorist groups like al-Qaeda and the Islamic Maghreb which claimed responsibility for a string of horrific attacks in Algeria and a number of foreign fighters in Iraq, who regrettably come from Algeria.

Human rights concerns are of concern in that area. Many people question the need for Algeria to maintain its decades-old state of

emergency, which has reportedly allowed for human rights abuses by state security forces.

The challenge is to continue to strengthen our security cooperation while encouraging Algeria to take significant steps to improve its record on many issues, such as cracking down on human trafficking, easing restrictions on freedoms of speech, assembly, press, and association.

The Kyrgyz Republic is an important United States ally in a very troubled part of the world. It provided essential assistance following 9/11 particularly in letting us use the Manas Air Base, and this base still serves as a vital logistics hub for our operations in Afghanistan. In fact, nearly 100 percent of our supplies to Afghanistan transit through it.

While this partnership and United States efforts to assist Kyrgyzstan on security and economic improvements are key areas of our relationship, we also have a duty to stress the importance of fair governance in Kyrgyzstan. In particular, we are concerned that the 2007 constitutional referendum and parliamentary elections, which were not deemed to have met international standards, represented a missed opportunity to sustain democratic progress of the 2005 Presidential election.

So I will ask each of you, if you would, to limit your comments to about 10 minutes opening, maybe less even, and then we will have an opportunity to have a dialog on these issues. Thank you.

Ambassador Sison, do you want to start? Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO LEBANON

Ambassador SISON. Mr. Chairman, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Lebanon. I would like to introduce my sister, Vicki Sison Morimoto, just behind me with her husband, Miles, and daughters, Emiko and Michiko, who have come up from North Carolina today.

Senator KERRY. Thank you. Welcome. We are glad to have you here today.

Ambassador SISON. I have served in Beirut as Charge d'Affaires ad interim since February of this year, and I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the extraordinary decision made by Chairman Biden to agree to Secretary Rice's request that I be sent to Lebanon to serve as Charge in February, pending agreement and ahead of these Senate confirmation hearings. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, interested Members of Congress, and other Americans to represent the American people and to continue to advance United States goals in Lebanon.

I have served our country as a Foreign Service officer since 1982. Over the past 26 years, I have done my very best to represent the United States in a series of challenging assignments. As a first-generation American, I am especially proud to represent our country abroad. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunities and the many, many privileges that our great Nation offers its citizens.

Mr. Chairman, the United States, indeed, has important interests in Lebanon. If confirmed, I will work hard to advance these interests. Lebanon is at the forefront of our efforts to promote de-

mocracy, promote human rights and freedoms, and to combat extremism in the Middle East. Lebanon, as you note, has undergone seismic changes over the past several years, from the assassination of former Prime Minister of Rafiq Hariri and subsequent Cedar Revolution of 2005, to the devastating July 2006 war and the ensuing political stalemate that ended only this May 2008 with the Doha Agreement and the election of President Michel Sleiman, and then the subsequent formation of a national unity government on July 11, headed by Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.

Now, we should remember that it was the Lebanese citizens themselves who took to the streets in 2005 to end Syria's occupation and demanded a sovereign, democratic state free from foreign interference. The Lebanese people also called at that time on the international community to investigate Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri's assassination and related crimes through the U.N. International Independent Investigation Commission and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

One concrete measure of United States support for the Lebanese people's aspirations for a democratic, sovereign, stable, and prosperous Lebanon is our robust United States bilateral assistance program. Since 2006, the United States has committed over $1 billion to help Lebanon strengthen its state institutions and to rebuild, reform, and realize its economic potential. With these funds, the United States is training and equipping the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces, the police, to support their deployment throughout Lebanon to provide security for the Lebanese people. As we saw in May of this year, Hezbollah and other armed groups continue to threaten the peace and security of the Lebanese people and their neighbors in contravention of U.N. Security Council resolutions. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Lebanese Government to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces to ensure that Lebanon and thereby the region is more stable and more secure.

U.S. bilateral assistance programs also include judicial reform, education, entrepreneurial skill-building, support for civil society, and electoral law reform initiatives. Such United States engagement can do much to help the Lebanese people realize their dreams of a sovereign, prosperous and democratic state.

While the United States has a number of critical interests in Lebanon, my highest priority, if confirmed, will be the safety of the dedicated men and women serving under my leadership, both American and locally engaged Lebanese staff, as well as the safety of all Americans living, working, and traveling in Lebanon. Each day at Embassy Beirut, my staff and I pass the embassy's memorial to the 337 American and Lebanese colleagues who have lost their lives serving the United States Government at United States Embassy Beirut. We all serve in their memory and in their honor.

Mr. Chairman, I want once again to express my sincere appreciation for this opportunity to address you. I look forward, if confirmed, to seeing you and your staff in Beirut. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Sison follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MICHELE J. SISON,
NOMINEE TO BE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO LEBANON

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Lebanon. I have served in Beirut as charge d'affaires ad interim since February of this year.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the extraordinary decision made by Chairman Biden to agree to Secretary Rice's request that I be sent to Lebanon to serve as charge d'affaires pending agreement and ahead of these Senate confirmation hearings. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, interested members of Congress, and other Americans to represent the American people and to continue to advance United States goals in Lebanon.

I have served our country as a Foreign Service officer since 1982. Over the past 26 years, I have done my very best to represent the United States in a series of challenging assignments in Haiti, Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, India, Pakistan, and most recently, as the Untied States Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

As a first-generation American, I am especially proud to represent our country abroad. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunities and the many privileges that our great Nation offers its citizens. Also, I'm pleased today to introduce my sister, Vicki Sison Morimoto, and her family—Miles, Michiko, Andy, and Emiko—who drove up from North Carolina to be here this afternoon. I also want to recognize my two daughters, Alexandra and Jessica. The girls are college students and out in Flagstaff, AZ this summer, but are real Foreign Service troopers, having been raised in West Africa, India, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has important interests in Lebanon—interests that I will work hard to advance, if confirmed. Lebanon is at the forefront of United States efforts to promote democracy, protect human rights and freedoms, and to combat extremism in the Middle East. Lebanon has undergone seismic changes over the past several years, from the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and subsequent Cedar Revolution of 2005, to the devastating July 2006 war and the ensuing political stalemate that ended only this May 2008 with the Doha Agreement, election of President Michel Sleiman, and subsequent formation of a national unity government headed by Prime Minister Fouad Siniora on July 11.

We should remember that it was the Lebanese themselves who took to the streets in 2005 to end Syria's occupation and demand a sovereign, democratic state free from foreign interference. The Lebanese people also called on the international community at that time to investigate Prime Minister Hariri's assassination and related crimes through the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

One concrete measure of United States support for the Lebanese people's aspirations for a democratic, sovereign, prosperous, and stable Lebanon is our robust United States bilateral assistance program. Since 2006, the United States has committed over $1 billion to help Lebanon strengthen its state institutions and to rebuild, reform, and realize its economic potential. With these funds, the United States is training and equipping the Lebanese Army and the Internal Security Forces to support their deployment throughout Lebanon to provide security for the Lebanese people. As we saw in May of this year, Hezbollah and other illegal armed groups continue to threaten the peace and security of the Lebanese people and their neighbors in contravention of U.N. Security Council resolutions. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Lebanese Government to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces to ensure that Lebanon, and thereby the region, is more stable and secure.

The United States must continue to strengthen the forces of the Lebanese state—the Lebanese Army and the police (the Internal Security Forces)—so that Lebanese citizens may enjoy prosperity, peace, and security. Both of these institutions had languished under Syrian occupation, receiving very little in the way of training and equipment. When the Lebanese Government took the momentous decision in 2006 to deploy its army to southern Lebanon for the first time in 40 years and displace Hezbollah from the Israeli border, troops traveled in civilian vehicles because they lacked trucks, communicated via cell phone because they lacked radios, and slept in tents because they lacked permanent shelter. When LAF troops battled Fatah al-Islam militants in the Nahr al-Barid refugee camp in 2007, they faced the difficult challenge of modifying aging helicopters to drop bombs because they lacked proper close air support assets. Our assistance to the LAF is helping to address these needs for basic and more advanced equipment as well as training. Meanwhile, our assistance to the ISF is helping to create a credible police force capable of taking on new

missions including security inside Lebanon's refugee camps. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Lebanese Government to further strengthen these institutions to ensure that Lebanon—and thereby the region—is more stable and secure.

U.S. bilateral assistance also funds a variety of programs, ranging from judicial reform to education to entrepreneurial skill-building and support for civil society and electoral law reform. Such United States engagement can do much to help the Lebanese people realize their dreams of a sovereign, prosperous, and democratic state. While the United States has a number of critical interests in Lebanon, my highest priority, if confirmed, will be the safety of the dedicated men and women serving under my leadership, both American and locally engaged Lebanese staff, as well as the safety of all Americans living, working, or traveling in Lebanon. Each day at U.S. Embassy Beirut, my staff and I pass the embassy's memorial to the 337 American and Lebanese colleagues who have lost their lives working on behalf of the United States Government in Lebanon since 1976. We all serve in their memory and in their honor.

If confirmed, I will do my best to be worthy of the trust placed in me by the President, Secretary Rice, and the U.S. Congress to advance American interests and to protect American citizens. I fully understand that I will be answerable to you and to the American people in this regard.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I want once again to express my sincere appreciation for this opportunity to address you. If confirmed, I look forward to seeing you and your staff members in Beirut. I would welcome any questions you might have for me today. Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Ambassador.

Mr. Pearce.

STATEMENT OF DAVID D. PEARCE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Mr. PEARCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am deeply honored to appear before you as President Bush's nominee to be the Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. I appreciate the trust and confidence the President and the Secretary have shown in nominating me.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my family. My wife, Leyla, is my best friend, teacher, and instructor on the Middle East, born and raised in Lebanon, for over 30 years. She speaks fluent Arabic, English, an French. My daughter, Jenny, former Peace Corps volunteer, just received her masters degree in community and regional planning at the University of Oregon. And Joey has taught disadvantaged students in Beirut English and is now working on his masters in Arabic studies at Georgetown. I am very proud of them all and, frankly, Mr. Chairman, if it were not for their support and sacrifice through an awful lot of moves and separations over 26 years, I probably would not be sitting here today.

Mr. Chairman, Algeria is the keystone of North Africa, the third most populous country in the Arab world. It is the largest producer of oil and gas on the African continent and an important supplier of energy to both Europe and the United States. In fact, I believe a good part of it goes to New England, sir. Our own two-way trade with Algeria is worth about $20 billion. But even if Algeria were not our second-largest trading partner in the Arab world, we would have a great stake in this relationship. Algeria's stability and prosperity are important for the stability of both Africa and the Middle East.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, tens of thousands of Algerians died in the indiscriminate violence of the 1990s. While that internal violence has declined substantially from previous levels, as you noted,

the threat of extremism, nevertheless, remains. And Algeria has been an essential partner in fighting the instability created by the increasingly regional terrorist threat.

Mr. Chairman, the Algerian Government has confronted the challenge of extremism squarely and courageously. It has taken a leading role in international cooperation on counterterrorism, especially in pursuing and breaking up al-Qaeda-based networks. And our bilateral cooperation, again as you noted in this area, is strong.

Mr. Chairman, through the Middle East Partnership Initiative and other programs, we are also supporting Algeria's reform agenda. If confirmed, I will do my best to encourage continued reform and development and further Algeria's efforts to stabilize and modernize, consistent with the rule of law, transparency, and the importance we attach to human rights and other basic freedoms.

Mr. Chairman, Algeria has long had a significant role in Middle Eastern and African affairs. It is a key player in conflict resolution throughout the wider region. It facilitated an end to the Ethiopian-Eritrean border war in the late 1900s and more recently provided airlift support to peacekeepers going to Somalia and Darfur. Its mediating role in the Sahel has been vital to finding peaceful solutions there. The frozen conflict over Western Sahara cannot be resolved without Algerian participation. And Algeria is at the center of the Algerian is at the center of the Arab Maghreb Union, and here too, its willingness to lead is going to be a critical factor in greater regional integration.

Mr. Chairman, regarding the embassy itself, we have now moved into a new, more secure facility, which I look forward to seeing, if confirmed. There are still significant security restrictions, and I assure you that, if confirmed, I will have no higher priority than the safety and security of our staff and all Americans in Algeria.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to address you and Senator Coleman. If confirmed, I hope I will have many opportunities to host you, as I had the honor to do with both of you in Jerusalem when I was Consul General there, in Algiers. And I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Mr. Pearce.

[The prepared statement of David D. Pearce follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID D. PEARCE, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. I appreciate the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Rice have shown in nominating me.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my wife, Leyla, my daughter, Jennifer, and my son, Joey. For over 30 years now, Leyla, who was born and raised in Lebanon and speaks fluent Arabic and French, has been my first and best teacher on the Middle East. Jenny recently received her master's degree in community and regional planning at the University of Oregon. And Joey is working on his master's in Arabic studies at Georgetown. I am immensely proud of them all, and grateful for their constant support and sacrifice through many moves and separations during our 26 years in the Foreign Service.

Mr. Chairman, Algeria is the keystone of North Africa and the third-most populous country in the Arab world. It is the largest producer of oil and gas on the African continent, and an important supplier of energy to both Europe and the United States. Our own two-way trade with Algeria is worth about $20 billion. But even if Algeria were not our second-largest trading partner in the Arab world, we would have a great stake in this relationship. It is a country of real promise, where hun-

dreds of thousands of educated youth could drive a knowledge-based economy that would bring growth to the entire region. Its stability and prosperity are important for the stability of both Africa and the Middle East.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, tens of thousands of Algerians died in the indiscriminate violence of the 1990s. While that internal violence has declined substantially from previous levels, the threat of extremism nevertheless remains. And Algeria has been an essential partner in fighting the instability created by the increasingly regional terrorist threat. Nearly 2 years ago, a local Algerian extremist group sought a new lease on life by declaring a link to al-Qaeda. Since then, that group has carried out a number of atrocities against innocent men, women, and children in Algeria and elsewhere. It has attacked U.N. offices, engaged in kidnappings and bombings, and has extended its reach into surrounding countries.

Mr. Chairman, the Algerian Government has confronted the challenge of extremism squarely and courageously. It has taken a leading role in international cooperation on counterterrorism, especially in pursuing and breaking up al-Qaeda-linked terrorist networks. And our bilateral cooperation in this area is strong. We recognize that a comprehensive effort against terrorism must go beyond direct security assistance to incorporate cooperation in fields such as forensics, English-language instruction, and university training. So we are working to build our relationship in those areas.

Mr. Chairman, through the Middle East Partnership Initiative and other programs we are also supporting Algeria's reform agenda. Our programs promote the professional development of lawyers and judges. They assist Algeria's press in building journalistic expertise and business acumen. They help the Ministry of Finance to improve tax administration and reduce corruption. They aim to assist the Bank of Algeria in updating its system of bank supervision—just to name a few areas. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will look forward to joining this important work with the Algerian Government and people. I will do my best to encourage continued reform and development, and further Algeria's efforts to stabilize and modernize, consistent with the rule of law, transparency, and the importance we attach to human rights and other basic freedoms.

Mr. Chairman, Algeria has long had a significant role in Middle Eastern and African affairs. It is a key player in conflict resolution throughout the wider region. It is a leading member state of the Arab League, the African Union, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It is a longstanding member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and a founding member of the New Economic Partnership for African Development. It facilitated an end to the Ethiopian-Eritrean border war in the late 1990s and, more recently, provided airlift support to peacekeepers going to Somalia and Darfur. Its mediating role in conflicts in the Sahel has been and will remain vital to finding peaceful solutions there. The "frozen conflict" over Western Sahara cannot be resolved without Algerian participation. Not least, Algeria is literally at the center of the Arab Maghreb Union. It would gain from increasing trade within that grouping, and its willingness to lead in this area will be critical to realizing long-held dreams of regional integration.

Mr. Chairman, regarding the embassy itself, we have now moved to a new, more secure facility, which I look forward to seeing. There are still significant security restrictions, and I assure you that if confirmed, I will have no higher priority than the safety and security of our staff and all Americans in Algeria.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to address you. If confirmed, I hope I will have many occasions to host members of this committee in Algiers. For now, I would be pleased to address any questions that you may have.

Let me welcome my ranking member, Senator Coleman, and ask at this point, if you will excuse us for interrupting the conversation's flow, and if he has any opening.

STATEMENT OF HON. NORM COLEMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator COLEMAN. Mr. Chairman, what I will do is just simply ask that my opening statement be placed in the record. I will listen to the nominees. These are highly strategic areas and of great importance. So I look forward to an opportunity to ask some questions and then work with these nominees. So with that, I would ask consent that my statement——

Senator KERRY. Absolutely. Without objection, the full statement will be placed in the record.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Coleman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. NORM COLEMAN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Thank you, Senator Kerry. Today we are considering a very important set of nominations, as these nominees are to represent the United States in countries located in some of the most critical regions in the world. The countries for which we are considering nominees today are located in a highly strategic region and play critical roles in achieving U.S. objectives for the region—including bringing peace between Israel and its neighbors, fighting terrorism, partnering on energy security, combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—among other important areas. I look forward to hearing from our guests on how their experience has prepared them for the important tasks that have been placed before them in being nominated to serve as our Ambassadors in Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, and Kyrgyzstan.

One of the countries for which we are considering a nominee is Lebanon, which today stands at a critical juncture. I believe the complexity of the situation was highlighted dramatically last week when we observed a deeply saddening exchange of the bodies of two Israeli soldiers for the release of Hezbollah terrorists. In May of this year we watched as Lebanon faced a grave political crisis, which was overcome through the mediation of the Arab league. While the Doha Agreement that was agreed to in May prevented additional bloodshed at the time and restored some stability, it also gave Hezbollah a significant stronghold within the government. So it is unclear that this arrangement will serve as a stable basis on which Lebanon can advance its political process. Furthermore, the tentacles of both Syria and Iran continue to undermine the moderate elements in the country and to subject the future of the people of Lebanon to the whims of the theocrats in Tehran. Yet there are elements in Lebanon who are fighting for freedom and for democracy, and it is in the interests of the United States to ensure that these forces of moderation succeed. The situation therefore remains extremely complex and fragile, and the confirmation of a representative to represent the United States in Lebanon is vital at this time. I look forward to hearing the nominee's perspective on her views of the situation in Lebanon and how she will work to pursue our key interests.

Moving toward the Gulf region, we see that an unprecedented increase in the price of oil has allowed the Emirates of Dubai and Abu-Dabi to undergo a surge of acquisitions of United States properties and interests, orchestrated by their sovereign wealth funds. While some of these deals, such as the Dubai Ports World case, have raised concerns in this chamber, others received support since they brought a much needed life-line to some of our troubled financial institutions. What is certain is that we need to know more about these funds, about who is behind them, and especially about their objectives and implications.

The UAE, as well as Algeria, enjoy vast reserves of natural gas and other energy resources. In light of these circumstances, and the fact that Algeria is currently chairing OPEC, it is important that our nominees work closely with both these countries as we seek to resolve the significant energy challenges facing the United States. I believe that U.S. representation in both of these countries is important in this work to pave the way for more stable sources of energy supply, as well as to arrive at a mutual understanding on the most productive forms of economic and security cooperation with our country.

Kyrgyzstan also is a country with a very strategic geography, bordering with China and with the oil-rich Kazakhstan, and closely allied with Russia. It has also been of great support to coalition efforts in Afghanistan, allowing large forces to pass through its airports. For these reasons, the country embodies key U.S. security interests and should therefore be engaged in a close, cooperative, and mutually beneficial dialog, ensuring that this cooperation remains strong.

I thank each of the nominees for offering themselves to represent their country at an important time and in very important countries. I look forward to hearing the testimonies from our nominees and discussing how the United States can best pursue its objectives through our relationships with the countries we will be discussing today. Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Mr. Olson.

Let me just say also to the families that just got introduced. We really appreciate your being here. As a Foreign Service brat I have a lot of respect for the journey, so to speak. Mr. Pearce, your wife, it appears, ought to be going to Lebanon with Ms. Sison. We will work that out later.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD G. OLSON, JR., NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Chairman and Senator Coleman, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. I am deeply grateful to President Bush and Secretary Rice for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I look forward to representing the American people, to advancing United States goals in the United Arab Emirates, and to working with this committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance the United States agenda.

I have been privileged to serve the American people as a Foreign Service officer since 1982, having represented them at a series of assignments mostly in the Middle East and Africa. I have been lucky to have shared my life in the Foreign Service with my wife, Deborah Jones, currently serving as the United States Ambassador to Kuwait, and with our two wonderful daughters, two Foreign Service brats, Ana and Isabella.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Coleman, I would also like to acknowledge the presence of representatives of the United Arab Emirates embassy who are with us here today at this hearing and thank them for coming.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Coleman, the United Arab Emirates plays an influential and growing role in the Middle East and is an important partner for the United States. The United States and the United Arab Emirates enjoy strong bilateral cooperation on a full range of issues, including defense, law enforcement, countering terrorist finance, and nonproliferation. Within the region, the UAE has shown leadership by its recent decision to send an ambassador to Baghdad and to cancel $7 billion worth of Iraqi debt. The UAE has also contributed generously to international efforts to rebuild Afghanistan and given substantial assistance to the people of Lebanon and to the Palestinian Authority.

Our strategic partnership extends to cooperation on political-military issues. We conduct regular bilateral strategic security discussions through the Gulf Security Dialogue and continue to expand our robust military-to- military partnership.

The UAE is committed to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It endorsed the Proliferation Security Initiative in early 2006. In August 2007, the UAE passed a comprehensive export control law empowering the federal authorities to take action against companies or shipments threatening UAE national security. The United States has actively engaged Emirati authorities via the bilateral Counter Proliferation Task Force.

UAE remains one of the largest export markets for U.S. goods in the Middle East. A diverse array of American companies active in the petroleum, defense, services, education, and health care sectors have found the UAE not only an attractive place to work but also

an excellent location for regional hubs doing business across the Gulf. By investing heavily in its own infrastructure and in attractive opportunities overseas, the UAE is planning for a future in which hydrocarbons will not be the dominant source of wealth for its citizens.

If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador, I plan to build on our already solid base of partnership, focusing on cooperation in the Middle East region and on security issues. I will work with Emirati authorities on our common goal of seeing that the UAE's legitimate interest in trade with its neighbors is not put to inappropriate uses, especially with regard to Iran. I will be an active partner with the American private sector to encourage the further growth of our trade relationship.

And I plan to devote personal attention to the overarching issue of America's image in Emirati society. As a first step, I will listen to Emiratis' concerns, because I do believe that when Americans engage with Emiratis on the things that matter to them—good jobs for their children, a peaceful future, sustainable economic growth, then our image improves. And I know from personal experience that Emiratis who come to the United States, especially to study, got back to the UAE with a greater appreciation for our society. We can make no sounder investment to advance our long-term relationship than in the area of educational and cultural exchanges.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, in closing, if confirmed, I would welcome seeing you and your staff members in the UAE. I would also welcome any questions you might have today. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Olson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD G. OLSON, JR.,
NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. I am deeply grateful to President Bush and to Secretary Rice for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I look forward to representing the American people, advancing United States goals in the United Arab Emirates, and to working with this committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance the United States agenda.

I have been privileged to serve the American people as a Foreign Service officer since 1982, having represented them at a series of assignments mostly in the Middle East and Africa. I have been lucky to have shared my life in the Foreign Service with my wife, Deborah Jones, who is currently serving as the United States Ambassador to Kuwait, and with our two wonderful daughters, Ana and Isabella.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the United Arab Emirates plays an influential and growing role in the Middle East, and is an important partner for the United States. The United States and the UAE enjoy strong bilateral cooperation on a full range of issues including defense, law enforcement, countering terrorist finance, and nonproliferation. Within the region, the UAE has shown leadership by its recent decision to send an Ambassador to Baghdad, and to cancel $7 billion worth of Iraqi debt. The UAE has also contributed generously to international efforts to rebuild Afghanistan and given substantial assistance to the people of Lebanon and to the Palestinian Authority.

Our strategic partnership extends to cooperation on political-military issues. We conduct regular bilateral strategic security discussions through the Gulf Security Dialog and continue to expand our robust military-to-military partnership. For example, the port of Jebel Ali in Dubai is the United States Navy's busiest overseas port-of-call.

The UAE is committed to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; it endorsed the Proliferation Security Initiative in early 2006. In August 2007, the UAE passed a comprehensive export control law empowering the Federal au-

thorities to take action against companies or shipments threatening UAE national security. The United States has actively engaged Emirati authorities via the Export Control and Related Border Security program to provide training and discussed ongoing issues of bilateral concern via the bilateral Counter Proliferation Task Force.

In April 2008, the UAE issued its white paper on nuclear energy. Noting that peaceful nuclear power is an environmentally promising and commercially competitive approach to meeting its future electricity needs, the paper announced a program to thoroughly evaluate a nuclear power option for the UAE. From a nonproliferation perspective, the paper included several important policy decisions by the UAE, including renouncing any intention to develop domestic enrichment or reprocessing capability in favor of long-term external fuel supply arrangements and meeting the highest international standards for nonproliferation, safety, and security.

The United States has engaged the UAE with the goal of helping to develop the infrastructure necessary to meet the highest standards for nonproliferation, safety, and security in a nuclear energy program. On April 21, 2008, the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on peaceful nuclear cooperation with the UAE. Simultaneously, the UAE endorsed the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

The UAE remains one of the largest export markets for United States goods in the Middle East. A diverse array of American companies active in the petroleum, defense, services, education, and health care sectors have found the UAE not only an attractive place to work, but also an excellent location for regional hubs doing business across the gulf. By investing heavily in its own infrastructure and in attractive opportunities overseas, the UAE is planning for a future in which hydrocarbons will not be the dominant source of wealth for its citizens.

Since 2006, the UAE has voluntarily submitted proposed investments to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States numerous times—in all cases with a successful resolution. Investors from the UAE have put billions of dollars into the American economy. Whether purchasing shares in well known institutions or making investments that garner less attention in the media but are equally important in generating new jobs for Americans, the UAE is a long-term strategic investor in the U.S. market. To ensure that the international community remains open to investment the UAE and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority have worked in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the International Monetary Fund to establish a set of voluntary best practices for Sovereign Wealth Funds.

If confirmed as U.S. ambassador, I plan to build on our already solid base of partnership, focusing on our cooperation in the Middle East region, and our partnership on security issues. I will work with Emirati authorities on our common goal of seeing that the UAE's legitimate interest in trade with its neighbors is not put to inappropriate uses, especially with regard to Iran. I will be an active partner with the American private sector to encourage the further growth of our trade relationship. And I plan to devote personal attention to the overarching issue of America's image in Emirati society. As a first step I will listen to Emiratis concerns, because I do believe that when Americans engage with Emiratis on the things that matter to them—good jobs for their children, a peaceful future, and a sustainable economic future—then our image improves. And I know from personal experience that Emiratis who come to the United States, especially to study, go back to the UAE with a greater appreciation for our society. We can make no sounder investment to advance our long-term relationship than in the area of educational and cultural exchanges.

As head of the U.S. mission comprising employees of more than 12 different U.S. Government agencies and departments, my first priority will remain at all times the safety and security of the dedicated men and women, American and foreign nationals, at my mission as well as all Americans living and working or traveling to the United Arab Emirates. I will strive to be worthy of the confidence placed in me by the President, Secretary Rice, and the U.S. Congress because ultimately I will be answerable to you and to the American people.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, in closing, if confirmed, I would welcome your insights and views on the UAE and the region, and would look forward to seeing you and your staff members in the UAE. I would also welcome any questions you might have for me today. Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Mr. Olson.

Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff.

STATEMENT OF TATIANA C. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. Mr. Chairman and Senator Coleman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Bush and Secretary Rice have demonstrated the confidence in me to put forward my nomination as United States Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan.

During my almost quarter century in the Foreign Service, my family and I have been grateful for this opportunity to make a unique contribution to our country. Indeed, I would like to acknowledge here my family's culture of service. A number of family members have served or are serving now in Afghanistan and Iraq. My husband, Michael, whom you were kind enough to mention, and son, Emmanuel, are unfortunately unable to be present here today with me because Michael, as you said, Mr. Chairman, is serving as our deputy chief of mission at our embassy in Riyadh, and Emmanuel is busy training fellow cadets at West Point.

Kyrgyzstan is an important partner of the United States and a positive bilateral relationship is critical to United States interests in the region. Two months after September 11, Kyrgyzstan agreed to host the United States Air Force at Manas Air Base, a crucial supply link in our ongoing efforts to fight terrorism and to lay the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous future in Afghanistan and the entire Central Asia region. President Bakiyev publicly reaffirmed his country's continued commitment to the base in December of last year.

In March, we jointly reaffirmed our cooperation on a range of issues, from the fight against terrorism and other transnational threats like narcotics trafficking, to economic engagement, to democratic development, and promotion of the rule of law. If confirmed, I will be honored to do my part to deepen that cooperation.

Since independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan has made impressive progress toward the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one and from a command structure to a market-based economy. Early on, Kyrgyzstan recognized the value of the free exchange of ideas, establishing an open environment that fostered a vibrant civil society. It became the first former Soviet state to join the World Trade Organization.

Over the years, however, the momentum of reform stalled. The December 2007 parliamentary elections did not meet international standards, and the government has sought legislation that would restrict important freedoms, such as the freedom of the press and assembly. The United States, in close collaboration with other international partners, has made clear to the Kyrgyz Government that such steps do not reflect Kyrgyzstan's international commitments.

Through all this upheaval, however, Kyrgyzstan has maintained an active and vocal political culture, tolerating often contentious confrontations but avoiding serious political violence. Some say this country is learning about democracy by doing democracy. It has shown a capacity for reform. We can help the Kyrgyz foster that reform and, in so doing, demonstrate throughout the region the ultimate benefits of including all people in the political process.

One challenge that has beleaguered Kyrgyzstan throughout independence is corruption. All segments of society have sought our help in addressing this problem. If confirmed, I look forward to overseeing the implementation of a brand new threshold program focused on fighting corruption that the Millennium Challenge Corporation recently approved for Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan is keenly interested in American commercial engagement, but the challenges for United States companies are daunting. The economy has shown stability in recent years, but renewed inflationary pressures and other conditions make for a bleaker picture in 2008. If confirmed, I will look for ways to assist and encourage the Kyrgyz leadership to keep focused on improving the investment climate.

One of the key lessons we have learned over the years of transition is the interconnectedness of reform efforts. Kyrgyzstan itself recognizes the importance of economic revitalization. One of the requirements for true economic reform is the rule of law. Ensuring the primacy of the rule of law requires a fully functioning democracy. We continue to emphasize this interconnectedness.

If we consider where the country started 17 years ago, Kyrgyzstan has made remarkable progress, and the United States can take considerable pride in supporting that transformation. We can also take comfort in the contributions Kyrgyzstan makes to regional and global security. Our relationship still has room to grow, however. If confirmed, I will be honored to represent President Bush and work with Members of Congress to engage with the Kyrgyz Government and all elements of Kyrgyz society to facilitate that process.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TATIANA C. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO KYRGYZSTAN

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored that President Bush and Secretary Rice have demonstrated the confidence in me to put forward my nomination as United States Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan.

During my almost quarter-century in the Foreign Service, my family and I have been grateful for this opportunity to make a unique contribution to our country. Indeed, I would like to acknowledge here my family's culture of service. A number of family members have served or are serving now in Afghanistan and Iraq. My husband, Michael, and son, Emmanuel, are unfortunately unable to be present here today with me, because Michael is serving as our deputy chief of mission at our embassy in Riyadh, and Emmanuel is busy training fellow cadets at West Point.

Kyrgyzstan is an important partner of the United States, and a positive bilateral relationship is critical to United States interests in the region. Two months after September 11, Kyrgyzstan agreed to host the United States Air Force at Manas Air Base, a crucial supply link in our ongoing efforts to fight terrorism and to lay the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous future in Afghanistan and the entire Central Asia region. President Bakiyev publicly reaffirmed his country's continued commitment to the base in December of last year.

In March, we jointly reaffirmed our cooperation on a range of issues, from the fight against terrorism and other transnational threats like narcotics trafficking to economic engagement to democratic development and promotion of the rule of law. If confirmed, I will be honored to do my part to deepen that cooperation and promote our own interests—which include the secure, prosperous, and democratic development of Kyrgyzstan.

Since independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan has made impressive progress toward the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one and from a command structure to a market-based economy. Its progress has been uneven, however, and it still faces considerable challenges.

Early on, Kyrgyzstan recognized the value of the free exchange of ideas, establishing an open environment that fostered a vibrant civil society. It undertook necessary economic reforms, becoming the first former Soviet country to join the World Trade Organization. It is still the only WTO member in Central Asia. Over the years, however, the momentum of reform stalled. The government imposed new restrictions on the media, and political opponents found themselves in jail.

Then, the people of Kyrgyzstan demanded change. A series of protests culminated in the fall of the Akayev government in March 2005. The so-called Tulip Revolution led to presidential elections in July of that year that were widely recognized by international observers as free and fair. President Bakiyev was elected on a platform of continued reform, and we had high hopes for his efforts. Since then, however, Kyrgyzstan has faced protracted political turmoil, and the December 2007 parliamentary elections did not meet international standards.

Through all this upheaval, Kyrgyzstan has maintained an active and vocal political culture, tolerating often contentious confrontations across the political spectrum, but keeping them on the political level and avoiding serious political violence. Some say this country is learning about democracy by doing democracy. It has shown a capacity for reform. We can help the Kyrgyz foster that reform and, in so doing, demonstrate throughout the region the ultimate benefits of including all people in the political process and extending to them the freedom to build their own economic future.

President Bakiyev has declared he is ready to proceed with needed economic reforms. While we hope that he will soon get the country back on the reform path, progress has been limited so far.

One challenge that has beleaguered Kyrgyzstan throughout independence is corruption. Representatives of the government, the opposition, and civil society alike have all sought our help in addressing this problem. If confirmed, I look forward to overseeing the implementation of a brand new assistance program that the Millennium Challenge Corporation recently approved for Kyrgyzstan.

This threshold program will focus on helping Kyrgyzstan confront the scourge of corruption by reforming the judicial and law enforcement sectors. It has the potential not only to land a solid blow against the corruption that impedes Kyrgyzstan's progress toward prosperity, but to reassert the primacy of the rule of law and get the country back on the course of reform.

Kyrgyzstan cooperates with us on a host of security issues. In addition to hosting Manas Air Base, the government has expressed interest in providing more direct assistance to our coalition efforts in Afghanistan. We helped establish the Drug Control Agency of Kyrgyzstan in 2003, and we are working together to improve its capacity to intercept and reduce the flow of narcotics through Kyrgyzstan. Our military and other officials collaborate with Kyrgyz officials here, at the Marshall Center in Europe, and in Kyrgyzstan on workshops to improve individual officers' capacity to combat terrorism.

Kyrgyzstan is keenly interested in American commercial engagement, but the challenges for United States companies of operating far away in a relatively small market with pervasive corruption are daunting. The economy has shown stability in recent years, with over 8 percent growth in 2007, inflation under reasonable limits, and an improving fiscal picture. Renewed inflationary pressures and other conditions make for a bleaker picture in 2008. The World Bank and IMF have both approved additional assistance to help Kyrgyzstan through these recent difficulties. If confirmed, I will look for ways the United States Government can assist in the short term, but will also encourage the Kyrgyz leadership to keep focused on the longer-term goal of improving the investment climate, to increase opportunities for both the local population and American firms.

This past year has also seen disruptions in Kyrgyzstan's progress toward a fully functioning democracy. Since December's elections, the government has sought legislation that would restrict important freedoms, such as the freedom of the press and assembly. The United States, in close collaboration with other international partners, has made clear to the Kyrgyz Government that such steps do not reflect Kyrgyzstan's international commitments.

One of the key lessons we have learned over the years of transition is the interconnectedness of reform efforts. Kyrgyzstan itself recognizes the importance of economic revitalization and has committed to reform in that area. One of the requirements for true economic reform is the rule of law. Ensuring the primacy of the rule of law requires a fully functioning democracy, in which the population understands

and supports the system behind the law. Although Kyrgyzstan would prefer to focus its engagement with the United States on economic concerns, we continue to explain that our emphasis on the rule of law and good governance is as much about the economy as it is about democracy.

If we consider where the country started 17 years ago, Kyrgyzstan has made remarkable progress, and the United States—in particular through the generosity of the American people—can take considerable pride in supporting that transformation. We also can take comfort in the contributions Kyrgyzstan makes to regional and global security.

Our relationship still has room to grow, however. If confirmed, I will be honored to represent President Bush and work with members of Congress to engage with the Kyrgyz Government and all elements of Kyrgyz society to facilitate that process.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much. Thank you, all of you.

Since you were patient and waited till the end, Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff, I will just start with you. I will pick up where you left off.

You mentioned, appropriately, the slowdown in the reform effort. What do you attribute that to?

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. There has been a lot of instability. After the 2005 elections, which were free and fair, there was opposition to the President in the parliament. There were a lot of demonstrations. Unfortunately, the opposition is very fragmented. A lot of the parties—and there are many, many of them—are basically formed around one person as opposed to around an idea.

And so I think the President began to feel very beleaguered and started thinking that maybe he needed to consolidate power in some way. We certainly keep urging him to keep on the road to reform and that actually stability comes from democracy. But I think that as a result of certain demonstrations, which never got really violent but were somewhat of concern to him, he started feeling that maybe he needs to look at stability ahead of it continuing on the road to democracy.

Senator KERRY. How would you describe the competing forces on the ground particularly the play between China, Russia, and the United States presence?

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. Kyrgyzstan enjoys good relations with all three, Mr. Chairman. With Russia, of course, there are special ties that bind. Kyrgyzstan and Russia were part of the USSR, the same state. Many, especially of the elite, the educated people, speak excellent Russian. They have gone to Russian schools and universities. Many members of the government and even the opposition have been educated in Russia. So I expect that these ties will continue.

Also, they are both members of the Shanghai Corporation Organization, and there is a lot of Russian investment. There is a lot of Russian trade with Kyrgyzstan going on, and something between half a million to a million Kyrgyz citizens—and that is out of a population of only 5 million—are presently working in Russia and sending remittances to Kyrgyzstan, which are a very important part of the Kyrgyz economy. So I consider that probably Russia will continue to be a very important partner for Kyrgyzstan for the foreseeable future.

They are also both members of the CIS, the Commonwealth of Independent States.

China has recently become a more important partner for the Kyrgyz. Of course, when Kyrgyzstan was part of the USSR, Kyrgyzstan was a place of actual tension because the USSR and China sometimes did not have the best relations. So now the Kyrgyz are discovering kind of the opportunity of interacting with the Chinese and the Chinese discovering that they are able to interact with the Kyrgyz.

The Chinese have also invested a lot of money in Kyrgyzstan. There is cross-border trade which is flourishing. They are also both members of the Shanghai Corporation Organization. Again, I think that their good relations will probably continue.

We have no problems with the Kyrgyz having good relations with these two countries in the region. In fact, we welcome Kyrgyz good relations with the entire region.

What we would like, however, to see is greater opportunities for the Kyrgyz to branch out, and we are particularly looking at the south. For example, Kyrgyzstan on a seasonal basis produces more hydroelectricity than it really needs, whereas countries to the south, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, are in desperate need of energy. So we are looking right now and providing some technical support to the Kyrgyz and possibly creating a regional electricity grid where the Kyrgyz could sell some of their surplus electricity to the Afghans and the Pakistanis. And my understanding is that the Afghans and Pakistanis would be willing to pay a much higher price for the electricity than Kyrgyzstan is able to get domestically. So that is something that we are urging the Kyrgyz to look into, again not to try to impede in any way their relations with Russia and China, but to provide them with more opportunities, more chances, and therefore more independence.

Senator KERRY. How would you describe their relations with their neighbors? You mentioned the neighborhood. Besides, obviously, the relationships you just talked about with the larger powers, how would you describe them, particularly since the Tulip Revolution?

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Kyrgyzstan has three other neighbors. Tajikistan to the south is actually very similar to Kyrgyzstan. It is a very poor country. It also, though, has some hydroelectricity surplus on a seasonal basis, again, and has some potential in that regard. Relations between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are friendly and stable. There are a couple of issues about demarcation of borders, but basically things are going well. And we would be looking to have cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in building this grid because Tajikistan is between Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan and would also benefit very much from selling its own electricity. So I think that here things are looking good.

Kazakhstan to the north of Kyrgyzstan is a very important trading and investment partner. It has a muscular economy. It has invested a lot in Kyrgyzstan. There are some Kazakh banks in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. It also produces wheat and is a very important supplier of wheat to Kyrgyzstan. On the other hand, Kyrgyzstan supplies Kazakhstan with water. I believe that relations with them will continue to be friendly and stable.

With Uzbekistan, the last of the neighbors of Kyrgyzstan, there are—it is a friendly relationship. There are a bit more tensions. There are some areas of the border regions that are not demarcated properly. One thing that is happening is that they are both in the same natural water system, and Kyrgyzstan supplies Uzbekistan with water but is not charging for it, whereas it buys energy, especially coal, from Uzbekistan and gas and is being charged for it. I believe there is a bit of tension over that imbalance. But still, overall relations are friendly.

Senator KERRY. I will come back perhaps afterwards.

Mr. Olson, there have been some concerns that Dubai has been a transit point for the A.Q. Khan nuclear proliferation network. I wonder if you could share with us your perception of UAE's and Dubai's, in particular, efforts to try to curb the smuggling and your perception of it at this point or the administration's description of it at this point.

Mr. OLSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think that, indeed, for the Emiratis the revelations about the A.Q. Khan network were something of a wake-up call for them, and they recognized the importance of this issue. And the action that they have taken so far is to pass an export control law that was passed in 2007. Our assessment is that this is actually a good law and covers what is necessary to make sure that there is not reexport of dual-use or sensitive technologies to Iran.

We have been working with the Emiratis, with the Emirati authorities, the federal authorities, since that time on the implementation. There is a domestic implementation aspect. There are some regulations that are required to bring about the implementation of the law. But there has been very good cooperation with the Emiratis on certain specific instances which we discuss with them in the context of the Counter Proliferation Task Force. This is a bilateral initiative that has been going for several years, meets frequently at a senior level, United States and Emirati. In the course of those discussions, we have raised our concerns, both general and also specific cases, and we have received, in our view, considerable cooperation from the Emirati authorities.

This will continue to be a high priority. It will be a personal priority for me to make sure that Iran—there are interests in legitimate trade. They do have a very large volume of trade with Iran, and most of that is legitimate. But we want to make sure that Dubai is not a source of anything that can threaten what we both consider to be—I would say that both the Emirates and the United States share a strategic assessment about the danger that a nuclear-capable Iran would represent to the region.

Senator KERRY. What is your understanding of what we, the United States, are doing or helping lead the UAE to in an effort to prevent the flow of weapons-capable technology going through the UAE?

Mr. OLSON. Well, Senator, it would be difficult for me to answer in terms of specific cases in an open session. I would be happy to offer a briefing by myself or other persons on specific cases where we have had cooperation.

Senator KERRY. Let me frame the question this way for this session. Are you satisfied that we are doing enough, and if not, is your portfolio specifically designed to increase our efforts in that regard?

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Chairman, I think there is work still to be done in this area. I think there needs to be further domestic implementation legislation and regulatory framework in the United Arab Emirates. And I will work closely with the Emirati authorities to see that that is put in place. But I also think that it is an issue that needs continual vigilance, and I can assure you that I will be doing that on the specific cases. And we will work not just with the federal government but also with the authorities in Dubai at the emirate level to make sure that they understand our concerns and that it is fully internalized on their side.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Let me turn to Senator Coleman and then we will come back for another round.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will turn to Lebanon, Ms. Sison, if I can.

Hezbollah and its allies have a veto in the Lebanese cabinet. Obviously of great concern. The March 14 movement offered some hope. And the question of whether they can even live and work in Lebanon, whether they are able to do that. Can you give me an assessment of where the March 14 movement is doing a better job of reaching out to the—I am trying to get your sense of where things are at.

Ambassador SISON. The March 14 moderates came together in recent weeks, Senator, and with the other political parties, hammered together the 30-person cabinet on July 11. And I note that although, as you say, the opposition has a blocking third of the cabinet—it is 16 majority, 11 opposition, 3 cabinet members named by the president—Hezbollah only has one minister in the cabinet, which is interesting. The moderates, the March 14, put forward and appointed an independent Shia minister, Ibrahim Shamsudeen. This is interesting because it will make it more difficult, I think, for Hezbollah and their allies to assert that they are the sole voice of the Lebanese Shia in the government.

The Doha Agreement in May, yes, designed this 16/11/3 split in the makeup of the cabinet. It is important to note that the president, Michel Sleiman, retained control for the nomination of the defense minister and the interior minister, two key ministries with which we, the United States, work as we seek to strengthen key institutions of the state, the Lebanese Armed Forces, and the Internal Security Forces, the police. Of course, the interior ministry will also have the key role in organizing free and fair parliamentary elections in the spring of 2009. The new interior minister is a constitutional lawyer who had served on the Boutros Commission looking at electoral law reform.

On the blocking one-third on the so-called veto, I think, Senator, that this concession may actually have less significance on the ground since the Lebanese cabinet has typically operated on a consensus basis.

Senator COLEMAN. My concern sitting here is the question of our ability to strengthen those institutions if you have the fox in the

chicken coop. Talk to me a little bit about where Hezbollah gets its support. How much support does Iran supply to Hezbollah?

Ambassador SISON. As I have been in Washington over the last few days, Senator, I have consulted with several of my colleagues, and of course, our colleagues at the U.S. Department of the Treasury have been particularly active in bringing the interagency together to look at ways to approach the challenge of Hezbollah. As we saw last month, the U.S. Government—well, this month actually—this summer, the United States designated two Venezuela-based supporters of Hezbollah along with two travel agencies owned by one of the gentlemen.

So the United States has actually targeted Hezbollah's funding sources by taking action against Iran's bank, Saderat, which had been used by the Government of Iran to channel funds to terrorist organizations, including Hezbollah, as well as the Iran-based Marchers Foundation, part of Hezbollah's support network. So Hezbollah has received financial assistance through Iranian entities. The U.S. Government this year and in 2007 and in earlier years has targeted through designations and executive orders that process.

Senator COLEMAN. This is not a question here, but the hope would be that you would have a moderate government. It would take the reins and enforce its sovereignty over territories and not get into a position where Hezbollah can drag a country into war with grave consequences for the entire region. So it is a very delicate situation there and one of great concern.

Mr. Olson, if you can move over then in terms of the same issue with Iran and the UAE. Can you talk to me a little bit about the relationship between—when I was in Dubai, I think the language of commerce is Farsi. And Dubai, let me just say, is just one of the most incredible, vibrant centers in the world today. But talk to me a little bit about UAE's policy toward Iran. How does that impact our relationships with the emirate?

Mr. OLSON. Thank you, Senator Coleman.

Yes, indeed, the UAE and especially Dubai have a long history of a relationship with Iran. It is estimated that up to 400,000 Iranians live in the emirates, mostly in Dubai, and many Emiratis trace their family roots back to Iran. And there is a considerable volume of trade. There always has been between Dubai and Iran.

What I would say is that at the federal level, that is to say, at the level of the national government, it much shares our strategic assessment of the threat that Iran represents, and I think this is, in part, fundamentally a matter of demographics. The Emirates is composed of probably about 3 million people, of which fewer than a million are actually Emirati citizens, and they are looking 80 miles across the water at a population of 80 million. So they have some fundamental concerns, and I think this is one of the reasons why we do have such a strong relationship in defense cooperation. It is one of the, I think, fundamental motivations from the Emirati side for the interest in purchasing defensive weapons systems.

I think that we have made a lot of progress, as I already mentioned in response to the chairman's question, about export controls. I think an area that will also be of increasing focus for myself, if confirmed, is in the area of finances. As Ambassador Sison

mentioned, in Lebanon I think we have similar situation. There are Iranian banks in the United Arab Emirates. The UAE has complied with Security Council resolutions, especially 1747 and 1803, but if confirmed, it will certainly be my intention to continue to press the Emiratis to maintain vigilance over the Iranian banks that are present in the UAE and, where possible, to close down their operations.

Senator COLEMAN. The concern is—it appears to me when you look at the situation in Lebanon, when you look at the UAE, we have forces of stability, hopefully, moderation taking hold in Lebanon, that the battle or the concern is the forces of moderation and those forces that support extremism which are threat to forces of moderation. Obviously, it is their neighborhood, but we certainly have an interest there.

I talked about the incredible wealth and vitality that you are seeing in Dubai, sovereign wealth funds, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, close to a trillion dollars. Talk to me a little bit about pros and cons of the authority investing in American companies, what our role is in facilitating that, and how that impacts the relationship between us and the UAE.

Mr. OLSON. Thank you, Senator Coleman.

The sovereign wealth funds is an issue that we have had some intense engagement with the Government of the United Arab Emirates on. They have been working with us in the context of the IMF and also in the OECD to identify best practices for sovereign wealth funds.

You mentioned the trillion dollar figure. One of the issues, I suppose, that surrounds sovereign wealth funds—I think your reference was probably to the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, which is widely believed to be the largest sovereign wealth fund in the world. But no one really knows the answer, aside from people who work in ADIA and a few others as to what the actual size of the fund is. And I think that highlights one of the issues that we would probably want to work with the Emirati Government on in terms of best practices, working towards the idea of transparency, the idea that investments are made on a commercial basis and not on any other basis.

As I say, I think the Emirati Government has been very cooperative on these matters.

I also think it is worth pointing out that the sovereign wealth fund in the United States—the sovereign wealth funds in the States, especially the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, have been long-term investors and I think have made some significant investments that have been useful in terms of preserving American jobs here in the United States.

Senator COLEMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I may, just a note of thanks to these nominees and to their families, the level of commitment and sacrifice that they will make in the Foreign Service. Certainly every time I visit an embassy and talk to the staff—I do not know if we can thank them enough for their service to this country. So I just want to take this opportunity to thank the nominees here for their continued commitment to service and to their families.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Senator Coleman.

Let me pick up, Mr. Olson, if I can on that. When I was out of the room, you mentioned the numbers of Iranians that are in the Emirates. You put it at how many hundreds of thousands?

Mr. OLSON. Well, the number that we understand is about 400,000.

Senator KERRY. I'd like to have us speak for a moment with respect to Iran's financial institutions. We seem to be rattling the saber and talking very openly and repeatedly about military options without a lot of intermediary steps, which I find puzzling. The sanctions that exist today are frankly pretty lame mostly because they are not truly multilateral, but even those that are are not that creative in my judgment. It seems to me that some Iranian's have enormous sums of money that move across state lines and access the benefits of the western world's wealth-creating machinery.

It confounds me that when I go back to the debates we have had right here in this room on South Africa and then we did what we did partly because it was multilateral, that here we have leaders of countries proclaiming as a matter of policy that Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, but leaping from point A to point Z without any of the intermediary steps. And I find that dangerous and even stupid in some cases.

Are there not many tools available in your judgment that could really tighten the noose economically with respect to flights, visas, access to banking systems, freezing of assets, and other steps which would put a very serious financial crimp on Iran's options?

Mr. OLSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, in terms of overall United States policy, of course, I think our objective has been, as you know, to pursue a diplomatic option with regard to Iran while keeping all options on the table. But I think we actually, in the last few months, have been very successful in increasing the pressure on Iran, and I would cite two particular examples, first of all, on the Geneva talks that took place over the weekend in which, as you know, Under Secretary Burns participated for the first time. This was a tactical shift, not a policy shift for the United States. But the purpose that it served was to reinforce the unity of the P5 plus 1. And I think that that was a very solid outcome, and I think the ball is very squarely now in the Iranians' court to respond within 2 weeks to the offer that was put on the table.

The second area is one that has been in development over the longer term is the action at the U.N. Security Council and especially U.N. Security Council resolution 1747 and 1803, which have, indeed, tightened a bit the financial noose around the Iranians. And I think it is having an impact.

Senator KERRY. It is voluntary.

Mr. OLSON. Yes, sir. And we absolutely have to work with a number of allies, including the United Arab Emirates, to bring about that compliance. But for certain countries—for example, for the United Arab Emirates—and it is an important point because Dubai is in the process of establishing itself as an international financial center, with some degree of success. As the blue chip banks move away from dealings with Iran and increasingly do not want to deal in any way with Iranian assets, that makes it all the more

likely that the UAE will, in fact, adopt stronger measures for implementation of 1747 and 1803.

So I think there is an incentive for our allies and partners around the world to take the steps that we want them to take. And I think that these steps do impose real costs on the Iranian economy just because of the simple costs of the transactions, but also because it forces them to work harder to do business in a variety of other ways.

I would not want to speculate, Mr. Chairman, on what full range of options might be available otherwise, but I will certainly convey back your points on flights, on visas, on freezing assets to my betters at the State Department.

Senator KERRY. Well, you do not need to leap across boundaries here except to the degree you feel it affects what you are doing with respect to the UAE. But we will certainly be in communication with the administration. I think the clock is ticking actually on what they may or may not have even time to do here.

But it strikes me that the voluntariness of that situation and the laxity of it is such that it has not created the kind of consensus that I think is necessary to really have an impact. And I think to create a consensus, you cannot start with the most rigid targets, obviously. You have got to work up to them. China and Russia have their own attitudes about what that pace ought to be, but that is another topic.

Let me just ask you quickly—within OPEC, what is the UAE's attitude with respect to oil pricing and levels at this time?

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Chairman, the UAE, of course, is a longtime member, I believe, and a founding member of OPEC, but they have signaled that they are prepared to expand production to meet demand. I am afraid I do not have exact numbers with me here today, but I can certainly get back to you in a statement for the record.

Senator KERRY. So you understand they are not pumping all the oil they could be at this point in time?

Mr. OLSON. I understand that they are prepared to increase their pumping. If I may, Mr. Chairman, I think that they have had some concerns about the long-term impact on their fields with increased production so that somewhat limits their surge capacity, but I think that they are looking at ways to increase the amount that they produce.

Senator KERRY. What do you understand the goals of the current arms sales with the UAE to be? What capacity will that give them in your judgment?

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Chairman, the basic approach that we take with regard to the UAE is, of course, the Gulf Security Dialog which the administration launched in 2006. It has got six pillars, which I do not need to probably review here today, but one of them includes defensive capabilities and cooperation.

My understanding is that the weapons systems—and of course, we have a long history of weapons sales to the United Arab Emirates. We sold them 80 F–16 aircraft in the mid-1990s. I actually participated in that in my previous assignment there.

They are currently looking at a series of defensive systems that would enhance their air defense capability, so in other words, the

threat from the air, that is to say, whether by air-breathing aircraft or by missiles. Again, I think the basic strategic assessment where they would come from—they see this very much in terms of the Iranian threat.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Pearce, how would you describe the current al-Qaeda presence in Algeria?

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Chairman, as you noted in your own remarks, the violence—and the antiterrorism cooperation is important for us. What happened was the violence went down substantially after a 12-year period. However, there were small groups of extremists that did not sign on to the idea of a ceasefire, and among them was one small extremist group which affiliated itself 2 years ago with al-Qaeda. This group is not small in numbers but they have been active in undertaking a number of attacks. They attacked and bombed the United Nations, as you recall, recently. And it is a serious threat that we take seriously. I do not think it is the strategic threat to the existence of the state that there was, say, 10 years ago.

Senator KERRY. Do you know whether or not they are receiving operational guidance from al-Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan?

Mr. PEARCE. I believe that the leader of al-Qaeda in the Maghreb recently gave an interview in which he stated that, yes. He stated that they were in touch with them.

Senator KERRY. I have just been handed a note reminding me that we have another hearing that is going to start here at 3 o'clock. Therefore, you all may be saved by the overscheduling here.

So let me turn to Senator Coleman again for another round. Then we will come back and see where we are.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just a question both to Mr. Pearce and Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff regarding an investment climate. Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff, in your statement, you talked about the interconnectedness of reform elements, primacy of rule of law, and I think the corruption piece is all tied into that. Companies are not going to invest if they do not believe that there is rule of law, if they are worried about corruption.

Can you talk to me a little bit more about what we can do to assist developing a more stable rule of law and a better investment climate?

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. Thank you, Senator Coleman.

Yes, you are absolutely right. And in fact, right now there is very little American investment in Kyrgyzstan. It is no accident that the main investors, as I mentioned, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, are from sort of the same region, have some of the same issues, for example, corruption.

We are moving forward, though, as I mentioned with the MCC Threshold Program. I think that is a really extremely important program for Kyrgyzstan. What is particularly gratifying is that unlike many other countries in the region, the Kyrgyz actually openly admit that they have a problem with corruption. They are not trying to cover this up, and they openly say that they realize the negative impact corruption has, for example, on investment reform, a host of other issues. This is a belief held throughout Kyrgyz society. The president has said this openly, publicly. Opposition figures have said it. The man in the street, I understand, says it. So this,

I think, is encouraging. Once you know you have a problem, you are some way ahead of the game.

The MCC program, the Threshold Program, is going to focus on 3 areas of combating corruption—reform of the judicial system, reform of the criminal justice system, and reform of law enforcement. If, as I hope, this program is successful and the Kyrgyz are able to increase some of their indicators, particularly in the area of ruling justly, and if they are able to pass the corruption indicator, I believe that this will, in turn, bring about a much increased level of investment from the West, hopefully from the United States as well, because as you said, Senator Coleman, people will have confidence that if they invest, they will actually get their money back.

Senator COLEMAN. Mr. Pearce, in regard to Algeria, questions about what it takes to become part of the WTO. Are there issues there? Are they corruption? Is it bureaucratic? Can you talk to me a little bit about the investment climate there?

Mr. PEARCE. Senator, I think that is a hugely important question. This is a country where more than half of the population is under the age of 30, and there is a great deal of underemployment and unemployment. So the ability to have a better investment climate to help create jobs and achieve development to my mind is the other side of the coin of counterterrorism cooperation.

I think we have a lot of very good programs underway, and I will be looking hard, when I get there, to find more ways that we can help. Some of them include, for example, assistance in banking sector reform, judiciary reform, helping train young lawyers and judges. We have a very good program of English language instruction to disadvantaged youth. We have a new science and technology agreement, which I believe could be a vehicle for a lot of different things.

So I believe that the Algerian Government wants to move forward on WTO accession. They have had a process in place for quite a long time. So we will be looking to see if we can help move that along because the investment climate and improving it I think is a very important thing.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Pearce.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Looking at Algeria as a whole, there are tensions, obviously, over oil production, tensions over al-Qaeda in the Maghreb. There are human rights issues, and then these other tensions—rights of press, assembly, democracy, and so forth. We found a modus operandi to have some cooperation, obviously, on the antiterrorism efforts. Partly it is existential to Algerians and they have an interest in doing that.

How would you describe the relationship overall in terms of some of these other issues? Do we have any leverage? Is this just a way of getting along because there is neutral interest, or is there something more connective here that we can build on?

Mr. PEARCE. Senator, I think there is. I will not pretend. We do not see eye to with Algeria on everything. There are a lot of things we do not agree on. However, I think the quality and extent of the engagement has improved a lot in a number of ways, whether it is more military-to-military exchanges or all of the programs that I just discussed on the development side. So I think that it is a

growing partnership, but not a particularly easy one. But I do think that there is a lot of opportunity there.

And I would just say, to make my pitch to you, when you are trying to move ahead, as we saw in Jerusalem, hard, hard issues, it really does help to have high level visits. And these can often be the driver for access, for making a point. So I really hope that I will have a chance to see you in Algeria and other high level officials as well because these visits are pure gold in terms of having the kind of high quality discussion that can lead to a qualitative turn for the better in many, many ways.

Senator KERRY. I appreciate that and I have seen firsthand, obviously, the difference that some of those interrogatories and those visits can make, and the effects of some of the dialogs. I know they can be productive, and I have seen it in a number of countries. We try to get the Majority Leader and the President and others to give us a schedule that lets us do that. If Senator McCain is elected, then I may be over there a lot. If Obama is elected, he may be over there a lot. We will see what happens. [Laughter.]

Mr. PEARCE. We benefit either way.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Sison, let me sort of wrap up with you, if I may. Again, we are barely scratching the surface, and we all understand that. You do and we do up here. That is the nature of these hearings, particularly when you have four nominees, but it is an opportunity to at least lay down some markers of what we think is important. And I regret the time constraints, though I am sure you are delighted by them. [Laughter.]

Ms. Sison, let me ask you. Was the Doha Agreement a victory for Hezbollah? And is the current structure and the Israeli agreement recently on the exchange a victory for Hezbollah? Does that complicate matters for Siniora?

Ambassador SISON. Mr. Chairman, let us look at what the Lebanese people got out of Doha. The moderates retained control in the cabinet with the 16/11/3 makeup of the cabinet despite the so-called blocking third. Lebanon was able to inaugurate a consensus president, Michel Sleiman. The Lebanese people received an agreement for the issue of Hezbollah arms to be raised in the context of a renewed national dialog, but most importantly, as we discussed yesterday, the fighting stopped. The actions of Lebanese killing Lebanese during the month of May—that violence stopped. So the Lebanese people benefitted from the Doha Agreement.

Now, Hezbollah lost something in May I believe. Hezbollah turned its weapons against the Lebanese people. That is remembered in many quarters.

Now, I have to say that Hezbollah's efforts to establish its own telecom network and its decision to conduct its own airport surveillance in Beirut, the two issues that triggered partially the violence in May, remain areas of concern.

You noted the Hezbollah/Government of Israel agreement for the prisoner exchange, the recent prisoner exchange. I have to say that the return of Kuntar to Lebanon I found personally difficult to watch in the media, even though I was sitting here. He is not a hero. He killed a father, killed a 4-year-old, was responsible for the death of the 2-year-old sibling. Having said that, for the Lebanese people the issue of the Lebanese prisoners in the neighboring state

in Lebanon—this is also an issue in Syria because there are Lebanese detainees in Syria as well—is an issue that is of great interest, of great import to the Lebanese people, which is why you saw the welcome that Kuntar and the others received back in Lebanon.

If confirmed, I will continue to make the point in Beirut and elsewhere in Lebanon that Kuntar is not a hero. I understand from the media that he may be looking to run for a seat in the parliament in 2009.

Senator KERRY. Well, would it be your judgment that Lebanon's sovereignty can gain a publicly and diplomatically arrived at agreement as to sovereignty without our resolution with respect to Iran and Syria's resolution with respect to the Golan and the Shebaa Farms, or are they integrated, all three?

Ambassador SISON. Mr. Chairman, Senator Coleman, Lebanon is a relatively small country in a very complex and complicated region. So these regional issues that you cite obviously have great impact on Lebanon.

Senator KERRY. And the Hariri tribunal?

Ambassador SISON. The special tribunal—of course, we at the embassy in Beirut and, of course, the Washington watchers as well were struck when President Sleiman on May 25 took his oath of office in the parliament the day he was elected President. He specifically mentioned his intention to pursue those investigations through the special tribunal on the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and the others who had been assassinated because there is a long list, sadly, of those whose lives have been taken.

During her June 16 visit to Beirut, Secretary Rice stated that the time had come to resolve the Shebaa Farms issue in the context of U.N. Security Council resolution 1701, which also calls, of course, for disarmament of the militias such as Hezbollah. So we do believe that a diplomatic resolution to the Shebaa dispute would have the effect of undermining Hezbollah's so-called credentials, so-called resistance credentials and complicate Hezbollah's efforts to maintain an armed state within a state. Ideally that Shebaa Farms dispute would be resolved by a bilateral border delineation between Syria and Lebanon.

Senator KERRY. Well, I will wrap up here by saying to you that I have served now on this committee for 24 years, and this is the first administration that spent almost two-thirds of its administration with an arm's distance policy with respect to the Middle East, and I think we have paid a very high price for it.

I was in the West Bank the day that Mahmoud Abbas was elected President. I was the first person to meet with him the next morning, and I will never forget his question to me with a statement saying, I know what you expect of me. I have to disarm Hamas. Now, you tell me how I am supposed to do it. And he pointed to the absence of police, of radios, of cars, of capacity. And for years we have neglected to build capacity, and Hamas, as well as Hezbollah, practiced politics far more effectively than we have empowered our allies to do it.

I think it has been a tragedy that we have been selectively choosing to spend $12 billion a month to develop a democracy where there was not one and, frankly, not doing more to help a democracy

where there is one, struggling to hold on, in Lebanon. So I think we really need to think seriously about how we apply these priorities in what we do.

I am convinced that with the right attention and the right set of priorities and particularly putting the Mideast peace process on the table front and center, that we can begin to change our relationships in the region for the better. And I think the rest of those things can conceivably come together.

And what is clear to me, in my discussions in Israel—the efforts by Prime Minister Ohlmert now to find some sort of a pathway and President Abbas, given the difficulties of Gaza, are seriously complicated by that absence of united States presence and engagement over a period of time.

So we all hope we can move forward. It is in everybody's interests to do so. And I wish each of you well in these endeavors which are, obviously, made very complicated by the macro policies that spill downward which affect the choices that you have as ambassadors. It really is important what you are able to do on the ground and the messages that you can convey.

I do need to just ask a pro forma question of each of you, and it takes a yes or a no. Does anyone among you have any potential conflict of interest that would prevent you from doing your jobs? Ms. Sison.

Ambassador SISON. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Pearce.

Mr. PEARCE. No.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Olson.

Mr. OLSON. No, but Mr. Chairman, for the record, I should say, as you kindly noted at the beginning, my wife is the United States Ambassador to Kuwait, but of course, we have completely separate chains of command and we share no responsibility for supervision of employees or resources.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff.

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. No, Mr. Chairman, but just like my colleague, I would like to say for the record my husband is deputy chief of mission in Riyadh, but we do not share a chain of command.

Senator KERRY. What is going on here? We have got this nepotistic Foreign Service now. [Laughter.]

Senator KERRY. A family-friendly Foreign Service. We like it.

And the final question, does anybody have a conflict of interest that would require them to recuse themselves from any particular issue that might appear before you? Ms. Sison.

Ambassador SISON. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Pearce.

Mr. PEARCE. No.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Olson.

Mr. OLSON. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. And Ms. Gfoeller-Volkoff.

Ms. GFOELLER-VOLKOFF. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you all very much. We are going to leave the record open for a 48-hour period until Thursday. We want to move forward rapidly, and hopefully get all of you approved at the

first business meeting and by the Senate next week before we go away so you can all be on your way and get going with the future. So we thank you again for your service and thank you for being here today.

We stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:57 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSE OF RICHARD G. OLSON, JR., TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question. Within OPEC what is the UAE attitude with respect to oil pricing? Do you understand that the UAE plans to expand production?

Answer. UAE officials have said they are concerned about the impact of rising prices. The UAE currently does not export large volumes of oil to the United States; however United States firms are active in bringing Emirati oil to market. UAE officials have said they want to increase production capacity from the current level of 2.48 million barrels per day (b/d) to about to 4 million b/d in the next 2–4 years.

RESPONSES OF RICHARD OLSON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. In June 2007, the Senate confirmed J. Adam Ereli to be the Ambassador to Bahrain. After serving there less than a year, Ambassador Ereli is now in Baghdad, serving for a year as the Public Affairs Officer at the United States Embassy. He apparently intends to return to Bahrain to resume his post next summer. In the meantime, there is no United States Ambassador in Bahrain.

When the committee acts on your nomination, it expects that you will serve the usual 3-year tour, unless there are personal or other compelling circumstances that require you to return to Washington. We don't expect that ambassadors will abandon their jobs for a year to take another position.

Recognizing that you serve at the pleasure of the President, will you commit to stay at your position, and not depart your post for any extended assignment, whether in Baghdad or elsewhere? If you do take such an assignment, will you resign your ambassadorial post?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, it is my intention to serve a 3-year tour at Embassy Abu Dhabi, subject to the pleasure of the President and at the discretion of the Secretary of State.

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

Answer. Support for human rights and democracy has been a strong element throughout my career.

In 198586, I was the human rights officer at Embassy Kampala, and reported extensively on mass killings in the Luwero triangle during the Ugandan civil war. This reporting was instrumental in supporting the State Department's criticism of the Obote regime for its human rights record.

In 1992–94, as political-economic section chief at Embassy Addis Ababa, I worked intensively with the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, the opposition, and NGOs to promote civil society and a culture of democracy in the aftermath of the Mengistu regime. While not entirely successful, these efforts helped to create a space for the political opposition in Ethiopian politics.

As political director of the Iraq office in 2004–2005, I provided Washington support for the first Iraqi national elections, a milestone in Iraq's democratization.

As director of the office of Iraq in 2006, I led the Near East Bureau's support for the development of an Iraqi Constitution, a document that significantly advanced the rights of women and preserved the principle of religious freedom.

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

Answer. The most pressing human rights issues in the United Arab Emirates involve constraints on civil liberties—including freedom of assembly and association—as well as limited public participation in decision-making. A limited group of electors participated in the 2006 elections for the Federal National Council. While the UAE has seen rapid social changes in the past decade, inequality in treatment of woman and noncitizens remains a concern.

If confirmed, I will continue U.S. Government efforts to underscore the importance of human rights and democracy. For example, the recent decision of the UAE Prime Minister to forbid the imprisonment of legitimate journalists for what they write is a major step forward. If confirmed, I plan to encourage further domestic reform efforts such as the development of independent civil society organizations and the empowerment of the Federal National Council to take on a more responsive role in dealing with citizens and residents alike. In so doing, I hope to foster an environment in which a dialog on these issues can flourish. Through such collaborative efforts and engagement, I believe that we can strengthen our bilateral relationship, while improving the quality of life for all living in the UAE.

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 the UAE in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. While the UAEG has welcomed constructive feedback and engagement from the United States on the significant human rights concern of trafficking in persons, the UAE has been slower in developing competitive elections and representational government. With no democratically elected legislative institutions or political parties, and no general elections, citizens do not have the right or ability to change their government via democratic means. In addition, the vast majority of UAE residents are not citizens, and thus remain largely outside the political process.

Further progress on human rights and democracy must involve sincere backing by the UAE leadership. To ensure that the current Federal National Council (FNC), an advisory body, is more responsive to the needs of citizens, government ministries need to be charged with listening to and supporting the FNC, increasing its capabilities, and increasing public awareness of the importance of participation in decision making.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post/bureau activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. In addition to robust annual reporting on important issues such as trafficking in persons, human rights, and religious freedom, I will also actively engage the Emirati leadership throughout the year. If confirmed, I will ensure that human rights reporting and advocacy have a prominent place in the Mission Strategic Plan and other planning documents. I will also encourage my locally employed staff, none of whom currently are Emirati citizens, to share openly with me any issues of concern.

If confirmed, I will ensure that Foreign Service officers working on human rights issues, especially advocacy for human rights, receive appropriate credit for such activities in their annual evaluation reports and by special awards, as appropriate.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in the UAE who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. Yes, I believe that in order to achieve progress on human rights issues, the U.S. Government must engage both government officials and nongovernmental organizations. If confirmed, I would seek to create dialog between the efforts of citizens groups and the Emirati government. I would also welcome to the embassy, groups from the UAE or abroad who have specific issues they want the U.S. Government to be aware of and to facilitate contact with Emirati institutions.

RESPONSES OF DAVID PEARCE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD

Question. Over the past year the security situation in Algeria has deteriorated significantly with the emergence of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). If confirmed, how would you work with the Algerian Government to address this problem? What tools does the embassy have and what tools would you like to see strengthened?

Answer. The Algerian Government is committed to the struggle against terrorism, and we want to support them in that fight to the best of our ability. We maintain a strong and fruitful intelligence relationship, and the United States has significantly increased our capacity-building assistance to the Algerian Government on countering terrorism finance. We would like to see a wider relationship between United States and Algerian law enforcement, and we opened a legal attache office to that end in 2007. We would also like to see the relationship between our militaries continue to expand, as both the United States and Algerian militaries have hard-won counterinsurgency experience and could mutually benefit from sharing expertise. The United States and Algerian militaries are working together to build Algerian counterterrorism capabilities through training and education programs such as International Military Education and Training (IMET) and the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP). We also support commercial and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) of equipment for border and coastal security initiatives.

While these counterterrorism activities are important, the long-term struggle against terrorism must address the underlying issues of economic and political marginalization that feed extremism. It is in this area that I would most like to see a strengthening of the tools available to the United States mission in Algeria. Through the Middle East Partnership Initiative and other associated programs, we have in place promising programs building the capacity and independence of Algeria's judicial system, increasing the skills and professionalism of Algeria's media, fighting corruption, facilitating economic reforms, and, most promisingly, helping to transform Algeria's education system into one geared to producing graduates with the skills needed to succeed in the modern world. The needs in this area are immense, and if confirmed, I hope to be able to secure resources adequate to the task.

Question. Given the strategic location of Algeria—in North Africa but closely linked to the Sahel region—please describe the coordination on counterterrorism and security issues you'll expect to have with your colleagues across both regions, if you are confirmed, and what format this coordination will take. If there is no formal mechanism for such coordination and communication, how will you go about developing one?

Answer. Algeria is indeed in a strategic location vis-a-vis the rest of North and West Africa, and if confirmed, I will do my best to ensure that I maintain close contact with my colleagues across the region to ensure our coordination against an increasingly regional terrorist threat. The primary mechanism for such coordination is the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), which allocates counterterrorism resources to the Maghreb and Sahel countries in a process that includes substantial interaction between United States missions in the TSCTP partner nations, along with relevant agencies in Washington and the United States Africa Command. There is constant interface within TSCTP using twice monthly secure video teleconferences, an annual TSCTP conference, and visits to the region and between Washington and Europe. The Trans Sahara Regional Security Initiative also hosts a semiannual strategic forum with United States ambassadors and Washington; these remain valuable opportunities to exchange views and formulate an overall counterterrorism strategy for the region. If confirmed, I also plan to maintain more informal contacts with my counterparts in our missions to the countries of the Maghreb and the Sahel, to ensure that we are on the same page on cross-cutting issues with counterterrorism implications such as the Tuareg rebellions in northern Mali and Niger.

Question. A recent New York Times article delineated the challenges young Algerians face from a weak educational system vulnerable to religious extremism. What steps is the Algerian Government taking to address this problem and what kind of support is the U.S. Embassy providing?

Answer. While the Algerian educational system has been able to deliver a solid basic education to virtually all Algerian citizens, the demands of the modern world and especially of a modern economy make assistance particularly urgent. Under the Middle East Partnership Initiative and through other funding, we have been able to provide badly-needed assistance to Algeria's primary and secondary education systems in competency based curriculum and teaching instruction, including English-language instruction, and in incorporating technology into the classroom. A promising area we would like to develop further is the partnering of United States and Algerian universities to target increased job-training and instructor-training assistance to Algerian university student populations at risk of radicalization. If confirmed, I hope to be able to secure funding to substantially expand this pilot program.

RESPONSES OF MICHELE SISON TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. In light of recent attacks on United States personnel, what security improvements have been taken to ensure the safety of United States personnel and property in Lebanon?

Answer. For many years, based on the critical threat environment in Beirut, the United States Embassy has operated in a heightened security posture. We have robust countermeasures and a proactive, integrated security program in place to protect our personnel and property. The Emergency Action Committee regularly meets to discuss and adjust our security posture to reflect current threat assessments. Two recent incidents reflect the need for this constant vigilance. On January 15, 2008, one of our embassy vehicles was attacked with a roadside bomb, resulting in injuries to two Foreign Service National employees and the death of three Lebanese bystanders. On June 18, 2008, an incident involving aggression directed toward my motorcade occurred in Nabatiyeh, which slightly injured two embassy bodyguards. Following these incidents, the security units at the embassy and the Emergency Action Committee assessed how to best adjust existing security practices—as we do frequently in the constantly evolving and volatile local security environment—to better protect our people while in vehicles.

Based on our assessments, we determined that we could implement several procedures to augment vehicle security. These vehicle security policies compliment and reinforce the other existing security measures already in place at Embassy Beirut. We determined that the number of Americans allowed in each fully armored vehicle should be lowered from four to three, we diversified the embassy fleet by acquiring new sedans that are not as readily identifiable as being U.S. Embassy vehicles, and we increased manpower for chief of mission movements. We also contracted for rental vehicles that can serve as advance vehicles for motorcades, thus reducing the likelihood that our advance cars will be recognized and tip-off those that might be preparing attacks. In addition, we increased the number of routes in order to avoid using frequently used routes and implemented a "Zone System" in the Greater Beirut area in an effort to make our moves less predictable. The zones where Americans are permitted to travel for unofficial moves change weekly.

Question. Please provide the committee with a brief status report on United States efforts to train and equip the Lebanese Army and Internal Security Forces, and United States reconstruction assistance for the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp (which was destroyed in fighting against the Fatah al-Islam terrorist group last year).

Answer. Since 2006, the United States has committed over $400 million in assistance to the Lebanese security forces. The assistance includes equipping the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) with modern body armor, helmets, over 12 million rounds of ammunition of various calibers, front line weapons, spare parts for LAF vehicles and armor, and over 285 all terrain vehicles (HMWWVs). Three hundred more HMWWVs will arrive over the next year.

U.S. military personnel have provided training in Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and, in fiscal year 2007, DOD also conducted three Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) courses for LAF Special Forces units. DOD will conduct an additional six JCET courses in fiscal year 2008. Also, starting in October 2008, the United States military will begin its Comprehensive Training Program (CTP) in Lebanon, designed to train the entire LAF.

Through the U.S. Government partnership with DynCorp International, our Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) has implemented a number of demining programs with the LAF. Since summer 2006, these humanitarian assistance programs have cleared 4,092,569 square meters to return productive land for safe use by the Lebanese people. An additional 789,803 square meters have been scheduled for clearance.

Since 2006, the U.S. Government has committed over $60 million in security assistance to the Internal Security Forces (ISF). This assistance has equipped the ISF with 3,000 sets of civil disorder management equipment, 360 vehicles, 14 armored personnel carriers (APCs), duty gear for 4,000 cadets in various ISF units, and new academy classrooms, offices, and equipment with which to provide training.

In addition to equipment, funding has supported ISF training, which consists of two components—basic cadet training and instructor training. Basic training is a 10-week program taught by United States instructors with the assistance of Lebanese police and legal professionals that instructs recruits in the latest policing and law enforcement techniques, modern police practices, administration, democratic policing, human rights, criminal investigations, and other essential law enforcement

skills. Instructor training is a 1-week class that teaches ISF instructors the essential skills to teach law enforcement courses, which will prepare them to eventually take over the training program from the United States.

To date, we have graduated 343 police cadets in two classes, with an additional 190 cadets currently enrolled at the academy in Beirut. This third class is set to graduate September 12, with the next class starting training 1 week later. Between now and the start of the fourth class, we plan to complete sufficient academy upgrades that will allow us to double our training program from 200 to 400 cadets per class. This expansion will help us reach our goal of training to 8,000 cadets over a 5 year period. In addition, we have graduated two classes of instructors, or a total of 66 ISF instructors. The next class for 45 instructors is scheduled for October.

Also, through the State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) program, U.S. trainers are providing specialized ISF units with training in advanced driving tactics, SWAT tactics, and crises management training. This advanced training for the ISF will continue throughout 2008.

The United States announced in June 2008 a $22 million pledge for the reconstruction of the Nahr al-Bared refugee camp to assist Palestinian refugees and Lebanese in surrounding communities. This pledge follows the U.S. Government's $13.5 million contribution in fiscal year 2007 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to provide emergency assistance for the Palestinian refugees displaced by the fighting and a separate $100,000 contribution to nearby Lebanese communities also affected by the fighting.

The $22 million aid package is divided into three components. First, $10 million will support UNRWA's reconstruction of the camp, including housing, infrastructure, and utilities, in addition to restoring educational and health services. Second, $6 million will focus on revitalizing Lebanese communities surrounding the camp, including reconstruction, job creation, improved sanitation services, school rehabilitation, and business development. Third, $6 million in security assistance will bolster the ISF's community policing program, construct an ISF police station and provide equipment such as patrol vehicles and duty gear.

Question. In June 2007, the Senate confirmed J. Adam Ereli to be the Ambassador to Bahrain. After serving there less than a year, Ambassador Ereli is now in Baghdad, serving for a year as the Public Affairs officer at the United States Embassy. He apparently intends to return to Bahrain to resume his post next summer. In the meantime, there is no United States Ambassador in Bahrain.

When the committee acts on your nomination, it expects that you will serve the usual 3-year tour, unless there are personal or other compelling circumstances that require you to return to Washington. We don't expect that ambassadors will abandon their jobs for a year to take another position.

Recognizing that you serve at the pleasure of the President, will you commit to stay at your position, and not depart your post for any extended assignment, whether in Baghdad or elsewhere? If you do take such an assignment, will you resign your ambassadorial post?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, it is my intention to serve a 3-year tour at Embassy Beirut, subject to the pleasure of the President and at the discretion of the Secretary of State.

RESPONSES OF DAVID PEARCE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Question. In June 2007, the Senate confirmed J. Adam Ereli to be the Ambassador to Bahrain. After serving there less than a year, Ambassador Ereli is now in Baghdad, serving for a year as the public affairs officer at the United States Embassy. He apparently intends to return to Bahrain to resume his post next summer. In the meantime, there is no United States Ambassador in Bahrain.

When the committee acts on your nomination, it expects that you will serve the usual 3-year tour, unless there are personal or other compelling circumstances that require you to return to Washington. We don't expect that ambassadors will abandon their jobs for a year to take another position.

Recognizing that you serve at the pleasure of the President, will you commit to stay at your position, and not depart your post for any extended assignment, whether in Baghdad or elsewhere? If you do take such an assignment, will you resign your ambassadorial post?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I am fully committed to serve a 3-year tour at Embassy Algiers, subject to the pleasure of the President and at the discretion of the Secretary of State.

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

Answer. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, I was head of the political section in Embassy Kuwait. I was caught out of the country with my family at the time of the invasion, and spent most of the war in Taif, Saudi Arabia working with Ambassador Skip Gnehm and the Kuwaiti Government in exile. We knew that there was a great deal of anger among Kuwaitis at the pro-Saddam position of Yasser Arafat and the PLO. Ambassador Gnehm and I repeatedly stressed in our daily interaction with Kuwaiti leaders in Taif the strong United States interest in restoring the rule of law and, in particular, protecting the Palestinian population after liberation. When we returned to Kuwait to reestablish the embassy, we found that there was indeed much anger directed against the remaining Palestinians. We reaffirmed our strong view to the Kuwaiti leadership on the need to protect these civilians repeatedly. To back this up, we also organized—in addition to patrols by U.S. Special Forces—multiple, daily trips by U.S. Embassy officers into neighborhoods and police stations all over the city. I believe this action, which did not get a great deal of attention at the time, was instrumental in saving Palestinian lives.

As director of Northern Gulf Affairs 2003–2005, my office ran the Future of Iraq project, which had more than a dozen working groups. One important group was the Democratic Principles Working Group, which I chaired. Some of our Iraqi colleagues dubbed it the "mother of all working groups." The work of this group brought together about 30 Iraqis from all strands of society and their discussions foreshadowed many of the important issues that the Iraqi people are still dealing with today. What I particularly valued about this process was that a very heterogeneous group of Iraqis came together, identified and discussed fundamental issues about the future of their country, and put forward their ideas about how best to grapple with those issues. I remember telling them that perfect consensus was not necessary in a democratic process—there was not a Congress or a parliament in the world that agreed on everything all the time. What was important was that there be a representative and accepted process, and that they all recognize each other's rights in that process. I believe the Iraqis we worked with then demonstrated that, despite their considerable differences, they had the will to work through those differences and find their way to a national political accommodation. That process is now under way in earnest in Iraq and I believe it will ultimately succeed. Many of the people who took part in that initial Democratic Principles Working Group are now serving in the Iraqi Government and parliament and are deeply involved in the political process.

I was consul general in Jerusalem when Yasser Arafat died. There was some inclination among the Palestinian leadership at the time to throw the election for President into the parliament—which Fatah controlled—in order to guarantee the outcome that the Palestinian authority leadership preferred. Some Palestinians, including in leadership positions, thought that both Israel and the United States were also against elections. I countered this strongly, advocating with the Palestinian leadership against any move for a simple parliamentary vote and for a general election that would confer proper legitimacy to any outcome. In the end, this view prevailed, and Abbas was elected President in a vote that was seen as providing legitimacy not only to him but to a negotiated solution to the conflict with Israel. Abbas' principal rival for the presidency, Mustafa Barghouti, and others in the PA, made a point of thanking me personally for my advocacy on behalf of free and fair elections.

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

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that human rights issues continue to be an important part of our dialog with Algeria. Key outstanding issues include the lack of accounting for many persons who disappeared during the 1990s; restrictions on freedom of assembly and association; a criminal sanction on defamation that leads to self-censorship in the press; and recent limitations on freedom of worship for religious minorities that mar the Algerian tradition of religious tolerance. If confirmed, I will work for progress in these areas, both in our engagements with the government and with other stakeholders in Algeria. I would hope these engagements, together with other embassy programs and training, would not only contribute to progress on specific issues, but also to the public discourse, thereby making clear the importance that the U.S. Government and people attach to fundamental freedoms.

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 Algeria in advancing human rights and democracy in general?

Answer. The primary obstacle that I believe that I will face in addressing all of the primary human rights concerns that I noted in my previous response is that the experience of Algeria's 1990s civil war has made the Government of Algeria considerably more cautious about attempting to open its political system and loosen its restrictions on the activities of society, as it attempted to do in the late 1980s. This sensitivity is understandable, but I believe it is misdirected. If confirmed, I will work to convince my interlocutors that Algeria can best fight extremism and the threat it poses to return Algeria to the violence of its "black decade" by laying a foundation for the kind of open, pluralistic society that can give its citizens a stake in the health of the state and hope for the future.

Question. In your new position, what steps will you take to ensure that promotion of human rights objectives will be an integral part of post/bureau activities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that Foreign Service officers who engage in human rights activities are encouraged and professionally rewarded for superior service?

Answer. The dialog with Algeria on human rights issues has been and will continue to be an integral part of our mission. This will be reflected in mission contacts, reporting, and programming, including by our continued support for the Middle East Partnership Initiative and other programs. Officers providing superior service in these areas will be recognized the same way superior service in other areas is rewarded—through awards, performance evaluations, and challenging onward assignments.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with nongovernmental organizations in the United States and in Algeria who are working to promote human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I anticipate that meetings with nongovernmental organizations will be a regular feature of the mission's engagement on human rights issues.

RESPONSES OF TATIANA GFOELLER-VOLKOFF TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Question. Have you read the cable reference: 04 STATE 258893–Peace Corps-State Department Relations?

Answer. Yes. I have carefully reviewed this cable.

Question. Do you understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in this cable?

Answer. Yes. I understand and agree to abide by the principles set forth in 04 State 258893 regarding Peace Corps-State Department relations.

Question. Specifically, do you understand and accept that "the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct and concerns of our foreign policy" and the "the Peace Corps's role and its need for separation from the day-to-day activities of the mission are not comparable to those of other government agencies"?

Answer. Yes. I understand the need to keep the Peace Corps substantially separate from the day-to-day conduct of our foreign policy and, if confirmed, will strongly support this policy.

Question. Do you pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise your chief of mission "authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies"?

Answer. I pledge, as Secretary Rice requests in 3.B of the cable, to exercise my chief of mission authorities so as to provide the Peace Corps with as much autonomy and flexibility in its day-to-day operations as possible, so long as this does not conflict with U.S. objectives and policies.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008

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

Kim, Sung, to be Special Envoy for the Six Party Talks
McGann, Steven, to be Republic of the Fiji Islands, the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdoms of Tonga and Tuvalu, and the Republic of Kiribati
Rodley, Carol Ann, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:10 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Barbara Boxer presiding.

Present: Senators Boxer and Murkowski.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA BOXER, U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA

Senator BOXER. We will come to order.

Senator Murkowski and I are on a very fast time frame, which is very good for all of you because it means that we are very happy that you are moving forward. We do not have a lot of questions. So I will ask unanimous consent and grant it, that my statement be put in the record.

I will just say we are meeting to consider three distinguished nominees for ambassadorial posts.

Ms. Rodley, the President's nominee to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, has served her country as a career member of the Foreign Service for 28 years, most recently serving as the consultant for Afghanistan and Iraq, training at the Foreign Service Institute. Prior to that, she served as the Counselor for Political and Military Affairs at the United States embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. Ms. Rodley has experience in Asia, having served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. embassy in Cambodia. She speaks Khmer, the native language of Cambodia.

Mr. Steven McGann, a career Foreign Service member since 1992, is the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Fiji Islands. If confirmed, he will also serve concurrently as Ambassador to the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Republic of Kiribati. Mr. McGann previously served as the Director of Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and as a senior advisor to Assistant Secretary of State Chris Hill.

And we are considering the nomination of Mr. Sung Kim, a native of my home State of California, currently the President's Special Envoy for the Six Party talks. In other words, he is Assistant Secretary of State, Christopher Hill's, right-hand man on the issue of negotiating an end to North Korea's nuclear program. What an important assignment. And the President has nominated Mr. Kim for the same position, but this time he will carry the rank of Ambassador. Prior to working on North Korean nuclear disarmament, he served in a variety of posts throughout Asia.

Thank you all so much for service to country.

And at this time, I will put my statement in the record and turn it over to Senator Murkowski.

[The prepared statement of Senator Boxer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA BOXER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA

Today, the full Senate Foreign Relations Committee meets to consider three distinguished nominees for ambassadorial posts. As chair of the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, I am extremely pleased to welcome our nominees, Ms. Carol Ann Rodley, Mr. Steven McGann, and Mr. Sung Kim.

Ms. Rodley, the President's nominee to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, has served her country as a career member of the Foreign Service for 28 years, most recently serving as a consultant for Afghanistan and Iraq training at the Foreign Service Institute. Prior to that, she served as the Counselor for Political and Military Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. Ms. Rodley also has experience in Asia, having served as the deputy chief of mission at the United States Embassy in Cambodia between 1997 and 2000. She also speaks Khmer—the native language of Cambodia.

Mr. Steven McGann, a career Foreign Service member since 1992, is the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of the Fiji Islands. If confirmed, he will also serve concurrently as Ambassador to the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga Tuvalu, and the Republic of Kiribati.

Mr. McGann previously served as the Director for Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and as a senior advisor to Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill.

And finally, we are considering the nomination of Mr. Sung Kim, a native of my home State of California. Mr. Kim is currently the President's Special Envoy for the Six Party Talks. In other words, he is Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill's right-hand man on the issue of negotiating an end to North Korea's nuclear program.

The President has nominated Mr. Kim for the same position, but this time he will carry the rank of Ambassador. Prior to working on North Korean nuclear disarmament, Mr. Kim served in a variety of posts throughout Asia.

Thank you all for your service to our country.

I would like to touch on the issues that each of you will face in your respective regions and countries, because I think they clearly illustrate the range of challenges that must be addressed in Asia, including poverty, weapons proliferation, political instability, corruption, lack of adequate foreign investment, and climate change. These challenges affect America's interests and our values.

Cambodia, despite notable economic growth over the past decade, remains one of the poorest countries in Asia, with over 80 percent of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture. Corruption remains pervasive, and the government, whose human rights record was recently rated as "poor" by the United States State Department, too often uses a heavy hand in its dealings with Cambodian citizens.

Even Cambodia's attempt to atone for one of the greatest crimes of the 20th century, the massacre of more than 1.7 million Cambodian citizens by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime, has been plagued by corruption. The Khmer Rouge trials set for this fall are currently at risk as international donors have threatened to withdraw funding over allegations of corruption.

Fiji, a relative success story in the Pacific, was rocked by a military coup in 2006 and has yet to see democracy restored. Kiribati and Tuvalu are facing threats to their very existence from global warming. One day in the not too distant future, islands that are home to tens of thousands may simply be swallowed up by the ocean.

And finally—North Korea.

I was very critical of the Bush administration's initial approach to North Korea, one that favored tough talk and little action over meaningful engagement.

I think the administration learned a harsh lesson with respect to North Korea, one that demonstrated that problems in Asia cannot be simply ignored or wished away.

Unfortunately, this administration woke up one day to learn that North Korea's nuclear weapons program had been significantly expanded. It was only after that realization that the administration initiated the diplomacy we needed through the Six Party Talks.

While the process has been marred by difficulty in recent weeks, I am hopeful that through sustained effort, our end goal can be achieved, the complete and verifiable dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear program.

But reports about Kim Jong-il's health raise the possibility that North Korea's future could be uncertain, with the potential for a jarring and unpredictable transition.

So, as I have said to many ambassadorial nominees heading to Asia before you, it looks like you all have your work cut out for you.

I look forward to hearing your prepared remarks, which I ask that you limit to 3 minutes. Longer statements can be submitted for the record.

But before you give your statements, I would like to turn to the distinguished ranking member of the committee, Sen. Lisa Murkowski, for any comments she may have.

STATEMENT OF HON. LISA MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Madam Chair. I too will keep my comments brief, but want to extend my welcome to the three of you and my appreciation for your willingness to serve.

Mr. Kim, certainly the issue of the Six Party Talks is one that has garnered a tremendous amount of attention lately. Mr. Kim, we followed your travels to North Korea with great interest. I thank you for your willingness to be gone from home for such long periods of time as you work to verify North Korea's compliance in disabling and hopefully the future dismantlement of its nuclear program.

Mr. McGann, welcome. Now, while you may have a small population to pay attention to in your new post, you certainly make up for it in the distance that you will have to travel in order to serve. It kind of reminds me of my home State. But again, thank you for your service.

And Ms. Rodley, Cambodia is certainly making some progress in its political reforms, but we acknowledge that it still has a ways to go. I will be interested to hear your assessment of whether their new-found oil and gas reserves will either help or hinder that progress.

With that, Madam Chairman, I look forward to the statements of each of these respected individuals and to our questions later.

Senator BOXER. Mr. Sung Y. Kim, for the rank of Ambassador, we would be thrilled to hear from you, sir.

STATEMENT OF SUNG Y. KIM, NOMINEE FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE AS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE SIX PARTY TALKS

Mr. KIM. Thank you very much. Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor and a privilege to be here today as President Bush's and Secretary Rice's nominee to be Special Envoy for the Six Party Talks and, with your consent, to receive the rank of

Ambassador during my tenure. Few Asian-Americans have had the opportunity to serve the United States as an ambassador, and I am deeply moved and grateful to be considered for this opportunity. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with this distinguished committee and other Members of Congress to advance United States interests with regard to North Korea and the Six Party Talks.

I would like to take a moment to introduce my family because without their support I would not be here today. My mother and my brother traveled from California, my home State of California, to be here today, and my wife, Jae.

Senator BOXER. Would you stand? Hello.

Mr. KIM. And my wife and our daughters, Erin and Erica, are here today, as well.

Senator BOXER. Stand up. We are so happy to see you all here.

Mr. KIM. I think Erin and Erica are mostly happy to be missing school today. [Laughter.]

May I also introduce some of my distinguished colleagues from the State Department and the NSC, some of the most dedicated and talented young officers in the United States Government. They also took time to be here today.

Madam Chairman, I have had a lifelong interest in Asian affairs. In fact, as a Foreign Service officer, I have spent much of my time advancing United States interests in Asia. Although my direct involvement in the Six Party process started just with my tenure as Director for Korean Affairs, in some ways during my 19 years of diplomatic service, the challenge posed by North Korea's nuclear program has figured prominently and I believe has prepared me well for the important tasks I had. In fact, in some ways, even my pre-State Department career as a prosecutor in Los Angeles I believe has been useful to my work in the Six Party negotiations.

As deputy of our Six Party delegation, I have had the opportunity to lead several interagency delegations to North Korea to try to advance implementation of all Six Party commitments. During this time, I have had the privilege of working closely with Assistant Secretary Hill who, as you know, has energetically led the Six Party process, and I thank him for his support, guidance, and trust. I am also grateful to Secretary Rice for her leadership and support.

Madam Chairman, during the past 2 years, we have taken significant steps in the Six Party process. Working together with our Six Party partners, we have shut down North Korea's nuclear complex in Yongbyon and, in fact, have moved into disabling those facilities in Yongbyon. And our nuclear experts have been on the ground continuously since November of 2007.

North Korea has temporarily halted disablement activities and, in fact, appears to be reversing some steps, but we remain committed to the Six Party process and are working closely with our partners to make sure that the disablement process is put back on track.

On June 26, North Korea submitted a declaration of its nuclear programs. The Six Parties have agreed to a set of principles to guide verification of this declaration, and we are now focused on

developing a strong, robust verification protocol to move the verification process forward.

Madam Chairman, we remain concerned about North Korea's possible activities with uranium enrichment and proliferation activities. North Korea has stated categorically that it is not now and will not in the future engage in any uranium enrichment or proliferation activities. North Korea has also agreed to cooperate with verification with regard to those two issues.

The Six Parties have also established a monitoring mechanism to ensure full implementation of all Six Party commitments, and we believe that would be an important vehicle to check North Korea's fulfillment of its obligations.

Madam Chairman, there is still much work left. We anticipate many challenges and ups and downs as we seek the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. However, the Six Party process is working and a denuclearized North Korea remains essential to peace and stability in the region. With your consent, I hope to continue to serve my country in the pursuit of this vital national interest.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kim follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUNG Y. KIM, NOMINEE TO HAVE THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE SIX-PARTY TALKS

Madame Chairman, Senator Murkowski, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor and a privilege to be here as President Bush's and Secretary Rice's nominee to serve as Special Envoy for the six-party talks and, with your consent, to receive the rank of ambassador for the duration of my tenure. Few Asian-Americans have had the opportunity to serve the United States as an ambassador, and I am deeply moved and grateful to be considered for this privilege. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with this distinguished committee and with other Members of Congress to advance United States policy with regard to North Korea and the six-party process.

I would like to take a moment to recognize my family because without their support I would not be here today. I am joined by my mother and brother who flew in from my home State of California, and my wife, Jae, and our two daughters, Erin and Erica. I am also pleased that my friends and colleagues from the Department of State, some of the most dedicated and talented young officers in the U.S. Government, are able to join me today.

I have had a life-long interest in Asia, and as a Foreign Service officer, I have had the opportunity to spend much of my time working to advance United States interests in Asia. My direct involvement in the six-party talks began with my tenure as Director for the Office of Korean Affairs, but in looking back at my 19 years of diplomatic service, I realize that my experience has prepared me well for this important assignment. As Political-Military Affairs Chief in Seoul, I worked closely with our military colleagues to strengthen our alliance with the Republic of Korea; as a political officer in Tokyo, I covered Japan's relations with China, as well as North Korea; and as a desk officer in Washington a decade ago, I focused on a key aspect of our relations with China. The challenge posed by North Korea's nuclear program figured prominently in all of these assignments. Even my pre-State Department experience as a prosecutor in Los Angeles in some ways has been useful to my work in six-party negotiations.

As Director for Korean Affairs and as deputy of our six-party delegation for the past year, I have had the honor of leading several interagency delegations to North Korea to advance the implementation of various six-party commitments. These efforts included negotiating a robust package of disablement measures for core North Korean nuclear facilities and securing critical information on North Korea's nuclear program. During this time, I have had the privilege of working closely with Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, who has energetically led the six-party ne-

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Madame Chairman, during the past 2 years, we have taken significant steps in the six-party process. Working with our six-party partners, we have shut down North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear complex. We have also moved into disabling the core facilities at Yongbyon, and since November 2007 United States personnel have maintained a presence on the ground in Yongbyon. North Korea temporarily has halted the disablement activities and appears to be

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUNG Y. KIM, NOMINEE TO HAVE THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE SIX-PARTY TALKS

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On June 26, North Korea provided a declaration of its nuclear programs. The six parties have agreed to guiding principles for verification of this declaration, and we are now working with our partners and the North Koreans to develop a strong verification protocol to move the verification process forward.

We still have concerns with North Korea regarding uranium enrichment and proliferation activities. North Korea has stated that it is not now and will not in the future engage in any uranium enrichment or proliferation activities. North Korea also has committed to cooperate with verification activities related to these two issues. The six parties have established a monitoring mechanism intended to ensure

implementation of all six-party commitments, including nonproliferation. We believe this will be an important vehicle to pursue any questions regarding North Korea's follow through on its promises.

Madame Chairman, there is much work left to be done. We anticipate many challenges and ups and downs as we pursue the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. However, the six-party talks process is working, and a denuclearized North Korea remains essential to peace and security for all the members of the six-party talks. With your consent, I hope to continue to serve my country in pursuit of this vital national interest. Thank you, and I am happy to respond to any questions you have.

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Senator MURKOWSKI [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Kim.

Senator Boxer has had to excuse herself for just a moment. She does anticipate being back, but we will proceed. Mr. McGann, if you would like to give your statement.

STATEMENT OF C. STEVEN McGANN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE FIJI ISLANDS, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF NAURU, THE KINGDOM OF TONGA, TUVALU, AND THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

Mr. MCGANN. Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, members of the committee, I am deeply honored that President Bush has nominated me to be United States Ambassador to the Republic of the Fiji Islands, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Nauru, and the Kingdoms of Tonga and Tuvalu. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust in nominating me for this position.

Madam Chairman, I want to thank you and the members of this committee for your efforts to address a burgeoning array of challenges confronting these countries and for giving me this opportunity to appear before you today. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Members of Congress to maintain strong bipartisan support for United States goals and priorities in the Pacific.

Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, I would like to acknowledge the support of my wife, Bertra McGann, the dedication of my mother, Evangeline Hutson, who hopefully is watching in Los Angeles today, and the enthusiasm of my children, Leyland, Steven, Bethany, Bradford, and Benjamin, my family, friends, and colleagues, particularly Barbara Benson, my secretary, that led to my being before the committee today.

If confirmed, I plan to build upon my work over the past 2 years leading the Office of Australian, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs to build United States relationships in the Pacific. During my tenure, I will focus on four important areas: promoting democracy, increasing economic growth, strengthening environmental stewardship, and enhancing maritime security.

The Pacific's balmy weather, welcoming people, and natural wonders attract over 150,000 Americans to Embassy Suva's consular district each year. My responsibility is to provide services to these Americans will remain a high priority of our embassy.

Addressing environmental issues will be an essential part of my portfolio. Environmental degradation poses an especially critical challenge for these countries. Many are low-lying atolls that are increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Over-fishing threatens marine sources and hits hard in the Pacific because these island states depend on fish stocks not only for sustenance but as a major source of government revenue. We will continue our work with Pacific countries to help save coral reefs and protect the marine environment from invasive species. If confirmed, I will work with Pacific nations to help make them green economies based on environmentally sustainable policies and adopting renewable energies, including solar, wind, and wave, to advance our common interests.

I would like to take a few moments to address a number of pressing bilateral issues the United States faces in the Pacific, beginning with Fiji.

In December 2006, the Fiji military, led by Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, overthrew the country's lawfully elected government. This was Fiji's fourth coup in 19 years. In accordance with the Foreign Operations Assistance Act, the United States suspended military and some foreign assistance programs in Fiji because of the coup, and those restrictions will not be relaxed until Fiji returns to democracy. We have also imposed visa sanctions and taken other measures directed against coup leaders and their supporters. We have taken these steps in close coordination with our allies and partners in the region to underline the urgency to restore democracy and to bolster the efforts of the Pacific Islands Forum. If confirmed, I will work with all elements of Fijian society and regional partners to quickly restore the rule of law, strengthen civil society, and rebuild democratic institutions in Fiji.

Nauru's once bountiful phosphate mines are almost exhausted. Per capita income in that country has plummeted from among the world's highest to near subsistence levels. Tuvalu has expressed concern that any rise in seal level may completely engulf Tuvalu's nine atolls, precipitating the relocation of its entire population. Kiribati generally manages its affairs responsibly but has severely limited prospects for economic development. This year's legislative

elections showed that Tongans have a strong desire for democratic reform, and Tongan King George Tupou V has agreed that democratic reforms are needed in the country. If confirmed as ambassador, I would work closely with our longstanding friends to address these economic, political, and social issues.

Finally, I will do my best to promote excellent relations between the United States and each of these five countries and the territories within my consular district. Working together, we can achieve our common goals for a more peaceful and prosperous Pacific region.

Again, I applaud the committee's efforts to address challenges confronting the Pacific region, and at this time I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McGann follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF C. STEPHEN MCGANN, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE FIJI ISLANDS, THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI, THE REPUBLIC OF NAURU, THE KINGDOM OF TONGA, AND TUVALU

Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, members of the committee, I am deeply honored that President Bush has nominated me to be United States Ambassador to the Republic of the Fiji Islands, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, and Tuvalu. I want to thank President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust in nominating me for this position. Madam Chairman, I want to thank you and the members of this committee for your efforts to address a burgeoning array of challenges confronting these countries and for giving me this opportunity to appear before you today. If confirmed, I will work closely with Members of Congress to maintain strong bipartisan support for U.S. goals and priorities in the Pacific.

Madame Chairman, I would like to acknowledge the support of my wife, Bertra McGann, the dedication of my mother, Evangeline Hutson, and the enthusiasm of my children, Leyland, Steven, Bethany, Bradford, and Benjamin, my family, friends, and colleagues that led to my being before the committee today.

Prior to being nominated, I served as in the State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs as the Director of the Office of Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs, as well as the Maritime Security Coordinator. I also served as the Director for Asia and Near East in the Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration, as well as in other positions during my 29 year career in the U.S. Foreign Service.

If confirmed, I plan to build upon my work over the past 2 years leading the Office of Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs to build United States relationships in the Pacific. During my tenure, I focused on four important areas—promoting democracy, increasing economic growth, strengthening environmental stewardship, and enhancing maritime security. As ambassador, I will be building upon the United States historically friendly relations with Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu. Those relations began with 19th century mariners and missionaries and grew stronger during the Second World War. Some of the bloodiest fighting in the Pacific theater took place on Tarawa atoll in Kiribati, and United States forces set up bases at several locations in Fiji, Tonga, and Tuvalu.

If confirmed as the United States Ambassador, resident in Suva, Fiji, I would be responsible for our bilateral relationships with five independent nations. Suva also is the headquarters of the Pacific Islands Forum, the preeminent multilateral organization in the region and home to offices of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, which manages technical and development assistance programs in the region. Fiji's place in the Pacific, as host to numerous diplomatic missions and international organizations, including the United Nations, and as a transportation center, makes it a key focal point for our larger regional engagement.

Embassy Suva is a busy hub of American activity in the Pacific. If confirmed, I will lead an embassy team of professional, highly dedicated public servants. They manage relations with five sovereign countries and collaborate with multilateral organizations. The embassy serves as a center for regional public diplomacy activities, environmental programs and policies, and defense-related relationships. The embassy also has consular and commercial responsibilities for French Polynesia, New

Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna, making it the largest geographic consular district in the world. The Pacific's balmy weather, welcoming people, and natural wonders attract over 150,000 American visitors to Embassy Suva's consular district annually. Provide services to these Americans would remain a high priority of our embassy during my tenure.

If confirmed as ambassador, fostering regional stability and eliciting support for the war on terror would remain priorities of the embassy. Tonga and Tuvalu became early members of the coalition to liberate Iraq. Tongan troops currently provide security for coalition forces at Camp Victory. Fiji's troops are doing the same for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq in Baghdad.

Pacific Island nations face many of the same "global issues" threats and challenges that the United States and other countries face—but in the case of the Pacific Islands the repercussions can be more acute.

Protecting the environment, fighting HIV/AIDS, stemming the flow of illicit drugs, and combating human trafficking are growing concerns in the region. Environmental degradation poses an especially critical challenge for these countries. Many are low-lying atolls that are increasingly vulnerable to the effects of rising sea levels. Overfishing threatens marine resources and hits hard in the Pacific, because these island states depend on fish stocks not only for the sustenance, but as a major source of government revenue. We are also working with Pacific countries to help save coral reefs and protect the marine environment from invasive species. If confirmed, I will work with Pacific nations to help make them green economies based on environmentally sustainable policies and adopting renewable energies, including solar, wind, and wave, to advance our common interests.

A key partner in this effort is the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). I have had the pleasure of working with several SPC leaders, and if confirmed, I would look forward to our continued collaboration in such areas as maritime security; the fight against diabetes and other public-health concerns; women's issues; biosecurity; natural resource conservation; and economic development. In addition, if confirmed, I will implement initiatives to spread to the Pacific community the economic and employment opportunities related to the multibillion dollar relocation of United States forces from Okinawa to Guam.

As in other parts of the world, Peace Corps volunteers in the Pacific make a tremendous difference in so many lives. Simply put, they are among America's most effective ambassadors. The Peace Corps plays an essential role in enhancing our people-to-people relations in the region. I have worked closely with Peace Corps staff and volunteers during the past 2 years and in my previous posts. If confirmed, I will build on these close relationships to ensure the health and safety of volunteers, and consult with key stakeholders on the possibility of expanding the Peace Corps' presence in the region.

I would like to take a few moments to address a number of pressing bilateral issues the United States faces in the region, beginning with Fiji. This list is by no means exhaustive. In December 2006 the Fiji military, led by Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, overthrew the country's lawfully elected government. This was the Fiji's fourth coup in 19 years. The coup has created a prolonged political and economic crisis in Fiji. In accordance with the Foreign Operations Assistance Act, the United States suspended military and some foreign assistance programs in Fiji because of the coup, and those restrictions will not be relaxed until Fiji returns to democracy. We have also imposed visa sanctions and taken other measures directed against coup leaders and their supporters. We have taken these steps in close coordination with our allies and partners in the region to underline the urgency to restore democracy and to bolster the efforts of the Pacific Islands Forum. Recently, Fiji's interim government withdrew its pledge to Pacific leaders to hold free and fair elections no later than March 2009. If confirmed, I will work with all elements of Fijian society and regional partners to quickly restore the rule of law, strengthen civil society, and rebuild democratic institutions in Fiji.

Nauru's once bountiful phosphate mines are almost exhausted. Per capita income in that country has plummeted from among the world's highest to near subsistence levels. Tuvalu, one of the world's smallest nations, has 9 atolls only a few feet above sea level. The Government of Tuvalu has expressed concern that any rise in sea level associated with climate change may completely engulf Tuvalu and necessitate the relocation of its entire population. Kiribati generally manages its affairs responsibly but has severely limited prospects for economic development. This year's legislative elections showed that Tongans have a strong desire for democratic reform, and Tongan King George Tupou V has agreed that democratic reforms are needed in the country. If confirmed as ambassador, I would work closely with our longstanding friends of the United States to address these economic, political, and social issues.

Many nations have significant interests in the South Pacific. Australia and New Zealand have strong cultural, political, historical, and security ties with the region, and the United States works most closely with these two countries in coordinating policies and programs throughout the area of Embassy Suva's responsibility. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in Australia and New Zealand to achieve our common objectives.

China is rapidly expanding ties throughout the Pacific in its pursuit of seeking resources and commercial opportunities. China's competition with Taiwan for diplomatic recognition and influence plays out directly in Embassy Suva's area of responsibility: Kiribati, Nauru, and Tuvalu recognize Taiwan, while Fiji and Tonga recognize China. If confirmed, I will engage with both China and Taiwan to press for responsibility, accountability, and transparency in development programs to ensure that their assistance supports good governance and the rule of law.

Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu occupy a strategically important place in the Pacific. As our partners in addressing critical global and regional issues, it is in the United States interest to remain fully engaged with these countries. If confirmed, I will do my best to promote excellent relations between the United States and each of these five countries and the territories within my consular district. Working together we can achieve our common goals for a more peaceful and prosperous Pacific region.

Again, I applaud the committee's efforts to address challenges confronting the Pacific region. At this time I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. McGann.

And finally, we will turn to Carol Rodley for your statement. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF CAROL ANN RODLEY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

Ms. RODLEY. Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the Ambassador of the United States to the Kingdom of Cambodia, and am grateful to the President and to Secretary of State Rice for their trust and confidence in sending my name forward for your consideration. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and other interested Members of Congress to advance United States interests in Cambodia.

I would like to introduce my husband, David Newhall, and my son, Niles Lashway, who are in the audience. Two other children of mine are tied up with the demands of law school and organic chemistry and are unable to join us today, but are rooting for me from afar. The career I have had in public service has been a great privilege, but it has demanded sacrifices of my family and I would like to acknowledge their great partnership and unfailing support and thank them for that.

Senator MURKOWSKI. We thank them.

Ms. RODLEY. The United States reestablished relations with Cambodia in 1993, following one of the largest U.N. peacekeeping operations ever mounted. Although the effects of Khmer Rouge rule still linger and Cambodia's road to democracy has been a difficult one, today the country is at peace. Its economy is growing rapidly, and Cambodians express more confidence in their future than they have in the past. Throughout this transition, the United States has been a proud beacon of support for democracy and human rights in Cambodia. A vibrant Cambodian NGO community today flourishes with our moral and financial support and has taken the lead in advancing the causes of political freedom, democratic governance, justice, and respect for human rights. This year, the Khmer

Rouge Tribunal is scheduled to hold its first trial for crimes against humanity, a significant milestone on the path to justice and reconciliation. Cambodia, once the beneficiary of U.N. peacekeeping, today has troops deployed in southern Sudan and its demining experts have served honorably in Afghanistan.

While much work remains to be done to strengthen the rule of law, democratic institutions, and respect for human rights, Cambodia and Cambodians have come a very long way from the dark days of Pol Pot's evil reign. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing United States interests in Cambodia by promoting freedom and greater openness, pressing for justice, standing up for and speaking out for human rights and the rule of law whenever possible, safeguarding United States citizens, 150,000 of whom live in or travel to Cambodia every year, advocating for United States business interests, and working hard to achieve the fullest possible accounting for United States personnel still missing from the Vietnam War.

Thank you, Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Rodley follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CAROL ANN RODLEY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the Ambassador of the United States to Cambodia. I am grateful to President Bush and Secretary of State Rice for their confidence and trust in sending my name to the Senate for your consideration. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance United States interests in Cambodia.

I would like to introduce my husband, David Newhall, and two of my children, Alice and Steven, who are in the audience. Another son, Niles, is away at school in West Virginia. The career I have had in public service has been an enormous privilege, but it has demanded sacrifices from my family and I want them to know how much I appreciate their partnership and unfailing support.

In my 28 years in the Foreign Service, I have served in a number of countries, including Cambodia and Afghanistan, which have suffered from political strife, ethnic conflict, post-conflict challenges, and insurgencies. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve and represent my country and I have always sought challenging assignments, both abroad and at home, where I believed I could make a difference. I am recently back from a year in Afghanistan, where I worked on coordination of civilian and military counterinsurgency efforts and reform of Afghan security forces. That experience reinforced for me the importance of an integrated approach to the complex problems that face us and our foreign partners.

The United States reestablished relations with Cambodia in 1993, following one of the largest U.N. peacekeeping operations ever. Although the effects of Khmer Rouge rule still linger and Cambodia's road to democracy has been a difficult one, the country is at peace and its economy is growing. National Assembly elections in July took place peacefully and with a significant voter turnout, and Cambodians themselves are more confident of their future than they have been in the past. Throughout this time, the United States has been a beacon of support for democratic development and protection of human rights in Cambodia. A vibrant Cambodian NGO community flourishes with our financial and moral support and has taken the lead in advancing the causes of political freedom, democratic governance, justice, and respect for human dignity. This year, the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, established to bring the senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge to justice, and which I worked to establish during my previous service in Cambodia, is scheduled to hold its first trial—a significant milestone on the path to reconciliation and justice. Cambodia, once the beneficiary of a U.N. peacekeeping operation, today has deminers deployed in southern Sudan, and other Cambodian demining experts have shared their expertise on mine action coordination and victim assistance in Afghanistan.

While much work still needs to be done to strengthen rule of law, democratic institutions and respect for human rights, Cambodia and Cambodians have come a long way from the dark days of Pol Pot's evil reign. If confirmed, I would continue

to emphasize that support for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law remain cornerstones of United States policy in Cambodia.

The United States and Cambodia share many common interests and our bilateral relationship is also growing closer. Cambodia has cooperated with us for years in helping achieve the fullest possible accounting of Americans missing from the Vietnam War. More recently, law enforcement and counterterrorism cooperation between our two nations has increased, as has our military-to-military engagement. Cambodia has also made significant progress in combating trafficking in persons and deserves praise for its support of religious freedom. Cambodia continues to improve its business and foreign investment climate, and its economy is growing. However it remains one of the poorest countries in Asia and is wracked with corruption that both inhibits development and threatens much of the progress that has been made. As I alluded to earlier, Cambodia's democratic institutions are still fragile and need our support.

If confirmed, I look forward to advancing our interests in Cambodia, promoting freedom, pressing for justice, standing up for human rights and the rule of law, safeguarding the 150,000 Americans who live in or travel to that country each year, and advocating for American business interests.

I would like to mention the progress Cambodia has made in the area of child welfare, which I know is of interest to many members of this committee. Intercountry adoption from Cambodia has been suspended since 2001, when widespread corruption and trafficking in children was discovered. Since then, Cambodia has ratified the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption and is working to establish the capability to meet its Convention obligations. If confirmed, I will work closely with Cambodian counterparts to develop a system that respects both Cambodian and United States law and provides safeguards for vulnerable children, birth parents, and adoptive parents.

I believe my 28 years in the Foreign Service, including my recent service in Afghanistan as Counselor for Political/Military Affairs, my years as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, and my previous service as Deputy Chief of Mission in Cambodia have prepared me well for this assignment. I would certainly draw on this experience to ensure that our embassy uses its resources wisely, that we intensify our engagement on important issues that affect U.S. national security, and that the safety and security of American citizens remains a top priority.

Thank you, Madam Chairman, Senator Murkowski, and members of the committee. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator BOXER [presiding]. Thanks. I have asked Senator Murkowski to run the hearing, and I am going to ask my questions first. I just have three things happening all at the same moment in my life, which is what happens in the Senate.

I wanted to talk to you, Mr. Kim, about where we are today. I do not want to assume anything and I do not want to ask you some question that you really cannot answer, given the instability there. Do you feel that the Six Party Talks process will move forward regardless of who is at the helm in North Korea?

Mr. KIM. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

We, of course, have no information to confirm the press reports.

Senator BOXER.. Yes.

Mr. KIM. But we are continuing to monitor the situation very closely. We are also in close contact with all of our Six Party partners about the situation in Pyongyang.

It is difficult to speculate, but in terms of the Six Party process, we of course remain fully committed to the Six Party process, and we hope that whatever the leadership situation is in North Korea, that the North Koreans also realize that it is in their interest to continue to work with us toward the goal of the denuclearized Korean Peninsula and the Six Party process.

Senator BOXER. It is so key.

I have some other questions, but I am going to ask you to answer them in the next few days. There is nothing tricky for the others.

Mr. KIM. Thank you.

Senator BOXER. So we will leave open the record.

I am just very pleased at these nominations. I just want to make sure that Senator Murkowski knew that. She has graciously agreed to chair the rest of the hearing and ask the questions. And I wish you every good wish, and I am so happy that some of the families are here to give you the support that you deserve. And we thank you for everything you have given to your country and will continue to give into the future.

Senator, thank you so much for taking the chair for me.

Senator MURKOWSKI [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Boxer.

Mr. Kim, let me just continue in the same line that Senator Boxer has mentioned. We are not quite certain the status of Kim Jong Il. We can do a lot of speculation here in terms of how the talks will proceed, but moving from that, we recognize that some of the other countries in the Six Party Talks are also looking at some changes. How will the resignation of Japan's Prime Minister impact the Six Party Talks, or will it?

Mr. KIM. The Japanese Government has been a very good partner in the Six Party process, and we fully expect that their participation in the process will continue through the transition.

They, of course, as you know, Senator have had serious concerns about the abductions issue, and we have pressed the North Koreans repeatedly to address Japan's concerns. And in fact, we were cautiously encouraged when the North Koreans and the Japanese reached an agreement on a set of modalities for resumption of investigations into that issue. I understand that investigation has been put on hold pending the transition in Tokyo, and I would urge the North Koreans to proceed with the resumption of investigations as soon as possible.

Senator MURKOWSKI. We recognize from Japan's perspective and from our perspective as a friend and ally of Japan that that aspect is something that we know needs to be addressed.

What do you make about North Korea's statement that it would consider steps to restore the operations at Yongbyon?

Mr. KIM. North Korea is known to issue unhelpful statements, and I am afraid that is one example. Any move to restore Yongbyon, I think, would be a serious mistake. We have noticed that they have begun to take some steps that would indicate restoration of Yongbyon, but these are relatively——

Senator MURKOWSKI. Such as what?

Mr. KIM. Such as they removed some disabled equipment that had been placed in storage. They took them out and brought them into operational areas. But at the moment, we have not detected any serious step to restore the operation of the Yongbyon facilities. In fact, we have been talking to all of our Six Party partners about the current situation, and I think all of our partners share our deep concern that any move to reverse disablement at Yongbyon would be a serious mistake.

Senator MURKOWSKI. So you think at this point in time that it is just talk by North Korea and that they do not intend—or you have indicated that there may be some signals out there that they could be serious about restoring the operations.

Mr. KIM. Yes, Senator. It is always difficult to figure the North Koreans out. It remains one of the most opaque societies and government.

What we have, of course, noticed is the statements, as you have cited, and some movement in Yongbyon that might indicate that they would move toward restoring Yongbyon, but these steps have been limited. And what we would like them to do is focus on getting a verification protocol done so that the verification of their declaration can move forward. I think that is the most urgent task. Any move to reverse disablement I think detracts from the work of the Six Party process, and I think it is something that they should not consider.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Are you seeing good cooperation then by our partners in the Six Party Talks on the issue of verification?

Mr. KIM. Yes, Senator, we have. We have continued to work very closely with the Chinese and all of our other Six Party partners in developing a strong and robust verification protocol that would help guide the verification activities on the ground in North Korea.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. Well, I thank you for your responses. Again, for all the efforts and your good work with regard to the Six Party Talks and all that you are doing, we appreciate it greatly.

Mr. McGann, you had mentioned the economic issues and associated matters and made reference to the coup in Fiji. With the coup and the subsequent pledge by China for continued foreign assistance and then the riot in Tonga in relation to China's economic infrastructure there, are there any other hot spots that we should be looking at in the Pacific islands as the China and Taiwan economic diplomacy plays out? Anything else you might be aware of that you could share?

Mr. MCGANN. Senator Murkowski, I believe that we have to work closely with China to make sure that China's approach toward development and assistance in the Pacific does not undermine our own efforts to promote good governance and rule of law. In the past few years, we have been engaged with China to try and move them away from what we call these white elephant projects, you know, building stadiums, building residences, and move in a direction that we are trying to move and that is focusing on capacity building, training, and technical assistance to the Pacific islands. We think we are hearing a responsive chord in China in that they are willing to listen to us. In that regard, while we are mindful that China has not altered its assistance to Fiji, again we are constantly talking with them about making sure that their efforts do not stray from our principal goal in Fiji which is the quick restoration of democracy and the legitimate government based on the existing constitution.

I would also like to add that we have often spoken with Taiwan officials about their responsibility as a donor in the Pacific region and that Taiwan should not focus on diplomatic recognition but, in fact, continue to focus on building friends in the Pacific. I might add that Taiwan has collaborated with the United States in the Pacific on very good issues such as polio eradication. Taiwan has also donated portable solar-powered generators to some Pacific islands. We think this is the right direction for Taiwan to take and that if we can continue to keep the focus on the real assistance needs of

the Pacific region and move it away from this unnecessary competition over diplomatic recognition between Beijing and Taipei, then we can eliminate the concern about their provoking or contributing inadvertently to creating hot spots in the Pacific.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Now, in the past or traditionally, Australia and New Zealand have been the very close partners certainly to Fiji. Is that still the case, or have China and India overtaken them in terms of those partnerships?

Mr. MCGANN. No, they have not. Australia and New Zealand are members of the Pacific Island Forum. Both Australia and New Zealand give substantial assistance to the Pacific region, not just Fiji alone. And we work very closely with both Canberra and Wellington to make sure that our policies in the region are complementary.

Although the United States is not a member of the Pacific Island Forum's group, which Australia and New Zealand and other Pacific island countries participate in, we are a Pacific nation, and we have increased our engagement over the past few years simply because we understand that there is an urgency in the Pacific, an urgency for us to address issues such as how to deal with noncommunicable diseases such as diabetes, how to address the food and energy concerns of the Pacific, which is why we are focusing on trying to direct the Pacific countries toward renewable energies. We believe that by continuing our engagement, the United States can work in a complementary fashion as a Pacific nation with all of our partners in the region to move toward our common goals which, as I said, are good governance, sustainable development, maritime security, and reaffirming the rule of law.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Very good. Well, thank you. We appreciate your statements here.

Ms. Rodley, I had mentioned in my very brief remarks about Cambodia's recently discovered oil and gas reserves. Can you tell me how far along they are in their development and whether or not you believe that the opportunity for increased revenues impact the government and whether or not they have already spent the money before it has come to them? Just give me a status on what is going on there, please.

Ms. RODLEY. Thank you, Senator Murkowski, and I especially appreciate the heads-up at the beginning that that question was coming.

There are two points that I would like to make about the oil and gas reserves.

The first one is that the most promising offshore tracts are in the area where the territorial claims of Cambodia and Thailand overlap, and Cambodia and Thailand have made very little progress to date in resolving those overlapping claims so that they can be exploited for the benefits of both countries. That is something that needs to be paid attention to and to be really stepped up.

The second concern that I have is that Cambodia has a lot of work to do still to reduce corruption, official corruption and all kinds of corruption, so that when those resources come on line eventually, it will benefit all of the people of Cambodia, that all of the people will benefit from those resources rather than just a few elites.

Senator MURKOWSKI. How about an update on adoptions? Are we any closer to seeing adoptions from Cambodia resumed?

Ms. RODLEY. The Cambodian Government has become a signatory to the Hague Convention which is a major step in that direction. Right now they are in the process of drafting domestic legislation to implement the Hague Convention. Once that legislation is passed, the next step and perhaps the hardest will be to establish the domestic institutions that will discharge their Hague responsibilities. And if I am confirmed as ambassador, the U.S. embassy will stand ready to assist them with that task.

Senator MURKOWSKI. We appreciate that.

And then one final question just about the latest election. What should we take away from that?

Ms. RODLEY. The election was the freest election that Cambodia has ever had. We believe the results of the election express the will of the Cambodian people. The U.S. embassy sent monitors freely throughout the country observing the polling and followed carefully the proceedings of the national election committee in resolving complaints and allegations of fraud after the election. While there were some isolated incidents of fraud and there may have been pockets of more systematic fraud, we believe that the election reflects the will of the Cambodian people.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, I thank you for that.

That concludes the questions that I had of the three of you. I appreciate your statements, and I echo Senator Boxer's comments in recognizing the caliber and the quality of individuals that we have before us. Your names submitted by the President for these respective positions—truly I think you will do great service to our country as you clearly have in the past. And we wish you well as you move through the process.

I too want to thank and recognize your families, whether they are here with you in person and missing school or whether they are viewing this on TV. We truly do appreciate the support that the families allow our public servants as they represent our country in various capacities, and it is so very fitting that we give them a little special thank you here this afternoon. So with that, I thank you so very much and best wishes to you all.

With that, we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:45 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008

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

Hook, Brian, to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs

Lebedev, Gregori, to be Representative of the United States to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform, and to be Alternate Representative of the United States to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations

Reynolds, Matthew, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs

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The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:00 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bill Nelson presiding.

Present: Senators Nelson and Corker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator NELSON. Good morning, everybody. If the officer at the door would close the door for a moment, we are going to observe a moment of silence in recognition of those who lost their lives when we were attacked on September 11.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

Senator NELSON. Thank you.

We are going to, as the committee, consider the nomination of three individuals for key leadership positions at the Department. We are also joined by several distinguished colleagues who will introduce our nominees, Senator Grassley, Senator Robb, Congressman Dreier. I want to welcome you all.

Mr. Brian Hook has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs.Mr. Gregori Lebedev has been nominated to be representative of the United States to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform, and that is with the rank of Ambassador, and to be Alternate Representative of the United States to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the U.N. And I will be seeing you up there because I am going to be representing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Mr. Matthew Reynolds has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs.

And so what I would like to do now—you all have been told ahead of time that I am not going to have you read your statements. Your written statement is going to be entered in the record and we will just get right into questions.

[The prepared statements of Mr. Hook, Mr. Lebedev, and Mr. Reynolds follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIAN H. HOOK, NOMINEE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS

Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs. I am grateful to President Bush for nominating me to this position, Secretary Rice for her support, and I thank Chairman Nelson and Senator Vitter for convening this hearing during a very busy time.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the good work of my predecessor in advancing U.S. interests before the United Nations, its affiliated bodies, and other international organizations to which the United States is a party. United States leadership in multilateral organizations has never been more important. Many of the challenges we face today are international in scope and require action on a multilateral level. These challenges include international terrorism, nuclear proliferation, the protection of human rights, promotion of democracy and good governance, poverty eradication, disease prevention and treatment, and food security. Working constructively within the United Nations, through the U.N. Security Council, the U.N. General Assembly, and the many U.N. agencies, we are better able to address constructively many of these challenges. Of course, any such success requires not only the shared commitment of our international partners, but also rigorous oversight of the agencies in question to ensure effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable outcomes.

If confirmed, I will apply what I learned while serving at the U.S. mission to the United Nations for 2 years. During that time, I was the ambassador's lead negotiator on Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran, Sudan, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban. I also helped to negotiate the resolution authorizing deployment of the U.N./AU peacekeeping mission in Darfur.

I believe it is necessary to further strengthen U.S. leadership in the United Nations and to facilitate the necessary reforms to the organization.

Of course we face many challenges throughout the world, but we should also recognize progress in a number of key areas, including:

- In March we adopted Security Council Resolution 1803, which imposed legally binding Chapter VII sanctions on Iran for its failure to comply with its prior U.N. Security Council obligations. This is the third time that the council acted to impose Chapter VII sanctions on Iran since the IAEA reported Iran's noncompliance to the council in February 2006, and Secretary Rice has expressed her commitment to a fourth resolution should Iran continue to act in defiance of council's directives.
- Last fall the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution on the elimination of rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict situations, as well as a resolution on women, peace, and security during our Council Presidency in June. Both these resolutions call attention to states that condone the use of rape by their own forces or surrogate militias as a weapon of war.
- The last General Assembly also adopted United States cosponsored resolutions condemning the human rights records of Iran, Belarus, the DPRK, and Burma, communicating to these regimes and to their victims that the international community will not countenance such blatant disregard for the fundamental rights and freedoms of their people.
- The World Food Program delivered 3.3 million metric tons of food aid to more than 86.1 million people in 80 countries last year. The United States provided approximately $1 billion, or roughly 40 percent of the resources needed to accomplish this. The World Food Program continues to reach those in need quickly and effectively, despite physical and political obstacles. A recent example of this was its response to Cyclone Nargis in Burma.
- U.N. peacekeeping operations continue to successfully facilitate the difficult transitions to stability and democratic governance underway in Haiti, Liberia, the Congo, and Timor-Leste.

While we can point to such notable achievements, we must be frank in acknowledging failures and the continuing challenges the U.N. faces.

Russia's recent military actions in Georgia and recognition of the Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states are inconsistent with previous Security Council resolutions reaffirming Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We are closely engaged with our colleagues to promote a constructive role for the council in addressing this crisis, but that will ultimately depend on Russia's willingness to play a constructive role in any council decisions.

At times, the U.N. has neglected to act with the moral clarity that defined its establishment. The U.N. Human Rights Council, for example, was established in 2006 as a replacement for the discredited former Commission on Human Rights. The council was intended to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Unfortunately, it has consistently failed to address grave and ongoing human rights violations in countries such as Zimbabwe and Iran, and has protected notorious human rights abusers from scrutiny. In its first year the council eliminated the special rapporteurs on the situations of human rights in Cuba and Belarus. Furthermore, it has taken only weak and ineffective action on Sudan, while a political agenda has led to the passage of 20 unbalanced resolutions and other actions against a single country—Israel. Regrettably, in its first 2 years the Human Rights Council has proved to be even worse that its predecessor, and we are now focused on ways to correct the council's deficiencies, including its membership structure, when its mandate and functions are renewed by the UNGA no later than 2011.

We are also disappointed that the U.N. plans to hold a second World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance in Geneva in April 2009. The United States withdrew from the first antiracism conference in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 due to the pervasive anti-Semitism that characterized the conference itself, as well as the inclusion of anti-Israeli language in the Draft Declaration and the Program of Action. We have no confidence that the second conference will avoid the anti-Semitic undertones that plagued the conference in Durban. Accordingly, and in compliance with section 695 of the 2008 Foreign Operations Act, we will withhold from our regular U.N. budget assessment an amount equivalent to the U.S. share of funding for the Human Rights Council and the Durban review conference.

The work of the U.N. has also been hampered in some cases by systemic weaknesses in the organization. Many U.N. programs are outdated, irrelevant, or ineffective. As we have pressed the U.N. for greater oversight, accountability, and transparency, serious problems have come to light that need greater attention by U.N. management, including cases of sexual misconduct by U.N. peacekeepers and management failures in the United Nations Development Program.

Such failures underscore the need for continued efforts to reform the U.N. to ensure the organization is prepared to confront directly and effectively the great problems of our time. There is widespread recognition that the U.N. is not living up to its full potential.

If confirmed, my central focus will be to advance reform and facilitate substantive progress in the following areas:

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

We will continue to work for a United Nations that meets the highest standards of integrity. The United States has launched the U.N. Transparency and Accountability Initiative (UNTAI) to encourage action to improve oversight, transparency, and accountability at the U.N. specialized agencies, funds, and programs. We will continue to reinforce this initiative. Within the U.N. Secretariat, we are working to strengthen the independence of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and will continue to demand responsible and effective stewardship of limited U.N. resources.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Due to the regrettable record of the U.N. Human Rights Council and in light of the United States longstanding commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, the United States has decided that it can no longer participate as an active observer in the council. We will further intensify our efforts in the U.N. General Assembly's Third Committee, which has jurisdiction over human rights and related issues, and will continue to pursue constructive interaction with the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and with the U.N. Special Rapporteurs on country-specific and thematic human rights questions.

PEACEKEEPING

We will work to achieve full troop deployment of the joint United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and continue to call on all U.N. member states to provide full support for the peacekeepers. Simultaneously, we will support the U.N. Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) peacekeeping operation in its efforts to facilitate the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between North and South Sudan, as a means to promote long-term reconciliation and an end to Sudan's suffering. We will continue to rally international diplomatic support for U.N. operations that are rebuilding peace and stability in transitioning countries such as Liberia, Haiti, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

NONPROLIFERATION

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remains the preeminent threat to U.S. national security. We will work within the U.N. Security Council, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and other international organizations to strengthen the barriers against access to WMD, associated technology, and their means of delivery.

DEMOCRACY FUND

We believe the U.N. should take a more active role in promoting democracy around the world through such mechanisms as the U.N. Democracy Fund. The Fund is the U.N.'s only entity devoted solely to democracy promotion primarily by supporting civil society. While other U.N. organizations such as UNDP typically regard host governments as their primary development partners, the Democracy Fund supports civil society directly—making it possible for the U.N. to fund democracy promotion regardless of whether it is a priority for the host government. In only 2 years of programming, the fund has already made important contributions in countries around the world, particularly for those most in need. We anticipate that the fund will take action on its second round of grants during the month of September. This will include funding for projects in China, Zimbabwe, and Venezuela, among others.

DEVELOPMENT

We will work with the U.N. to help developing countries eradicate poverty and hunger. This goal, along with the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), can only be achieved and sustained through a strategy of economic growth. The United States is proud to be the world's largest contributor of development assistance, but our focus and that of the U.N. must be more on the quality and effectiveness of our efforts than on the quantity of our contributions. Development requires national responsibility, good governance, openness to trade and investment, and a free and robust private sector.

TERRORISM

The U.N. provides a unique venue for member states to take collective action against terrorism, particularly those that may be reluctant to cooperate openly with the United States bilaterally. We will work with our allies to ensure that U.N. counterterrorism bodies and programs are streamlined and that they engage with each other and with other international bodies to ensure maximum efficiency and systemic coherence. We will also continue to work toward ensuring that the Global Counterterrorism Strategy and Plan of Action, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in September 2006 to enhance national, regional, and international efforts to counter terrorism, is implemented effectively.

Mr. Chairman, it is a great honor to be here today, and I hope that I have the privilege of working with you and your colleagues in the future. I would be happy to respond to the committee's questions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GREGORI LEBEDEV, NOMINEE TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N. MANAGEMENT AND REFORM, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, AND TO BE ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Vitter, and distinguished members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the United Nations for Management and Reform.

I am grateful to President Bush and to Secretary Rice for their confidence and support.

For nearly 30 years, I have worked in the foreign affairs community—as State Department Assistant Inspector General for Foreign Assistance, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Security and Consular Affairs, as Executive Vice President for International Policy at the United States Chamber of Commerce, as a senior partner in a global consulting firm whose clients included multilateral organizations, and currently as chairman of the Center for International Private Enterprise, one of the four institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy.

During that same period, I also acquired considerable experience in management and finance, having served as a CEO, a COO, and a CFO of industry associations; provided consulting advice to public and private as well as foreign and domestic organizations about management, financial structures, and human resources; evaluated economic and military assistance programs as a State Department Assistant Inspector General; and have spoken frequently about public corruption and its corrosive effects upon private enterprise. I believe these experiences have provided me with uniquely relevant insights which will permit me to effectively address the challenges of the position for which I have been nominated.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will focus on our shared interest in improving the management and governance structures of the United Nations, and thereby heighten the efficiency and effectiveness of this important institution. The time I will spend at the U.S. mission will measurably contribute to the continuity of attention on governance and management reform—the linchpin to any broader institutional initiatives that may be pursued. To be sure, without the requisite measure of accountability, transparency, and fiscal discipline the U.N. will forever be unable to meet the high expectations that we, and other member states have for this critically important multilateral organization.

Filling the currently vacant position of U.S. Representative to the United Nations for Management and Reform is key to meeting America's commitment to U.N. reform and fiscal stewardship. Placing a seasoned policy and management professional in this role sends a very clear signal to the international community that the United States, as the U.N.'s largest contributor, has not turned away from its fiduciary duty to advance the changes that are needed. To be sure, to leave this post vacant—and thus dim the spotlight on reform—would weaken the ability of the administration to continue to achieve much-needed improvements in the U.N. system.

In his 2007 speech to the General Assembly, the President spoke to the critical mission of the United Nations and its role in the liberation of people from four universal enemies: tyranny and violence; hunger and disease; the chains of illiteracy and ignorance; and poverty and despair. Progress can be made toward the realization of these long-term objectives, but only if the U.N. and its affiliated bodies are effective, transparent, and accountable. Our belief in the importance and value of the United Nations is enduring, but our commitment is not unconditional. Reports of scandal, mismanagement, and dishonesty shake the confidence of donors and cast doubt on the organization's ability to deliver results to those in need. Consequently, if confirmed, I intend to devote much of my attention and energy to the following areas:

Transparency and Accountability Initiative—In 2007, the United States launched a U.N. Transparency and Accountability Initiative (UNTAI) to apply common governance standards throughout the U.N. system, including independent internal oversight, disclosure of internal audits, ethics protocols, whistle-blower protections, and financial disclosures by staff. This initiative came about in the wake of abuses by the North Korean Government while a beneficiary of U.N. humanitarian and development activities. UNTAI draws upon existing practices within the U.N. Secretariat, and seeks to have them implemented in the U.N. Funds and Programs—in particular UNDP and UNICEF in New York, as well as all the other programs and specialized agencies throughout the U.N. system. If confirmed, I will work to continue our progress on this important program of work.

UNDP Accountability—There have been serious concerns about U.N. Development Program (UNDP) operations and the lack of internal controls in several countries, most recently in North Korea where U.N. auditors discovered that UNDP had violated U.N. rules. We have similar concerns about UNDP as an implementing agent for the Global Fund to Combat HIV, Malaria, and Tuberculosis in Burma.

The Department of State has been working with senior UNDP officials in an effort to help that organization meet the standards of the U.N. Transparency and Accountability Initiative, and to begin to more aggressively disclose audit and programmatic information, promote ethical behavior, and protect whistle-blowers. If confirmed, I will be forceful but fair in working with UNDP to improve the quality of the oversight of its programs.

Budget Issues—If confirmed, I will also be a strong advocate for fiscal responsibility within the U.N. The General Assembly approved an initial budget for 2008–2009 of $4.2 billion; however, this did not include approximately $1.1 billion in budgetary add-ons identified last fall but about which U.N. members decided to defer action rather than face tough decisions. The United States rightly objected to the adoption of this budget because this piecemeal approach clearly undercuts any rational process for fiscal planning. If confirmed, I will be actively involved in negotiations this fall to limit any increases to only those that are most vital to U.S. goals and interests.

While there have been a number of positive achievements in the U.N. reform arena, we are not yet satisfied with the progress that has been made throughout the U.N. system. Certainly, more work remains to be done. Although, I would not suggest that the tasks that remain could be completed over the next few months, I believe we must continue to advance our initiatives without interruption in order to bridge the gap between this and the next administration. I look forward to this opportunity and challenge.

In summary, the diversity of my experience is uniquely relevant to the challenges presented by the U.S. agenda for U.N. management and reform, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you, the members of this committee and all those who are committed to making the U.N. a more effective and efficient organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MATTHEW A. REYNOLDS
TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to appear before you today in regard to my nomination as Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs. I would like to thank President Bush and Secretary of State Rice for the confidence placed in me. I am honored by this opportunity to serve.

I would also like to thank my former chairman, mentor, and friend, Representative David Dreier, for introducing me before the committee today. While the U.S. Senate is solely responsible for confirmations—and I hope to achieve the Senate's approval through this hearing—the Bureau of Legislative Affairs serves both chambers of Congress and I value Mr. Dreier's endorsement as a representative from the House.

I have spent most of my professional career directly serving U.S. Senators and Representatives. Over my 18 years working in Congress, I gained a wide range of experience managing both Members' personal offices and standing committees of Congress. One of my most rewarding assignments was serving as a professional staff member of this committee. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, it is good to be back, though it is a bit more intimidating now sitting at the witness table than it was enjoying the relative anonymity of the staff bench behind you.

For the past 5 years, I have been at the State Department in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs gaining knowledge and appreciation of the responsibilities and capabilities of the agency. With this firsthand understanding of both Congress and the Department, if confirmed, it will be my highest priority to further strengthen the already solid relationships between the State Department and the Congress and with this committee, in particular.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs has three major responsibilities:

- First, is to be responsive to your concerns and to requests for information from you and your staff, as well as to assist your constituents on consular and other matters. This is a customer service bureau and this Congress is its customer.
- Second, is to consult with you—as well as with other committees that have oversight responsibilities for foreign affairs—to ensure that your views are considered in the State Department's policy formulation process.
- Third and finally, is the responsibility to articulate, to explain, and to defend the positions, policies, and financial requests of the Department of State.

As this is the end of an administration, I also recognize that the position of Assistant Secretary has another important responsibility that arises only periodically, and this is one of those times. Namely, the task of facilitating a smooth and seamless transition with the new, incoming administration. If confirmed, I plan to carry out this mission to the highest level of success and professionalism possible to ensure the continuity of quality service.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to be here today. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have.

Senator NELSON. But as a courtesy I want to get to Senator Grassley, Senator Robb, and Congressman Dreier. We will let the three of you go first and then you can excuse yourselves, if you would so desire, and then we can get on with the hearing.

Okay. Senator Grassley?

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES GRASSLEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM IOWA

Senator GRASSLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Nelson. I am very pleased to have an opportunity to introduce a friend and also a fellow Iowan to this Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Of course, I congratulate all the witnesses on their nominations, and I thank you, Chairman Nelson, this late in the session, for taking time to hold this hearing.

I have known Brian Hook for many years, and I strongly support his nomination to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations. I had the opportunity to first meet Brian way back in 1991 when, obviously—he is still young, but very young then when he was an advisor to former Iowa Congressman Jim Leach.

When he returned to Washington in 2000, after attending law school at the University of Iowa, I became better acquainted with him as he became a weekly jogging partner of mine. We would always have breakfast afterwards, and my wife Barbara and I have come to know Brian and his wife Amy very well.

Brian comes from an Iowa family with a tradition of public service that goes back generations. His great, great grandfather was a Member of Congress who represented the 3rd District of Iowa during Teddy Roosevelt's presidency. One of Brian's grandfathers was mayor of DeWitt in Clinton County. His other grandfather was a civic leader in the Quad Cities, and Brian's father was President of the Bettendorf School board. So it is no surprise that Brian continues this tradition of public service.

During his career, Brian has served as an advisor to a Member of Congress, an advisor to a Governor of Iowa, an advisor to an assistant attorney general, advisor to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, the Secretary of State, and the President.

Brian has extensive foreign policy experience, negotiated difficult Security Council resolutions on a range of issues at the top of our foreign policy agenda relating to Iran, al-Qaeda, the Taliban, North Korea, Darfur, Zimbabwe, and Georgia. He has also worked to advance U.N. reforms, human rights, and humanitarian relief.

The President has placed great trust in Brian by nominating him to this position, and I know that his trust is well placed. Brian brings great energy to his work. He has a strong work ethic and he believes in getting results. I know that Brian believes in building up a stronger, more effective U.N. to help advance our foreign policy goals and the ideals of the U.N. Charter.

So, Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to introduce Brian to the committee. I support his nomination, obviously, and ask that it move as quickly as possible and will look forward then to endorsing his confirmation to the full Senate. Thank you.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Senator Grassley.

Senator Robb, welcome back.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES "CHUCK" ROBB, FORMER MEMBER, UNITED STATES SENATE

Senator ROBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am delighted to be able to join you and your members in absentia this morning to introduce Mr. Greg Lebedev to be the U.S. Representative to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform.

I had a little trouble finding out what exactly the job description was for this particular post. As I understand it, if confirmed, Ambassador Lebedev would be the lead U.S. diplomat on U.N. management, finance, and reform. He would represent all U.S. interests surrounding the $4.2 billion regular U.N. budget, as well as the $7 billion for peacekeeping missions. He would address the various integrity lapses such as Oil for Food, and he would advance the U.S.-initiated reform agenda, i.e., work to persuade a reluctant U.N. to embrace a series of government principles and procedures involved in transparency, ethics standards, whistle-blower protections, and the like.

I have known Greg Lebedev for about 3 years, and I believe he is about as qualified as anyone possibly could be to undertake some of these often thankless tasks. I first got to know him in his capacity as senior advisor to the Robertson Foundation, a fund which is dedicated to supporting talented men and women wishing to pursue government careers in national security and in national affairs.

He has a very impressive background in the areas covered in this appointment: senior advisor to Adelphi Capital; Chairman of CIPE, the publicly funded Center for International Private Enterprise that promotes free market institutions and emerging economies throughout the world. He has been the President and CEO of the American Chemistry Council, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President for International Policy and National Security Affairs for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; President of the Center for Corporate Citizenship; Senior Vice President for Management and Finance at the ATA; Senior Vice President of IPAC where he helped direct projects in the reconstruction of Kuwait following the first gulf war. Until 1990, he was the senior partner of the Hay Group where he directed all business and international sector consulting contracts with major work in South Africa and the Middle East. President Ford appointed him Assistant IG of Foreign Assistance at the Department of State. He served on the White House staff. President Bush 41 nominated him to be IG of the DOD right at the end of his term, which did not continue, so he did not have a chance to serve in that particular post.

He is a seasoned internationalist. He has spent almost 30 years in and around the international community. He has highly relevant experience in management, finance, and government. And he is also a respected lawyer and an engaging conversationalist.

Mr. Chairman, I hope it will be the pleasure of this committee to approve his nomination quickly and get him to work as soon as possible. Anyone who thinks the U.N. could not use a little help in sorting through some of their daunting challenges probably has not spent much time at the institution.

With that, Mr. Chairman, unless you have any questions for me, in keeping with established tradition, I will asked to be excused and leave Mr. Lebedev to the tender mercies of this distinguished committee. And I thank you.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Senator Robb.

Congressman Dreier, welcome back.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID DREIER, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA

Mr. DREIER. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Corker. I appreciate the warmup that my friends, Chuck Robb and Chuck Grassley, have provided, and I hope you will be equally as kind.

I want to say that Senator Corker will some day learn what it is like to see very, very young, diligent, hardworking staff members emerge to prominent positions. I have heard the fact that people have known the individuals they are introducing for periods of time. Actually I have known Matt Reynolds for 20 years. I was just recalling that in 1988, when he was working as a staff member for my former California colleague, Bob Lagomarsino, who at that time was the Chairman of the National Endowment for Democracy's International Republican Institute. We had the chance to engage in some very, very interesting and important travel. In fact, I recall our being the first congressional delegation following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 to go to that country. And Matt Reynolds was a very, very important part of that.

When our colleague, Congressman Lagomarsino, left the Congress, Matt continued to work on Capitol Hill, and I was very pleased that he came to work when I had the privilege to serve as Chairman of the House Rules Committee. And he just reminded me that 7 years ago at this moment, we were all together in the House Rules Committee, and what a challenging time that was for us.

And I cannot help but think as we have all of these potential public service individuals before you, Mr. Chairman, how important the efforts in dealing with diplomacy are. A very important part of that diplomacy, of course, exists between the Department of State and the first branch of Government, that being us. The job that Matt Reynolds is actually serving—acting in right now and did in 2005 is such an important one because we all know what that separation of powers consists of. And while Matt works for the executive branch, he has had such a distinguished career working in the legislative branch.

And I will say that while he will continue to work for the executive branch, after you do what I certainly hope you will do, Matt is one who does understand—and please do not tell everyone this—that Article I happens to be the first among equals. And so his experience here, I think, will lead him to do the very important things that his job consists of.

His name is Matt Reynolds, but we often refer to him as Map, M-a-p, Reynolds because of the tremendous knowledge that he has of circumstances that exist throughout the world. And I am convinced, Mr. Chairman, that he is going to continue to do the superb job that he has in this very important work as we deal with the many challenges that exist around the world and within the United

States Congress. Just as my colleagues have, I encourage you to proceed as expeditiously as possible with his confirmation.

And thank you very much for including me.

Senator NELSON. And we are going to proceed expeditiously. Thank you, gentlemen.

The ranking member's opening statement will be entered in the record, as are your written testimonies. So let us get right to the questions.

[The prepared statement of Senator Nelson follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Before we begin, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the significance of this day, September 11. I propose that we observe a moment of silent reflection to commemorate the lives we lost on that tragic day 7 years ago, as well as remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of our great Nation.

Today, the committee meets to consider the nominations of three individuals for key leadership positions at the Department of State.

Mr. Brian H. Hook has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs.

Mr. Gregori Lebedev has been nominated to be Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform, with the rank of Ambassador, and to be Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Mr. Matthew A. Reynolds has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs.

I would like to recognize and welcome the nominees' family and friends who are with them today. We are also joined by several distinguished colleagues who will introduce our nominees—Senator Charles Grassley, former Senator Chuck Robb, and former Congressman David Dreier. Welcome, gentlemen.

Mr. Hook, you are currently serving as the acting Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs and recently testified as the administration witness at the subcommittee hearing I held on U.N. peacekeeping. Since you have had a few months to settle into your role as head of the bureau and to manage our complex relationship with the U.N. you already know the challenges you face.

The United Nations is an imperfect body, but over 60 years after its founding, it is still the only multilateral body in the world in which all 192 countries can consult over the most important issues of our time—war and peace, poverty and development issues, HIV/AIDS and malaria, and climate change among other topics. Next week the United Nations General Assembly will begin in New York. I look forward to hearing the administration's priorities for this important session.

Mr. Reynolds, you are currently serving as acting Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs. You too are well-acquainted with your duties—to serve as the principal advisor to the Secretary of State on legislative matters and as the Department's principal liaison with Congress.

If confirmed, your long service as a professional staff member in the U.S. Congress will serve you well as you manage this important relationship.

Mr. Lebedev, you have been nominated to serve as Representative of the United States to the U.N. for Management and Reform as well as to serve as Alternate Representative to the General Assembly. If confirmed you would become the point person in trying to achieve an important, but thus far elusive, United States priority: reform at the U.N.

Thanks to all three of you for testifying today and for your willingness to serve our country in these important positions within the Department of State.

Mr. Hook, we have got this coming session that is going to open up in another week. Senator Corker and I will be representatives of this committee up there in New York. What do you think are the top priorities for the United States at this session?

Mr. HOOK. We are very pleased that you are going to be representing the United States as delegates for the 63rd General Assembly. This will be President Bush's last opportunity at the GA. It will also be Secretary Rice's last opportunity.

So it is going to be a little bit of an opportunity to take stock in terms of all the progress that I think we have made at the United Nations in a range of issues. When you look at advancing freedom and democracy, curbing nonproliferation, humanitarian assistance, addressing threats to international peace and security, protecting human rights, these are all categories I think where we have made a lot of progress over the last 7 or 8 years.

And for the 63rd General Assembly, we will be certainly working on a number of resolutions in the General Assembly that would speak to human rights abuses that are taking place around the world. Some of them will be introduced by the United States. Some will be introduced by other countries. We did do an Iran resolution last year to shine a spotlight on the human rights abuses that are taking place there. That only passed out of the third committee by one vote.

One of the things that I have been working on—and I am making it a priority for this General Assembly—is changing the rate of voting coincidence among countries with respect to the United States. In 2002, it was around 30 percent, and now it is around 18. I just made a trip down to Central America and met with a number of foreign ministers. These are countries where we have very strong bilateral ties, and yet when we go into the United Nations, somehow there are more disagreements than there are agreements on some of these General Assembly votes which, when I read it, did not make a lot of sense to me because we agree in so many areas, the areas that I just talked about.

And so I am going to be making a focused effort on trying to change some of the voting outcomes in the General Assembly. It is not acceptable to me, I think, for us to have—at the United Nations where we play a leadership role, in overall voting in the GA, we are only at 18 percent voting coincidence with the United States. I think that number needs to improve. And that is something which I will looking at across the board if we are doing resolutions on Iran or Zimbabwe. I am sure there will be thematic resolutions. I would like to see our voting improve in the General Assembly.

I do know that during the time that you are up there, Burkina Faso will be doing a Security Council meeting, a thematic debate on mediation and settlement of conflicts. That will be on Tuesday when the President addresses the General Assembly. It is sort of helpful for Burkina Faso because they happen to be presiding over the Security Council at the time when all the heads of state are in town. And so I think there will be some focus on that issue.

But that is broadly what I am hoping to focus on in the 63rd.

Senator NELSON. Have you thought about what you ought to do with the U.N. peacekeeping force in Haiti, given the fact that Haiti has been racked by these recent hurricanes?

Mr. HOOK. Mr. Chairman, after we had our hearing in July, I went and visited Haiti. I was there 2 weeks ago and I met with the head of MINUSTAH, Heddi Annabi, whom I knew when I served up in New York at the U.S. mission. I think MINUSTAH is doing a very good job. In the last 2 years, it had very good leadership under Mullet, and now under Heddi Annabi who was the number two official in DPKO, he is now heading up MINUSTAH. And I met at length with Heddi, and he briefed me on sort of some

of the strengths and weaknesses of MINUSTAH. But I think on balance, I think we are seeing more strengths than weaknesses.

There is no doubt in my mind, in light of the devastation of three hurricanes and a tropical storm, that they are stretched. I did ask them, because we have a mandate renewal coming up for MINUSTAH, if they would like to see any change in their mandate, and they do not want to see any change.

Now, in light of these hurricanes, which have really been devastating, I will be getting back in touch with him. I do not want to sort of get in the way of him doing his job, but I think when things settle down a little bit, I will be in touch with Mr. Annabi to ask him, in light of the hurricanes, do we need to enhance the mandate to help it accomplish its duties a little more effectively.

When I was in Haiti—actually I was there the day that Hurricane Gustav hit and had to be evacuated through the Dominican Republic. But I had said before leaving that I thought MINUSTAH was expanding the space for political progress and economic development. Safety in the hierarchy of human needs is first, and it also happens to be the prerequisite for economic development. And I think MINUSTAH is doing a good job of that. It is then important for the government to take advantage of this space that I think MINUSTAH is helping to expand so that we can make some progress, I think, on economic development.

Senator NELSON. Were you able to travel freely throughout Cite Soleil?

Mr. HOOK. Cite Soleil I was planning on visiting on Tuesday, and that is when the hurricane hit, and so it was on my schedule but we ended up having to cancel it. There was not going to be any problem with traveling freely through the city. There were no security concerns raised.

Senator NELSON. What about the vetting of the national police? That started about 2 years ago trying to expel the corrupt. What do you observe there?

Mr. HOOK. Well, I think they are doing, I think, good work on—you have corruption issues and you have human rights abuses. And I believe that MINUSTAH is doing a good job of changing both categories. And they are graduating more police from their training programs. I saw a number of the police while I was in Haiti. I met with the U.N. police chief, who I think is doing a very good job. I think the head of the police operation and then the general I met with, the general of MINUSTAH—I was astonished at how well they worked together. They are a great team. And I left feeling fairly inspired about the work they are doing.

But you have been to Haiti and it just breaks your heart to see the kind of poverty and challenges they face, but I think we have the right people in place and I think they are doing a good job on policing. There is a lot more to do. We are trying to get to a goal of 14,000. That is the goal, to get to 14,000 police. You know, it is interesting in Haiti you have got a population about the size of New York City, and New York City has about 35,000 police. I think Haiti is somewhere around 9,000 or less. They are trying to get to a goal of about 14,000 under the U.N. training program. So I strongly encourage that because, again, it gets to this issue of cre-

ating more sort of safety and security so that then we can make progress in other places.

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. I will follow on and welcome both of you. Thank you for your service.

And I would agree with you. The general who is heading up MINUSTAH in Haiti is most impressive. So we are speaking of something that I think in that particular specific regard is going well from the standpoint of the United Nations.

In general, though, as you look—and I realize I have no idea how long you guys will be in these positions, you know, 4 months, 5 months, maybe a long, long time. Who knows? So some of these questions may be fair and some unfair.

But as you look at what the U.N. does well and you look at what the U.N. does not so well, give me sort of an outline of those areas that you think they do an exceptionally good job and those that you think really are gross failings or need improvement.

Mr. HOOK. Thanks for your question, Senator.

I would probably break it down by agency. We often refer to it as "the U.N.," this monolith, but it is, in fact, this organization. The org chart is really something to behold for the United Nations. But I think in some programs, especially the ones where our funding is voluntary, you see, I think, pretty effective work being done.

The World Food Program. We are the biggest donor to the World Food Program. They do a fantastic job of getting aid out the door and into the hands of people who need it.

The Food and Agriculture Organization does not have—I think they have had a lot of management problems. We think this food security—the crisis we are going through is a real chance for them to reform. We have been leading reform in the Food and Agriculture Organization.

On human rights, the Human Rights Council, deeply disappointing. We certainly did everything we could to create a body that would be worthy of its name. Now we have a body that is, in fact, curtailing I think its focus on a lot of human rights abuses that are occurring around the world, particularly in Cuba and Belarus.

The U.N. Security Council. I think the end of the cold war allowed for a great deal more cooperation on peacekeeping operations. We now have 20 around the world. At the end of the cold war, we did not have nearly that number. There is a 75 percent coupon people talk about when we have U.N. peacekeeping operations go out because we are able to do it—you know, if we send the military out, it is 75 percent sort of more expensive than if you would send a U.N. peacekeeping—because you are sharing the burden. And I think some peacekeeping operations have been successful. Others, as the chairman knows from our hearing, talking about the 60th anniversary of peacekeeping operations, some have been there for a very long time. But I think there have been successes in peacekeeping.

Today we have challenges in the Security Council. We think it is very important for the credibility of the Security Council to effectively address threats to peace and security. And I think that has been a mixed record.

Senator CORKER. I get the feeling in dealings with the United Nations, either being there or being in front of testimony here, that it is a really—it is more than a feeling. I think a fact. I mean, it is a place where change is very difficult to occur. I mean, the issues of transparency, of ethics.

I know that you have been there for a while in an assistant position. But what are the real obstacles there to causing the organization to handle itself in a way that is appropriate for all the donors and for those involved in the organization?

Mr. HOOK. We certainly use our contribution—we are the leading funder of the U.N., as you know. We try to leverage our financial support to effect the reforms that are necessary. I remember at the end of Oil for Food, Chairman Volcker's report talked in the U.N. about a culture of inaction, which is what you just sort of were referencing in the beginning of your remarks. It is a body of 192 member states, and progress can be grindingly slow.

I think the U.N., because of our leadership over the last 7 or 8 years, is improving on transparency and accountability. Our UNTAI initiative, which we launched just a couple of years ago, I think is helping. On a lot of these funds and programs, especially with UNDP, we need to see internal audit reports. There ought to be whistle-blower protection. There ought to be accounting standards which hew to sort of the highest possible standard.

Senator CORKER. So you ought to. And there are probably not many people who would disagree. So why is that not the case? Why is that not just the case tomorrow?

Mr. HOOK. Well, I have often said to some folks I have been discussing at the U.N. that we should not be having an argument about transparency and accountability. But the U.N. is a system that is very resistant to change, and we certainly do everything we can. I raise it at every opportunity in my meetings with U.N. officials.

But as I said, we are one member of 192. We are its leading funder. We leverage that as best we can, but much of it depends on the will of the body to change itself. And we cannot make it change itself. We can only sort of make the best arguments why it should, and when there is corruption in violation of U.N. rules, we shine a spotlight on it.

Senator CORKER. Is there any sense with this resistance to change? Let me go back and say that certainly we as an institution, just the way we operate here in Congress and just in our Federal Government, have not changed with the times enough to meet the needs. And I think we all realize that. But the U.N. seems to me to be continually, because of that lack of change, in many ways losing relevance as it relates to solving some of the major issues that we have. I wonder if you could give any editorial comment.

Mr. HOOK. Well, I have made exactly that point in my conversations, that in order for the United Nations to be credible and relevant in terms of meeting the very high obligations that the U.N. Charter imposes on it, it needs to be accountable and transparent to its member states. And some of the problems we have are with member states themselves who do not share our vision for reform.

I think Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon has got a commitment to reform. I think he is doing the very best he can. It is a very hard job pleasing 192 different member states.

Senator CORKER. Does the Secretary-General really have a position of power, or is it more of an anarchical kind of organization?

Mr. HOOK. Well, the funds and programs do report to the Secretary-General, but they have a certain independence which they protect robustly. And some of the challenges that we face are that the Secretary-General can agree with us, but then we also had to have that same conversation with funds and programs who may be in a different place than the Secretary-General. And in some cases, like I said, like the World Food Program, UNICEF, they are I think doing a very good job.

We have other organizations which we think have had enough of a history in terms of either not following the kinds of ethical standards that are necessary to maintain its credibility. It is very hard to get it to move. It is like sometimes it feels like turning a battleship, but I am committed to it.

Senator CORKER. I will let the chairman resume and I may resume after, or he may adjourn. I do not know what he is planning.

Senator NELSON. China and Russia are fueling the arms going into the Sudan, and I am getting ready to introduce a resolution to strengthen that arms embargo. What is going to be the action that the United States is going to take in the U.N. Security Council on the Sudan?

Mr. HOOK. Mr. Chairman, we are willing to pursue additional sanctions against Sudan not just sort of against the government, but against all the parties to the conflict.

When I was in New York advising a U.S. Ambassador, I had negotiated the Security Council resolution that imposed targeted sanctions against some individuals who are responsible for committing genocide or promoting hostilities.

The arms embargo is something which—you know, expanding the arms embargo could be a very effective tool. We also face a circumstance where some on the P5 engage in robust military trade with Sudan. So we need nine votes and no vetoes to pass a resolution that would impose an arms embargo.

We have an arms embargo on Sudan but it is not complete. It is partial. We all know that arms are getting into Darfur, so the U.N. arms embargo, the existing one, could very well be strengthened. Doing it in the Security Council I think will be a challenge in light of the military trade that some members of the council are engaging in.

Senator NELSON. Some of that P5 you are talking about is Russia and China.

Mr. HOOK. Yes.

Senator NELSON. What has been the impact of the International Criminal Court deciding to charge Bashir?

Mr. HOOK. The indictment referral, or at least the referral from Ocampo to the ICC, has actually had a very positive effect in terms of improving President Bashir's behavior. Right after the referral was made to the judges, suggesting an indictment, we saw enhanced cooperation in a number of areas.

We are not a party to the ICC, but many members of the council are. We think that from what I have heard from folks on the ground, that it is having a salutary effect. The indictments, if they are issued by the ICC judges—it may be some time before we see them. Ocampo made the referral. He made the recommendation, but we seen any indictments yet, only the recommendation that he be indicted for war crimes and genocide. But it has had a positive effect on the ground so far.

Senator NELSON. Well, that is good to hear.

The 2009 administration budget request underfunds the U.S. contribution to the U.N. by about $600 million. So I know you are not the head of Office of Management and Budget, but I would like to know your opinion on how do we justify continuing to short change the peacekeeping budget while continuing to vote for additional peacekeeping missions in the U.N.?

Mr. HOOK. Mr. Chairman, we want to continue to work with Congress to pay our bills in full and to meet our assessed contributions. You know, at this time last year, I do not think we could have predicted that UNMIH would cease to exist, nor could we have predicted that the operation in Georgia, UNOMIG, would be in the kind of limbo that we are experiencing in terms of the conflict in Georgia. It is a very dynamic set of circumstances that we have to assess. We look at it. Obviously, as you know, it is considered in the context of the overall budget, and we do the best we can without the benefit of a crystal ball and also trying to do this in the context of the larger budget. But I certainly recognize the concern and we do want to pay our bills in full, do what we can to meet our obligations.

Senator NELSON. Well, I want to continue to work with you on that because basically the next President is going to have to straighten out this inconsistency.

Senator CORKER. Because you brought it up and the currency of the issue, I was just in Georgia a couple weekends ago looking at what had happened in Gori and some of the other places that talk about the status of what we are doing in Abkhazia and with the U.N. and how you see that evolving with the present conflict.

Mr. HOOK. The U.N.'s role on this has been fairly limited so far. In Georgia, we have about 130 or so monitors that are part of the U.N. We have some police who are there, as well. They are there to monitor the cease-fire in Abkhazia. There are no U.N. officials in South Ossetia. And so to date the U.N.'s role has been limited.

I know that we have been working with the OSCE. We have 28 monitors who are in Georgia. Eight of them have been able to get into South Ossetia. We are looking to have a total of 100 OSCE monitors. The EU looks like it is going to be deploying 200 monitors into Georgia.

The real key is going to get Russia to permit the kind of access that is necessary into South Ossetia and Abkhazia. And Russia needs to meet its obligation to withdraw its forces prior to their deployment on August 7, and once the Russian forces withdraw, you then, I think, can have an opportunity for monitors or observers or peacekeepers to be in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. But for the time being, we actually have not even reached that issue because

of the difficulty of getting these monitors into South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The 130 U.N. observers that I spoke of in Abkhazia are going to be up for renewal on October 15, and that will be, I think, an important vote because Russia has voted in favor of all of the UNOMIG resolutions, and all of those resolutions affirm the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia. And it is something that we will insist on.

And so we are in discussions up in New York looking ahead to the October 15 renewal to see whether it is possible to renew it, to see if Russia is going to vote in favor of it. We certainly hope they do. We would like to see, I think for now anyway—I know circumstances are changing daily, but we would like to see the U.N. stay in Abkhazia.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, I can tell by the body language we may be coming to a close in this hearing. I wondered if Mr. Lebedev or Mr. Reynolds wanted to say something since there is a microphone in front of them, and I just feel like there may be some family members who might have joined——

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker, I have not gotten to them.

Senator CORKER. Okay. [Laughter.]

I may have sensed incorrectly.

Senator NELSON. You have.

Senator CORKER. All right.

Senator NELSON. Mr. Reynolds, you are the acting Assistant Secretary now. One of the things that you ought to be preparing for is a swift confirmation process for the upcoming high-level appointees in the Department of State for the next President. So tell me what you are doing to set that in motion.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One of the key objectives that we are looking at, particularly in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, is a very smooth and successful and professional transition, very akin to perhaps—we have all watched the Olympics recently. It is a relay race, and if confirmed, I hope to be the runner behind that is passing a baton to a new runner who will run very strong, as well. And part of that is winning that race and getting a lot of new high-level nominees confirmed, for example.

We have already started the process in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs on a couple of grounds. Number one, if confirmed, we will have a new Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary who is actually here today, Ambassador Mike Polt, who has served in the bureau before and has actually done quite a few transitions, moved the embassy in Bonn to Berlin, so is quite familiar with change and working that, as well. So we have started that process and are part of a team in the building at the Department as a whole that is working to make sure that there is a smooth transition as some individuals leave and new ones come in.

Within the bureau itself, we are also in the process of upgrading all of our databases, both hardware and software, to take us from the 20th century into the 21st century, which will very much help in that process in terms of doing not only research for the new nominees, but also perhaps answering the inquiries and the questions from the committee a bit faster as well.

Senator NELSON. Are you past this nonsense of partisanship so that no matter who the next administration is, that you are going to try to see a smooth hand-off?

Mr. REYNOLDS. Sir, our objective is to have a very smooth, successful, and professional hand-off of the baton. From my own personal experience, I have done two transitions myself here on the Hill with Members who are not returning, and it was their opponent who actually won. And I am proud to say that in both cases I was publicly acknowledged for having done a good job of making sure the constituents of those offices were not left behind and that projects and so on for those districts were handed over in a way that kept that success going, and if confirmed, I would intend to do the very same here at the Department.

Senator NELSON. Well, generally State and Defense are pretty good in the hand-off. It has been the nonsense in the White House that we have seen in going from one administration to the next that needs to stop. And that is why I asked the question.

Tell me, as you look back on lessons learned from the passport debacle in 2007, particularly with regard to the lack of communication between the Congress and the State Department—and that lack of information was coming from the State Department to the Congress because we were here crying for action in this debacle—what are the lessons learned?

Mr. REYNOLDS. Well, Mr. Chairman, there were a number of internal lessons learned by the Bureau of Consular Affairs, and I would have to defer to my colleagues there to describe to you some of the technical parts of——

Senator NELSON. I am talking about the congressional relations, your bailiwick.

Mr. REYNOLDS. But in terms of communications, we learned very quickly, sir, being at the front lines of the interaction with Congress to try and get more information to the Hill much faster and in a much more comprehensive way. While the bureau is small, we could have deployed and should and will in the future deploy more individuals in that process.

One of the things that would be very helpful that helped us very much in the House of Representatives and we would like to have here in the Senate is a liaison office right here. A lot of the work that is done, particularly with passports and consular issues, is done by our liaison office for the Hill which resides presently in the Rayburn Building. While the workload has gone up considerably—and I think that has really helped the communications—unfortunately, we have seen the percentages of Senate inquiries go way down. So 80 percent of the workload is now with the House.

We have already engaged in some very positive discussions with the Senate Rules Committee about trying to get space here. We appreciate that it is a cyclical process, so we kind of have to wait until the end of the Senate when you have the movements happening to be able to get a facility here in the Dirksen or in the Russell Building or in the Hart Building. But we think that would also be a very, very, very helpful way to keep in touch, not only with the Senators but with your staff, on a daily—hourly basis.

Senator NELSON. Why has there been one in the House and not in the Senate in the past?

Mr. REYNOLDS. When it was originally established, if I recall from my predecessors, both chambers were approached. At the time, there just physically was not space available in the Senate. In the House, the House Administration Committee actually carved out and put some new walls in part what was the VA liaison office. So we have a very small space in the Rayburn Building that was literally carved out of a liaison office.

Since that time, we have been approaching the Senate and, as I said, I personally had very good conversations with Chairwoman Feinstein's staff director about the need and the importance of having an office space here. And they have agreed with that need, and we hope when the Senate does its changes of office space and so on, that we will be accommodated.

Senator NELSON. When Congressman Dreier introduced you, he was talking about your role in the past where you served as part of the staff to the Congress. Is that correct?

Mr. REYNOLDS. Correct, sir. I spent 18 years here in the House and the Senate.

Senator NELSON. And what was that last position that you served in?

Mr. REYNOLDS. The last position was staff director of the House Committee on Rules.

Senator NELSON. Well, then you understand. You ought to be sensitive to the fact that we need to have this communication, and one of you all mentioned—I think it was Dreier—about what is Article I of the Constitution. At times, I do not think we have had that in the past. And we need to change that. So it sounds like that you are someone very suitable by your background to understand the sensitivities for keeping the communication going between these two branches of Government.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If confirmed, I would intend to very much do that. Having been one of the back-benchers, actually right behind you, sir, at times with this committee, firing some of those same questions from the Article I perspective, I certainly appreciate that need and would like to strengthen it and build a better relationship.

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. I will ask one last question, and my body language may indicate I am leaving.

Senator NELSON. I see that you are trying to hurry this hearing up.

Senator CORKER. I think we have three very, very qualified people that we are fortunate to have going into these positions.

Mr. Lebedev, some of the management reforms we were talking about earlier with Mr. Hook—I understand there is sort of a dynamic that exists between the developed countries and the undeveloped countries as it relates to those reforms and creates the sort of paralysis that exists regarding those. Could you enlighten us a little bit as it relates to those?

Mr. LEBEDEV. Well, Senator, I think going back to your earlier conversation with Mr. Hook on why is there inertia within the institution, what is the reluctance to change, to use Senator Robb's expression, I think you have hit upon it. There is a different set of perspectives that are held by a community of developing coun-

tries, of whom there are many, and a community of the industrialized states, of whom there are few.

The developing world tends to see the United Nations as a unique opportunity for them to exert influence, to have a voice that they do not normally have on a bilateral basis. Many are small, poor countries who, rightly or wrongly, perceive that they do not have standing in many courts. This is a large court that was, in fact, designed to give them a voice. And in exercising that voice, they see or perceive, rightly or wrongly, any number of the initiatives under the rubric of reform, as we call them, as steps taken by that industrialized community to limit their influence, to possibly silence their voice, to take away their ability to do the things that they believe they can only do within the United Nations. So at the root of much of this is that dynamic and is that perception or that misperception, but regardless, it is one that, to your earlier point, creates a context in which change is greeted cautiously.

Senator CORKER. And are there ways to bridge that so that the voices are still heard and yet the organization itself evolves to where it is far more relevant and being effective in some of the issues that it deals with?

Mr. LEBEDEV. Well, I would argue, as I suspect this committee would argue and has argued in the past, that the reforms that the United States has put forward over the last several years in the transparency area, with respect to accountability, all of the things that we regard as relatively conventional mechanisms of good governance, whether you are in the public or the private sector, we believe that, if instituted, these concepts make the institution more effective and efficient. Very simply. And we would hope that with our own nudging, our own promotion, the energies that we put into bring these into a state of activity within the U.N. will ultimately be seen as not impeding those voices, but as ultimately strengthening the institution in which they have so much faith.

So we believe that these are not just U.S. ideas that give us some advantage. We are the largest single shareholder in this company, and we have, in effect, a fiduciary duty, like any sizable shareholder, to make it the most efficient, the most effective enterprise around. When we do that, when we accomplish that set of objectives, I think these other nations who might be skeptical right now will also see that the enterprise at large is a far more effective institution for their interests as well as ours.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman.

Senator NELSON. What kind of reform do you want to see in the U.N. before inauguration day, January 20?

Mr. LEBEDEV. Senator, I will borrow from Mr. Reynolds' metaphor of the relay race. Things move slowly at the U.N., but progress can be made in increments. And what I would certainly hope to address in the fall and for whatever period of time we have beyond that—several initiatives to move them down that path.

We have got a couple of things that are of serious concern in the reform arena. OIOS, which is their inspector general, terribly important in any institution where you are going to have valid and credible oversight. OIOS has been in existence since about 1994. It has, over that period of time, grown in stature and accomplishment. It is doing pretty good work. However, for whatever set of

reasons, it is not financially independent. It has never been given enough resources to give it the latitude to explore every area that needs exploration, to kick every tire that needs to be kicked, to the point that when they will identify a target investigation, in many instances they do not have the funding to permit them to do it, and they must go to the institution that, in fact, they wish to investigate to see if they will help fund this initiative. And you and I can well imagine that on many instances, the target of the investigation just is going to come up a little short on that funding. We need to continue to focus on that deficiency and see if we can create that financial independence within that enterprise.

Also in the OIOS arena, which is in my view as an old IG, if you will, a centerpiece of any sort of reform initiative in any institution, is the fact that the Secretary-General last year made a very curious proposition, and that proposition was that the investigations function, now housed in OIOS, should be removed and it should be decentralized so that everybody in the various funds and programs that Mr. Hook was referring to should have their own IG, so to speak. They do not, however, have any of the expertise. They do not have any of the separational procedures to maintain an integrity on a decentralized basis.

We worry that if you take the ability to investigate away from investigators, you have not got much left. And rather than building the stature and credibility and effectiveness of OIOS, those two conditions alone, the absence of an independent financial base and the potential loss of its investigation function, can do severe damage to its credibility and set back, very frankly, the ability of the institution to usefully oversee its own initiatives. So OIOS, Mr. Chairman, is one area where we think we can incrementally move that ball down the field.

I will also take some time to address the matter of ethics reform. As this committee knows, the U.N. Ethics Committee has been—the ethics initiatives have been decentralized so that there are ethics offices throughout the U.N., throughout the funds and programs. One of the things that is going on right now is the initiative by the U.N. Ethics Committee or the Ethics Office to create a set of uniform standards for all of these ethics operations. I think it is in our interest to continue to promote a very, very rigorous set of standards that should be commonly applied throughout the institution. Again, I see this as a short-term initiative. I see it as something that we can accomplish during the fall session.

Those are three things that are top of mind, Mr. Chairman.

Senator NELSON. You said that the Secretary-General wants to decentralize. Do I understand your answer that you do not think that that would be a good move?

Mr. LEBEDEV. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

Senator NELSON. So what do we need to do to get the Secretary-General to support the increased funding, which was your first suggestion?

Mr. LEBEDEV. I think we have to continue to build those coalitions of like-minded member states to bring the point home that the world watches this institution every day, and over recent years, they have had some bad moments in terms of public standing and credibility by the events that this committee is well aware.

To take steps like this, sends a very bad signal to the other members and to the public and to large investors like us that we are not taking this institution in the right direction. And that is of concern to us because we value the institution. This is an institution in which we place great faith and great hope, and we ask it to do many, many things. And we know that because we fund it at a very severe level. So we think that we will continue to rally a community of interested parties to make the point that this is not in the long-term interests of this institution.

Senator NELSON. Do you plan personally to go talk to the staff of the Secretary-General about this?

Mr. LEBEDEV. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do.

Senator NELSON. I want to visit with you up there.

Tell me what you think about transparency in the peacekeeping operations.

Mr. LEBEDEV. Well, I think we have made, over the last couple of years since Secretary-General Annan in, I think, 2003 brought into the open the issues of the sexual abuse and exploitation problems that have plagued the peacekeeping apparatus—I think over time that, followed by Prince Zaid's call for reform, and the fact that the members, in fact, embraced many, many reforms, I think those sets of steps that have brought us down to today have created a transparency within and around the peacekeeping operations. As this committee knows, we have now a number of action steps that are open and are well known with respect to the training of peacekeepers, whether it is things called conduct and discipline teams and also train peacekeepers once in country and do a very good job of informing local populations of the rules and the expectations with respect to those peacekeepers.

So I think at some level, we can say that there is clearly greater transparency, and we are pleased with the progress to date under the rubric of prevention of that continuing problem of sexual abuse and exploitation. I think it is a longer conversation, Mr. Chairman, that we might have about the open question of punishment and what happens when you do have an event and what are the appropriate follow-ons that occur.

Senator NELSON. Are you a chemist?

Mr. LEBEDEV. I am not. My father was a chemist, and when I assumed the position to lead the Chemistry Council, he was both pleased and appalled. [Laughter.]

Senator NELSON. And what had you done before that?

Mr. LEBEDEV. Early in my career when I came to Washington, I worked at AID. I worked at the White House. Then I had the good fortune to be the youngest Deputy Assistant Secretary of State under Dr. Kissinger. I also served as the Assistant Inspector General for Foreign Assistance at the State Department, a post that no longer exists but had an oversight function of foreign military assistance, aid, that sort of thing. And I went into the private sector for 10 years, Senator, was a senior partner in a management consulting firm, but had a very large international portfolio and worked with a variety of multilateral institutions and the State Department as well, and then went into the trade association world where I was a COO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, also headed up international policy in that institution, CFO as the chief finan-

cial officer at the American Trucking Association, and the CEO at the American Chemistry Council. I currently am the chairman of the Center for International Private Enterprise, which is one of the four institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy.

Senator NELSON. Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. I think we have had a great hearing, and I think we have some folks that I look forward to working with when both of you and I begin our work at the United Nations this year. I hope that not only will you continue to focus on the things that you have talked about today in these hearings, and I hope that that is for a long enough time for you all to have the kind of impact you want to have. At the same time, I ask you that as we come and as we become more involved in the United Nations, that you also help us in ways that you see fit and help us to have the kind of impact I think each us want to have.

But we thank you and we thank your families. I do not know, Mr. Chairman, if they would like to introduce their families, if they are here. It typically occurs. If not, I want to thank you for your service, for offering yourself, and certainly look forward to working with you.

Senator NELSON. The record will duly note that the family members that I have already met are here.

And if there are no other questions, the meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:00 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

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

Cretz, Gene A., to be Ambassador to Libya
Jeffrey, James F., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:38 p.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Kerry, presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry [presiding] and Menendez.

Also Present: Senator Warner.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. Good afternoon. I apologize for being a few moments late. Welcome to this hearing on two very important nominations. We're delighted always to welcome a senior and unfortunately departing colleague, Senator Warner. Let me just make a few statements if I can and then, since there are only two of us here, I'll turn to Senator Menendez, and then we'll invite our colleague to make his introductory comments.

We particularly join in welcoming any family members who are here. We are grateful that you can join us, and particularly so in the case of two distinguished career foreign service officers. Ambassador James Jeffrey, the nominee to be Ambassador to Turkey, I'm pleased to say is a native of Melrose, Massachusetts, a graduate of Northeastern and Boston University. So we're happy to welcome a fellow Bay Stater here. You start way ahead of the game. In fact, let's just pass you out right now. [Laughter.]

Senator KERRY. You've had a very distinguished career in the foreign service, currently serving as Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser, with previous postings in Iraq, Kuwait, Bosnia, Germany, Bulgaria, Tunisia, as well as serving as our ambassador to Albania. He's also served previously in Turkey three times, most recently as the chief of mission from 1999 to 2002. So he obviously brings a great deal of experience which would serve very well in this important post.

Gene Cretz, the nominee to be our Ambassador to Libya, has also had an equally impressive career, spanning over 25 years in the foreign service. Mr. Cretz knows the Middle East well, currently serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, and has previously served as the deputy chief of mis-

sion in Israel, the charge d'affaires and deputy chief of mission to Syria, and minister-counselor in Egypt.

One important note that I am compelled to address right up front with respect to Ambassador-nominee Cretz—and he's well aware of this—we're holding this hearing despite the fact that as of now Libya has yet to make full payment to the Humanitarian Settlement Fund which was set up under the recent bilateral agreement to resolve terrorism-related claims, legal claims.

It's essential that Libya ensure that these payments are made right away. The committee cannot discharge Mr. Cretz, as much as we might like to on his credentials, and the Senate will not be confirming him, as much as it would on his credentials, until those payments have been made in full.

Mr. Cretz, I know you know this has absolutely nothing to do with you personally and we look forward to Libya fulfilling that component of the agreement so that your qualifications can be put to use and we can move forward with this important shift in our relationship.

At this point I need to read a brief portion of a statement of Senator Lautenberg, who particularly wanted this brought to ours and your attention. He has long fought for the rights of American terrorism victims and been particularly active on this issue. The balance of his remarks will be placed in the record, but this much I would like to quote from his record: "Libya has not yet satisfied its obligations to U.S. victims of its terrorist acts and I"—Senator Lautenberg—"will object to this nomination moving forward until those victims receive justice. I know many of these families and I know the long journey they have taken to find answers and closure. While I welcome the recent progress on settling these claims, process is not complete. We cannot let Libya off the hook and leave U.S. victims with no assurance that they will achieve justice.

"I hope that today's hearing will be an opportunity to seek answers on when we can expect Libya to live up to its responsibilities under the settlement agreement."

[The prepared statement of Senator Lautenberg follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

Mr. Chairman, Thank you for the opportunity to present my statement before this Committee. I would like to express my strong opposition to the President's nomination of a U.S. Ambassador to Libya. But I want to make clear that my opposition is not personal or based on this particular nominee's qualifications. Rather, it is based on my deeply held belief that we cannot legitimize our future with nations that have committed terrorist acts against Americans until and unless they fulfill their obligations to our citizens. Libya has not yet satisfied its obligations to U.S. victims of its terrorist acts and I will object to this nomination's moving forward until those victims receive justice.

In 1988, 270 people perished in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. Thirty-eight New Jersey families lost a loved one that day. I know many of these families and I know the long journey they have taken to find answers and closure. They weren't the only ones. In 1986, the bombing of the Labelle Discotheque in Berlin, Germany killed two American service members and left many more injured. These heinous attacks and others like them, which were sponsored by the Libyan government exemplify why Libya was forced into a two-decade long isolation by the international community.

In 2003, Libya accepted responsibility for the Pan Am bombing, renounced terrorism and agreed to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction. This put the country on the path to normalizing its relationship with the U.S. Unfortunately, al-

though the U.S. lived up to its end of the bargain in 2006 by removing Libya from the State Department's list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, Libya failed to complete the payments it owes to the families of the Pan Am victims. Libya also went back on its word with the Labelle Discotheque victims, backing out of a negotiated settlement. It was up to Congress to hold up the normalization process and hold Libya accountable.

For the past two years, we have been pressing for these cases to be resolved in order to provide justice for U.S. victims and families. Earlier this year, my legislation for victims of terrorism was signed into law as part of the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. This law reaffirmed the rights of plaintiffs to sue state sponsors of terrorism; allowed the seizure of hidden commercial assets belonging to terrorist states; and limited the number of appeals that a terrorist state can pursue in U.S. courts, among other provisions. Congress also prohibited U.S. government assistance to Libya, and the Senate has continued to delay the confirmation of a U.S. Ambassador to Libya.

Over the past few months there have been significant developments on our effort to bring the justice victims have been seeking for decades. The first was passage of the Libyan Claims Resolution Act. This legislation contributed to the creation of a comprehensive claims settlement agreement for Libya to compensate U.S. victims of Libyan terrorism, including the victims of the 1988 Pan Am 103 bombing, victims of the 1986 bombing of the Labelle discothèque, and other cases involving U.S. victims of Libyan-sponsored acts of terrorism. The next development was the signing of the U.S. Libyan claims agreement on August 14th in Tripoli and the establishment of a compensation fund that suggested that Libya is serious about moving ahead with the U.S.-Libya relationship.

While I welcome the recent progress on settling these claims, the process is not complete. The compensation fund must now be paid in full by the Libyans. We cannot let Libya off the hook and leave U.S. victims with no assurance that they will achieve justice. I hope that today's hearing will be an opportunity to seek answers on when we can expect Libya to live up to its responsibilities under the settlement agreement.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently traveled to Libya. She was the first high-level diplomat to visit Libya in 50 years. I was disappointed that this visit came before the Libyans paid the full settlement amount they owe, and accordingly Senator Carl Levin and I sent Secretary Rice a letter urging her to make the victims' compensation a priority of her discussions.

No U.S. ambassador will make that same trip to Tripoli until these claims are settled. For this reason, I will continue to block consideration of this nomination in the full Senate and I would ask this committee to withhold any further action as well. Our bilateral relationship can truly move ahead only when U.S. victims of Libyan terrorism are fully compensated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Cretz, if we're able to confirm you, you will be the first U.S. ambassador to serve in Tripoli in over 35 years. This would represent a very important milestone in the gradual process of normalizing U.S.-Libyan diplomatic relations that has been taking place since 2003. The Libyan government then renounced its weapons of mass destruction and agreed to stop supporting terrorist groups, and we all hope that Libya can serve as a model for a potential rapprochement with other states with similar histories.

The recent visit of Secretary Rice to Tripoli seems to have brought us to the bring of a long-awaited new era in our relationship, in which we could realize the potential for greater cooperation and counterterrorism, military, and economic matters. It's my expectation that Libya will soon make these payments so that we can truly move ahead with this new chapter.

At the same time, we must note that Libya's human rights practices remain an area of deep concern. Libya's political system remains authoritarian and undemocratic. Opposition groups are marginalized or in exile and the regime is generally suspicious of dissidents. Torture and arbitrary arrest reportedly rank among continuing abuses. Freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and asso-

ciation are curtailed, and several prominent political prisoners, including Fathi El-Jahmi, have yet to be freed by the government of Muammar Qadhafi. These are important issues that must be addressed as we go forward.

Turkey is, we all know, a key NATO ally, playing an increasingly important role in attempting to resolve some of the world's most critical issues. I was recently in Turkey this February at meetings with President Gul, Prime Minister Erdogan, Foreign Minister Babajan and I was deeply impressed with Turkey's commitment to advancing our mutual interests. One couldn't help but be impressed by the level of activity, economic and otherwise, and outreach that Turkey is making within the region. They've taken the lead in efforts to improve relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. They've served as host to an international summit on Iraq and most recently mediated dialogue between Israel and Syria.

They're also playing a critical role as our partner in Afghanistan, where they've been a very significant contributor to NATO efforts, and in supporting our troops in Iraq, where Turkey serves as the conduit for some 70 percent of the air cargo supplying our forces.

I was in Turkey the day they sent troops across the border into Iraq to deal with the PKK and I believe strongly that we need to continue to work closely with Turkey to address this threat in an appropriate manner.

Turkey also does have some important issues that still need to be resolved, starting with Armenia. I was a co-sponsor along with many of my colleagues and with Senator Bob Dole of legislation introduced over 20 years ago that recognized the events of 1915 as genocide. I know this remains a sensitive and very difficult issue. It is an emotional issue as well.

But almost a century later, it's in the best interests of the modern states of Turkey and Armenia to resolve this issue as part of a process of normalizing diplomatic relations. It's encouraging that both sides recently took important steps toward improving relations when Armenian President Serzh Sargsian and Turkish President Gul attended a soccer match together in Armenia. In addition, there are currently bilateral meetings between Turkey and Armenia and trilateral talks with Azerbaijan going on in New York. The United States should be prepared to do whatever we can to help move these important efforts at reconciliation forward.

We also hope to see further progress in the coming months in resolving the dispute with Greece over Cyprus. The leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities in Cyprus are currently engaged in direct talks, with a goal of ending the division and reunifying the island and its people. I understand it's the policy of the United States to support the current process under the auspices of the United Nations to find a Cyprus settlement that would lead to a bizonal, bicommunal federation. I'd be interested to hear from Mr. Jeffrey about the role the United States could play in moving that forward.

So with that, let me turn to Senator Menendez for any opening comments he has, and then I'd turn to Senator Warner.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be brief because I'd like to have a little flexibility on the questions. So I'll keep this time very short.

Let me congratulate both of you on your nominations and thank you for the service you have provided to our country to date. I want to echo the chairman's comments, Mr. Cretz, about our position on Libya. My colleague from New Jersey Senator Lautenberg has been at the forefront of this issue and neither he nor I will yield on it until Libya does the right thing and meets its obligations to Americans who were victims of the Pan Am bombing.

That has nothing to do with your background, but it is a reality of the process. It's our only way to get the Libyans to pay final attention and make the payments that they need to make under the agreement that we agreed to in fact and expedited with an understanding. Yet that understanding remains void.

Secondly, with reference to Ambassador Jeffrey, I have a series of questions about our U.S. relations with Turkey. It is a very important NATO ally, but I don't believe that gives us carte blanche—or I should say, gives Turkey carte blanche. That means I have serious questions about Armenia-Turkey relations. I have serious questions about issues of genocide. I have serious questions about religious freedom, and of course the continued occupation of northern Cyprus, to mention a few. And I look forward to hearing your answers to those questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Senator Warner, thank you, sir. You honor us and the nominees by being here and we appreciate your presence enormously. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator WARNER. Chairman Kerry, Senator Menendez, I thank you very much for this opportunity. It's one I looked forward to. I have been in this room many, many times over my 30 years and this represents my last appearance. I just calculated that, probably 100 times.

But it ends with the nomination of someone I've come to know through the years and have enormous admiration for and think the President has chosen very wisely, this eminent public servant and career diplomat to take responsibilities representing the United States in Turkey. As was mentioned by you, Senator Menendez, it's a NATO country, both of you. And I enjoyed your dissertation and your historic background on the region, Senator.

I too have visited Turkey a number of times, and particularly in the context that we have our NATO air headquarters in that nation. You're fully aware of that, and that's pivotal to our operations.

I wonder if it's time that the nominee could be invited by the chair to introduce his family.

Senator KERRY. Absolutely, it's a great time for that.

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, I'd like to introduce my wife Gudrun, daughter Julia, son Jahn, and daughter-in-law Darbana Kruka.

Senator KERRY. Thank you. We welcome you all. I was a foreign service brat for about 10 years, so I'm always admiring what the families put up with in the process, and we thank you.

Senator WARNER. I thank the chair.

You have given a very important observation here with regard to his distinguished career of some 31 years as a public servant. I first met him while he was deputy chief of mission and charge d'affaires to Iraq in trips that I made there during 2004 and 2005. That was my first impression of this distinguished gentleman.

During our CODEL visit I remember to Baghdad on one occasion, we had the opportunity to discuss the situation in Iraq and the U.S. role there in great detail, and you briefed the delegation that I was heading at that time. I was indeed deeply impressed, as I am today, with your professional grasp of knowledge.

You've covered a good deal of his background, having spent time in Turkey as deputy chief of mission '83-'87 and 1999 to 2002. Currently, however, he is serving in a very key position with the National Security Council and working closely with Steve Hadley, the Assistant to the President. As a matter of fact, in Mr. Hadley's absence he is often the stand-in acting chief of that section.

He served in the Army from 1969 to '76, with posts in Germany and Vietnam, and his academic credentials are equally impressive. You have covered those.

I mentioned the importance of Turkey as a NATO ally and an ally in many other ways in that region. I'd like to thank Ambassador Ross Wilson, whom I've also known, the current U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, and his family for their service and we wish them well as he continues his legacy of public service. Following in the footsteps of Ross Wilson, I can think of no one better qualified or suited than Jim Jeffrey.

I'm pleased to be the one who's given him whatever value a Senator contributes. Each of the times that I've been here I've said the same thing as I conclude: You're on your own.

Senator KERRY. Well, Senator, before you get up and leave, which we know you have to do, and respect the schedules around here, if Senator Biden were here I know he would want this committee to be on record and I'm going to take the liberty of just putting it on the record how unbelievably grateful we are for your service. You have been just an extraordinary colleague. We have a bad habit sometimes around here of blowing smoke at each other, but I'll tell you, our relationship goes way back to 1970-whatever, but here in the Senate since '85. And there is nobody whose word is more reliable, nobody who more calmly and thoughtfully reaches out across the aisle, nobody who consistently puts country's interests ahead of party's interests and works to secure our Nation.

It's been just an extraordinary pleasure to have you as a colleague.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, I just want to join you in those sentiments. I am privileged that I got to the Senate in time to serve with John Warner. I really do not believe that this will be the last time that we will see you in this hearing room. You may be a nominee, and we will be judging on whether or not—I think it will be an easy confirmation. But nonetheless, I have no doubt that somehow your service to this country is not just finished.

But we are honored by the time we have had here to serve with you.

Senator WARNER. Well, I thank you. Give my very best to Senator Lautenberg. He's an old crony. There are five of us left in the Senate who served in World War II. He served with far greater distinction. But the chairman is too remiss—not remiss, but too modest to say that we served together during the Vietnam period. He was on the front line serving with distinction with the Navy and I was back as Secretary in my swivel chair. But I did visit your region on a number of occasions.

I wish you both well. And I'd like to thank the staff of this committee, particularly that gentleman in the back room whose hair is about the same color as mine. He has always greeted me, as well as other members of the staff of this committee. This committee has served the Senate magnificently, and really the eyes of the world have focused here so often on the issues that come before this committee to be resolved.

I thank you.

Senator KERRY. Thank you so much, Senator Warner. We appreciate it. Thank you.

Senator WARNER. Oh, by the way, by pure coincidence, I brought my wife with me today and I'm glad she heard what you had to say. [Laughter.]

Senator KERRY. There you go.

Gentlemen, thanks so much. Ambassador Cretz, why don't you begin. Do you want to lead off, and then we'll go to Ambassador Jeffrey. Thanks.

STATEMENT OF GENE A. CRETZ, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA

Mr. CRETZ. Mr. Chairman and Senator Menendez: I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be Ambassador to Libya, the first in 36 years. I want to express my profound gratitude to the President and Secretary of State Rice for the trust and confidence they have shown in nominating me for this challenging position.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my wife Annette, a registered nurse from Union City, New Jersey, Senator, who has helped manage the health care of several of our embassy communities overseas. My daughter Gabrielle is a graduate of James Madison University and works in the private sector. My son Jeffrey, a captain in the United States Air Force Reserves who has honorably served his country in two combat deployments to Afghanistan.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much for that.

Mr. CRETZ. Without my family's love, support, sacrifice, and spirit of adventure, shown through our 27 years in foreign service, I would not be here today.

Mr. Chairman, Secretary Rice's just completed historic visit to Libya marks a milestone in our relationship. She is the first sitting Secretary of State to visit Libya since 1953. Most importantly, her visit included the most senior and only cabinet-level meeting with Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qadhafi since he took power in 1969.

Libya is in the midst of an historic process of reengaging with the broader world after nearly 30 years of isolation. It is in our national interest to do all we can to help Libya and its people transition back into the international community. Over the past 5 years our bilateral relationship, as well as Libya's place in the international community, has drastically changed. Libya is now a vital partner in the common effort against terrorism. It is a leader on the African continent and a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

We had an extremely contentious relationship with Libya for several decades owing to its past acts, namely its involvement in acts of terrorism that took the lives of hundreds of Americans and others, which led to the imposition of U.S. and UN sanctions and its designation as a state sponsor of terrorism. As Libya has turned away from terrorism and the pursuit of WMD, we have worked hard over the past 5 years to turn a new page in our bilateral relationship.

The comprehensive claims agreement provides a process through which outstanding claims pending against Libya for past acts of terror can be resolved and bring a measure of justice for the many American families who have been waiting for this outcome for over 20 years. It will constitute a milestone event in our relationship and will provide a clear signal of this administration's commitment to fulfill its pledge to our citizens.

Together, the Secretary's visit, the claims settlement, and Libya's historic 2003 decisions to voluntarily rid itself of its WMD program and foreswear terrorism facilitated the country's reintegration into the international community and have opened the door to broader and deeper engagement with Libya and its people.

All of these efforts were taken to advance Libya's interests. We continue our important and significant cooperation on counterterrorism, further strengthening regional efforts to combat al Qaeda's presence in North Africa. We are beginning a defense relationship so that we can work toward a more stable and peaceful African continent. We will continue to work closely with the international community to ensure that Libya complies with its WMD obligations and are providing technical assistance to help it do so.

In Libya today there are calls for political reform. We will closely observe how calls for the opening of further political space and greater respect for human rights will be implemented and how they will affect the Libyan people. We believe a strong civil society and greater political space would also contribute to these efforts to strengthen Libya.

As we do with all nations, the United States will maintain an open and honest dialogue with Libya to discuss human rights and good governance. This dialogue will be a necessary element of our future relations with Libya. We continue to call for the immediate release of all political prisoners, including the unconditional release of Fathi El-Jahmi and the group of self-described regime critics led by Dr. Idriss Boufayed, as it constituted an important part of the Secretary's visit.

Libya is in the midst of a major infrastructure development initiative and has undertaken economic reforms. We have begun technical assistance programs in the banking sector and are committed

to helping Libya grow its economy for the wellbeing of its people and the region.

Our commercial ties are growing and the majority of U.S. exports to Libya are outside the hydrocarbon sector. U.S. companies have won sizeable contracts for infrastructure and construction projects and are competing for contracts in other sectors, such as communications and aviation.

As our relationship deteriorated in the 1980s, our ties with the Libyan people were all but severed. Rebuilding these links is an integral part of our re-engagement with Libya, whether through USG-sponsored public diplomacy program or promoting private initiatives between our two peoples.

Since 2003, the breadth and depth of our bilateral relationship with Libya have expanded greatly, but the resources we have committed to support those efforts have, frankly, not kept pace. I commend the women and men serving at Embassy Tripoli. One of my key priorities as ambassador if confirmed will be to oversee efforts to build a new and secure embassy and to identify the appropriate human and material resources to meet our critical mission goals.

Mr. Chairman, we have come a long way in this relationship with a former adversary. Acting in accordance with its own national interests, Libya has in fact said yes to the United States on the critical issues of abandoning its WMD aspirations, renouncing terrorism, and implementing the claims agreement. In that regard, Libya affords a potentially positive model for other countries that might make similar choices. If confirmed as ambassador, I look forward to the challenge of setting a firm foundation for future relations with this important country. We have a Libyan government and populace that are eager to engage with the United States and we should immediately seize on that opportunity. It is in the interest of both sides to do so.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cretz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GENE A. CRETZ, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be Ambassador to Libya, the first in 36 years. I want to express my profound gratitude to the President and Secretary of State Rice for the trust and confidence they have shown in nominating me for this challenging position.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my wife, Annette, a registered nurse, who has helped manage the health care of several of our embassy communities overseas. My daughter, Gabrielle, is a graduate of James Madison University and works in the private sector. My son, Jeffrey, a captain in the United States Air Force Reserves, has honorably served his country in two combat deployments to Afghanistan. Without my family's love, support, sacrifice, and spirit of adventure shown throughout 27 years in the Foreign Service, I would not be here today.

Secretary Rice's just-concluded historic visit to Libya marks a milestone in our relationship. She is the first sitting Secretary of State to visit Libya since 1953. Most importantly, her visit included the most senior and only cabinet-level meeting with Libyan Leader Colonel Muammar Qadhafi since he took power in 1969.

Mr. Chairman, Libya is in the midst of a historic process of reengaging with the broader world after nearly 30 years of isolation. It is in our national interest to do all we can to help Libya and its people transition back into the international community.

Over the past 5 years, our bilateral relationship, as well as Libya's place in the international community, has drastically changed. We started with no relationship,

and now we are well on the way to normal diplomatic relations. We had no presence in Libya, and now we have an embassy that is creating new ties with the Libyan Government and its people while advancing critical American interests. Libya is now a vital partner in the common effort against terrorism. It is a leader on the African continent and a nonpermanent member of the U.N. Security Council.

We had an extremely contentious relationship with Libya for several decades owing to its past acts—namely, its involvement in acts of terrorism that took the lives of hundreds of Americans and others—which led to the imposition of United States and U.N. sanctions and its designation as a state sponsor of terrorism. As Libya has turned away from terrorism, and the pursuit of WMD, we have worked hard over the past 5 years to turn a new page in our bilateral relationship. The comprehensive claims agreement provides a process through which outstanding claims pending against Libya for past acts of terror can be resolved and bring a measure of justice for the many American families who have been waiting for this outcome for over 20 years. It will constitute a milestone event in our relationship and will provide a clear signal of this administration's commitment to fulfill its pledge to our citizens. Together, the Secretary's visit, the claims settlement and Libya's historic 2003 decisions to voluntarily rid itself of its WMD program and forswear terrorism facilitated the country's reintegration into the international community and have opened the door to broader and deeper engagement with Libya and its people.

All of these efforts were taken to advance United States interests, and they have cemented Libya's important and significant cooperation on counterterrorism, further strengthening regional efforts to combat al-Qaida's presence in North Africa. We also anticipate beginning to develop military-military lines of communication and expect to conclude a Defense Contacts and Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding for that purpose soon so that we can discuss how to work toward a more stable and peaceful African continent.

We will continue to work closely with the international community to ensure that Libya complies with its WMD obligations, and are providing technical assistance to help it do so. We are cooperating with Libya to engage its former WMD scientists into peaceful and economically viable pursuits such as water management and desalination, to convert its former chemical weapons factory into a pharmaceutical plant and to transform nuclear reactor facilities previously fueled with weapons-grade uranium into centers for scientific research with no such proliferation risk. Additionally, we are partnering with Libya to establish a regional nuclear medical center. The center is a tangible example of the type of cooperation that would not have been possible before Libya's historic 2003 decision.

In Libya today, there are calls for political reform. We will closely observe how calls for the opening of further political space and greater respect for human rights will be implemented and how they will affect the Libyan people. We note that Libya has identified prison reform and relaxing of press restrictions as focus areas for political reform. We will work cooperatively with the Libyan Government and people to support these initiatives. We believe a strong civil society and greater political space would also contribute to these efforts to strengthen Libya. As we do with all nations, the United States will maintain an open and honest dialog with Libya to discuss human rights and good governance. This dialog will be a necessary element of our future relations with Libya. We continue to call for the immediate release of all political prisoners, including the unconditional release of Fathi El-Jahmi and the group of self-described regime critics led by Dr. Idriss Boufayed, as it constituted an important part of the Secretary's visit.

Libya is in the midst of a major infrastructure development initiative and has undertaken economic reforms. We have begun technical assistance programs in the banking sector, and are committed to helping Libya grow its economy for the well-being of its people and the region.

Our commercial ties are growing, including those outside the hydrocarbon sector. United States-Libyan trade in 2007 grew over 17 percent from the previous year and the majority of United States exports to Libya are outside the hydrocarbon sector. U.S. companies have won sizable contracts for infrastructure and construction projects, and are competing for contracts in other sectors, such as communications and aviation. With respect to the oil sector, Libya, which has the largest proven oil reserves on the continent of Africa, hopes to increase its daily production from 1.7 million barrels per day to 3 million barrels per day with the help of United States expertise.

Our relationship with Libya is as old as our republic. With the Barbary States, during Italian colonization, through the travails of World War II, the subsequent period of cooperation and in the cold war era we engaged with Libya on important issues of security and commerce while building bridges of understanding with the

Libyan people. At one time during the 1970s, there were over 4,000 Libyan students studying at American universities, many of whom are now senior Libyan Government officials and business leaders. However, as our relationship deteriorated in the 1980s, these ties were all but severed. Rebuilding these links is an integral part of our reengagement with Libya whether through USG-sponsored public diplomacy programming or promoting private initiatives between our two peoples. Today, over 1,000 Libyan students are studying at United States universities, and that number continues to grow. To promote greater engagement between the American and Libyan people, our two countries have been working on a Protocol on Educational and Cultural Cooperating to facilitate the exchange of individuals and ideas. This is one way we are reconnecting with the Libyan people after a 24-year hiatus that was previously characterized by animosity, mistrust, and misinformation.

Since 2003, the breadth and depth of our bilateral relations with Libya have expanded greatly, but the resources we have committed to support those efforts have frankly not kept pace. I commend the men and women serving at Embassy Tripoli. Their hard work, dedication, and sacrifice have made our relationship what it is today and they have done so in trying circumstances. The embassy, initially established in a hotel, has only recently moved into a collection of houses that serves as an interim embassy site. One of my key priorities as ambassador, if confirmed, will be to oversee efforts to build a new and secure embassy and to identify the appropriate human and material resources to meet our critical mission goals.

Mr. Chairman, we have come a long way in this relationship with a former adversary. Acting in accordance with its own national interests, Libya has in fact said "yes" to the United States on the critical issues of abandoning its WMD aspirations, renouncing terrorism, and implementing the claims agreement. In that regard, Libya affords a potentially positive model for other countries that might make similar choices. If confirmed as ambassador, I look forward to the challenge of setting a firm foundation for future relations with this important country. We have a Libyan Government and populace that are eager to engage with the United States, and we should immediately seize on that opportunity—it is in the interests of both sides to do so.

Senator KERRY. Thank you very much, Mr. Cretz.

Mr. Jeffrey?

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES F. JEFFREY, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

Ambassador JEFFREY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator. I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as ambassador to the Republic of Turkey. I am grateful to both President Bush and Secretary Rice for their trust and confidence in me. I have submitted a statement for the record and what I would like to do with your permission now is to summarize briefly my points.

Sir, let me begin with Turkey's role in relation to our foreign policy priorities. Turkey was very quick to respond to the crisis in Georgia, for example, and was vocal in its support for Georgia's territorial integrity. As was mentioned, Turkey is our close partner in working for success in Iraq. Turkey understands that success or failure there will have an immediate impact on its security.

As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, Turkey along with Iraq and the United States are engaged in joint efforts against the PKK terrorist organization, which has cost the lives of some 30,000 Turks since the 1984 outbreak.

Our military ties with NATO ally Turkey, as was mentioned, remain very strong and very important. I want to thank the Turkish people for the hospitality that they have shown entire generations of American military men and women.

In Afghanistan, Turkey has sent large contingents from the very beginning of the International Security Assistance Force and has

been a leader in both the civilian and the military side of that mission, and has also been a major assistance contributor.

Turkey is concerned as well as we are with the situation in Iran, particularly Iran's pursuit of nuclear enrichment, and it supports the IAEA's efforts to investigate this nuclear program. We support Turkey's efforts to normalize its relations with its neighbors and thus have been encouraged new developments in Cyprus and Armenia. As you have mentioned, Mr. Chairman, we were very, very pleased to see the courageous invitation by President Sargsian of Armenia to President Gul to travel to Armenia and we were very pleased with his courageous decision to accept that.

The election of a new president in Cyprus has given a new impetus to the discussions between the two sides there and we are hopeful to contribute to that. You asked what we're doing. We're working with both sides, and this would be one of my most important priorities, sir, were I confirmed.

We strongly urge Turkey to work with Armenia to establish diplomatic relations, to open the border, and to have an open and honest dialogue concerning the tragic events at the end of the Ottoman Empire.

The United States also supports Turkey's aspirations to join the European Union. We think this is very important also for our own relations, although it's a decision for the two in the end to take themselves. To its great credit, the current ruling Justice and Development Party is implementing the reforms necessary for eventual EU membership. We encourage Turkey, in doing so, to protect the civil rights of all religious and ethnic groups, such as by opening the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Halki Seminary.

Our economic cooperation with Turkey would be a key priority were I confirmed, Mr. Chairman. In particular, the United States and Turkey are working closely together on oil and gas pipeline projects that will help both Europe and Turkey respond to the very significant energy shortages and energy dependency that we see in the future if we don't develop new sources.

Mr. Chairman, Senator, many Americans, including my family and me, have had wonderful experiences living and working in Turkey, and in the case of our daughter graduating from a Turkish high school. It would be an honor to return to Ankara to represent our Nation.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Jeffrey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES JEFFREY, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to serve as ambassador to the Republic of Turkey. I am grateful to Secretary Rice and President Bush for their trust and confidence in me. With me today are my wife, Gudrun, daughter, Julia, son, Jahn, and daughter-in-law, Dardana Rruka. During my 31-year career in the Foreign Service, my family and I have had the pleasure of serving in Turkey three times previously, most recently as the deputy chief of mission from 1999 to 2002. I have seen firsthand the remarkable transformations in Turkey over the last few decades as it has become more democratic, more open, and more economically vibrant. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on how best to advance the many shared interests of the United States and Turkey in the years ahead. In doing

so, I would keep constantly in mind the heavy responsibility I would assume as ambassador responsible for this critically important and very complex relationship.

Throughout my career, during the times I was not working in Turkey, I was often working with Turkey—on Iraq, Iran, Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania. Turkey is a key friend and strategic partner of the United States in the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Balkans, Central Asia, and beyond, and a crucially important member of our NATO alliance. For decades, Turkey has worked with the United States on issues such as regional stability, trade, democracy promotion, energy security, and counterterrorism cooperation. The events over the past 2 months in Georgia underscore Turkey's importance as a democratic bulwark, a military partner, and a strategic ally in a dynamic and challenging region.

Even among close allies, however, there are occasional differences. While Turkey and the United States have shared values and goals, our tactics and methods are not always the same and have caused some misunderstandings. Our diplomatic and military exchanges were strained when the Turkish parliament failed to approve, in March 2003, the United States request to use Turkey to launch operations into Iraq. Starting in 2004, after several years of a cease-fire, the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) terrorists once again began attacking Turkish soldiers and civilians, both from its safe haven in northern Iraq and from inside Turkey. Turkey was frustrated by what it perceived as American hesitation concerning its plight in a struggle that has cost more than 30,000 Turkish lives over the last few decades. The unfortunate result of these differences was that the Turkish public, according to the 2007 and 2008 Pew Global Attitudes Surveys, had the lowest favorable opinion of the United States out of all the countries that were surveyed.

Thankfully, we started to see important improvements in our bilateral relations in 2007. First, Turkey's democracy was tested when challenges to its Presidential election led to early parliamentary elections. These elections ultimately led to a strengthened mandate for Prime Minister Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party. Second, the United States responded to the growing PKK threat to the region when President Bush pledged last November to provide assistance to help Turkey defend itself against this terrorist organization, a common enemy of Turkey, Iraq, and the United States. Now Turkey, Iraq, and the United States are working together more closely than ever before to root out the PKK. Turkish public opinion of the United States is also now improving. If I am confirmed as ambassador, I will do everything possible to maintain and enhance this momentum and build stronger ties with this strategic partner.

Let me describe Turkey's role in relation to our foreign policy priorities. Turkey has been quick to respond to the crisis in Georgia and vocal in its support for Georgia's territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty. Prime Minister Erdogan carried that message to both Moscow and Tbilisi and has been working to garner regional support for Georgia. The Turkish Red Crescent provided needed humanitarian assistance with tents, food, and water, and the Turkish Government has assisted the United States in approving the transit of our naval vessels that have delivered assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Georgian people. We are looking to Ankara for its thoughts on how its Caucasus stability initiative can integrate with efforts by the Euro-Atlantic community to advance peace, prosperity, and freedom in Georgia.

Turkey recognizes that our success or failure in Iraq will directly impact Turkey's domestic and economic security. Turkey is helping to ensure Iraq's progress, including by hosting the second Enlarged Ministerial Neighboring Countries Meeting in Istanbul November 2–3, 2007. Turkey, in fact, was instrumental in starting the Neighbors Process. Turkey also provides political party and military training, assists with reconstruction, and is helping to develop Iraqi oil and electricity infrastructure. We have seen increasing dialog between leaders in Ankara and Baghdad, including critically important visits of PM Erdogan to Baghdad and Iraqi President Talibani to Turkey in 2008, opening the way to further regional contacts with Iraqi democratic leaders. We are seeing, as well, growing contacts between Ankara and officials in the Kurdistan Regional Government. Finally, over 70 percent of the air cargo for our mission in Iraq transits Incirlik Air Base, which is also the primary refueling stop for flights to Afghanistan. Our military ties with Turkey remain vital to both countries, and I thank Turkey for its long tradition of hospitality to our military men and women. In short, Turkey is setting an example for the region.

Turkey's soldiers have been in Afghanistan since the beginning of the International Security Assistance Force. Turkey currently retains about 800 troops there, has a provincial reconstruction team in Wardak, and just upped its original $100 million humanitarian assistance during the Paris Conference, for a total now of $200 million in aid. Turkish firms have invested $1.5 billion in projects in Afghanistan since 2002, including schools and mosques, hospitals and health clinics, bridges

and water wells. Turkey has also worked to facilitate talks between the leaders of Afghanistan and Pakistan and to press for greater cooperation in rooting out terrorism emanating from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan.

Turkey has been a partner in the search for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Ankara hosted Israeli President Peres and Palestinian Authority President Abbas for an historic joint address to the Turkish Parliament just before the Annapolis Conference, which Turkey also attended and actively supports. Turkey followed up at the Paris Conference with a $150 million pledge for Palestinian institution building to be used in 2008–2010. Most recently, Turkey began facilitating peace talks between Israel and Syria. We welcome Turkey's constructive engagement and hope the talks bear fruit.

Turkey is concerned, as well, about Iran's efforts to develop nuclear enrichment capabilities in direct violation of Iran's obligations in three Chapter VII U.N. Security Council resolutions, and Turkey supports the IAEA's ongoing investigation of Iran's nuclear program. While we understand Turkey's desire to maintain good relations with its neighbor, we work with Turkey to ensure full enforcement of all of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and to pressure Tehran to comply with international obligations. Turkey implements all relevant UNSCRs (1737, 1747, and 1803), which help stem Iran's nuclear and missile proliferation efforts. One concern I will emphasize in Ankara, if I am confirmed, is Iran's hydrocarbon sector, and our legislative obligations to oppose foreign investment of over $20 million in it.

The United States strongly supports Turkey's aspirations to join the European Union. To its great credit, the ruling Justice and Development Party is implementing political and economic reforms necessary for EU membership, and we hope that process continues. We, like the EU, want to see Ankara expand further its democratic and human rights reforms. We welcomed recent changes to Article 301, the provision of the Turkish penal code that criminalized "insulting Turkishness," and amendments to expand non-Turkish broadcasting, including in Kurdish. We encourage Turkey to protect civil rights of all religious and ethnic groups, such as by reopening the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Halki Seminary as a vocational school. Turkey and the United States share the values of democracy and the rights of individuals, and we continue to see that reflected in the reforms that Turkey is undertaking.

We support Turkey's efforts to normalize relations with its neighbors and have been encouraged by new developments concerning both Cyprus and Armenia. The election of the new Cypriot President has led to talks between the two sides and a willingness to renew efforts with the U.N. on a bizonal, bicommunal federation. Turkish leaders welcomed their new counterparts after the Armenian elections, and President Gul just made a historic visit to Yerevan at Armenian President Sargsian's invitation. We strongly urge Turkey to work with Armenia to reestablish diplomatic relations and to have an open and honest dialog about the tragic events at the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Our economic cooperation with Turkey would be a key priority, were I confirmed, with emphasis on supporting United States firms and investment. The United States recently ratified a Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy agreement with Turkey, which should provide new opportunities for United States businesses to invest in Turkey. The United States and Turkey are also working together on oil and natural gas pipelines, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Turkey-Greece-Italy Interconnector, and the Nabucco pipelines, to develop a new generation of infrastructure that will help both Turkey and Europe secure and diversify their energy supplies. One of my proudest accomplishments on my last tour in Turkey was to help move the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline forward, paving the way for these further efforts benefiting both Turkey and global consumers.

Many Americans, including my family and me, have had wonderful experiences living and working in Turkey and, in the case of our daughter, graduating from a Turkish high school. It would be an honor to return to Ankara to represent our Nation, promote U.S. interests, and ensure that we are providing needed services for American citizens in Turkey. If confirmed for this post, I will ensure all members of United States mission Turkey work effectively to advance United States goals in Turkey and the region, do our utmost to support our private American community, and remain safe in the face of terrorist threats.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed as ambassador, these are only a few of the many items that would be on my agenda in Turkey. If confirmed, I hope I can count on the help and advice of you and your colleagues. I look forward to working with you and urge you to travel to this beautiful and fascinating country.

Thank you.

Senator KERRY. Well, thank you, both of you, very, very much. I appreciate it.

We'll just run—Bob, is 10 minutes okay? We'll do 10-minute rounds and sort of bounce back and forth here.

Let me begin by asking just a couple pro forma questions. Do either of you have any conflicts of interest which have required you to divest of anything that we should be aware of in the performance of the responsibilities in either of your assigned countries? Ambassador Cretz?

Mr. CRETZ. No, I don't, sir.

Senator KERRY. Ambassador Jeffrey?

Ambassador JEFFREY. No, sir.

Senator KERRY. Is there any issue on which either of you would have to recuse yourself because of any potential conflict of interest?

Ambassador JEFFREY. No.

Mr. CRETZ. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you. Thank you both.

Mr. Jeffrey, with respect to the PKK, what would you—how would you characterize the current state of relations between Turkey and the Kurdish regional government?

Ambassador JEFFREY. The Kurdish regional government and the Iraqi government both acknowledge the PKK is a terrorist organization and they're working with both us and the Turks to deal with that. There have been some strains and tensions, as you mentioned, at the beginning of the cross-border operation. There were some concerns from the Iraqi side, including from the side of the Kurdistan regional government. The Turks have been working both with the folks in Irbil in the Kurdistan regional government and in Baghdad to smooth over these concerns and I think that they have made considerable progress, particularly with Prime Minister Erdogan's recent visit to Baghdad and President Talabani's visit earlier this year to Ankara.

It requires constant exchanges, but we are seeing progress, sir, and I think that the two sides understand better now what the purpose of these operations are and the limits of these operations.

Senator KERRY. Where do you understand the Turkish government's influence and position with respect to any Kurdish independence issues?

Ambassador JEFFREY. The Turkish government, sir, like we and like the Iraqi government, supports the territorial integrity of Iraq as laid out in UN Resolution 1546 and subsequent ones. We're very strong on this, as are the Turks.

Senator KERRY. So you would see the problem as really one of self-defense and legitimate national security concern with respect to the PKK trans-boundary initiatives?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Yes, sir, very much so. President Bush met with Prime Minister Erdogan in November of last year and agreed to provide a variety of intelligence and other support for the Turkish operations and we do so fully cognizant that this is a self-defense operation, it is not designed for anything else, and the Turks have lived up to that, sir.

Senator KERRY. Fair enough.

With respect to the Turkish initiative regarding Syria and Israel, there have been no direct talks yet between Syria and Israel. Presi-

dent Assad is pushing those off pending, needless to say, U.S. engagement in some more direct way. How would you characterize the state, sort of what the accomplishment to date would be of that initiative, and where do you see it playing out?

Ambassador JEFFREY. First of all, sir, the United States, this administration, supports this effort. We encourage Turkey to continue what it's doing. The talks, as you said, have been at some distance, with the Turks functioning as an intermediary. The subjects are borders, security, water, and overall political-diplomatic relations between the two.

We think that this is a very important step in an overall comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and we hope that this effort continues. We are encouraging both the Israelis and the Turks to continue.

Senator KERRY. Do you see a role that we could play more proactively?

Ambassador JEFFREY. We review this from time to time, Senator. We are—at this point we're comfortable where we are in terms of reaching out to Syria.

Senator KERRY. Well, I'm not going to push you on that because I know that's a policy being made at a higher level, but one that the committee has had some concerns about, as I think you know.

Many of us on this committee are deeply concerned about how we move Turkey and Armenia to resolve the outstanding issues, including the opening of the border, the Nagorno-Karabakh, obviously the events of 1915, and so forth. How would you assess the progress made in the recent diplomatic initiatives, beyond the soccer initiative? How would you assess that?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Sir, looking back at where I was I was last in Turkey from 1999 to 2002, we've seen considerable, albeit not yet sufficient, progress. For example, a few years ago the Turks began issuing essentially immediate 90-day visas for Armenians traveling to Turkey. There are some 70,000 Armenians living and working in Turkey today. There are weekly commercial flights between Erevan and Istanbul. There are contract flights between Erevan and Antalya during the summer. During the Georgian crisis the Turks opened up the air space between the two countries, and there's about 60 to $120 million in annual trade between the two.

There are also, beyond the fairly dramatic events of last month, sir, with President Gul's trip, there are also diplomatic exchanges at various levels. The Armenians have a diplomat in the Black Sea Cooperation Council in Istanbul and there have been a variety of talks at other levels. However, we have not achieved yet what we need, which is, as I said, the establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of the border.

Senator KERRY. Let me go to one of the sort of tricky questions here. I'm not trying to, literally not trying to trip you up or anything. I'm just trying to get the record as clear as we can going forward. At a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on June 18, 2008, Assistant Secretary of State Dan Freid stated, quote, that the brutality against the Armenians starting in 1915 was, quote, "extraordinarily well documented," and that the assessment of former Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau, who docu-

mented the Armenian genocide, was, quote, ”accurate, that is there is no question the intent was not to remove people in a peaceful way.“

In a letter dated this year, July 29, Assistant Secretary of Leg Affairs Matt Reynolds wrote to Chairman Biden saying, quote: “Our goal in bringing archivists from Turkey and Armenia to the United States for training is not to open a debate on whether the Ottomans committed these horrendous acts. It’s to help preserve the documentation that supports the truth of those events.”

Reynolds further added, quote: “The administration recognizes that the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and forced deportation of over 1.5 million Armenians were conducted by the Ottoman Empire. We indeed hold Ottoman officials responsible for those crimes.”

That is the administration’s position. Based on those statement—I’m not going to go into the historical details, but based on those statements can you assure the committee that the administration is not supporting rhetorically, financially, or otherwise an effort to convene a commission to settle an historical debate that in effect is not a debate?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Mr. Chairman, as you’ve indicated, the administration recognizes and mourns and is very, very, very concerned about the historical facts, which include, as you said, the mass killing and the forced exile of up to 1.5 million Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire. We support, as President Bush made clear in his recent statement on March 24, the open effort by both sides to get to the bottom of the historical facts and to move forward as part of a reconciliation process both to establish closer and eventually full relations and to work out these dark chapters in the past.

Senator KERRY. So do I interpret that as, are you in fact going farther than Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs Reynolds did? Are you in effect saying that we are supportive of the historical commission itself and its goal, or are we supportive of simply maintaining the historical record?

Ambassador JEFFREY. We are supportive of anything that the two sides mutually agree on, sir. And as part of any process, we think that there should be a full and open review of the events of that time.

Senator KERRY. Providing its mutually agreed on?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Providing its mutually agreed on.

Senator KERRY. Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me first say to Mr. Cretz, now that I know your wife is a Union City native and as a Union City native, we’ve just got to get the Libyans to put their money up really quick so you can go there.

I mentioned the Pan Am bombing victims, of course. There’s the LaBelle victims and others as well. So we look forward to the Libyans meeting their responsibility and hopefully your opportunity once you’re there after they meet their responsibility to continue to engage in that respect.

Ambassador Jeffrey, I’m dismayed as I heard your answer to Senator Kerry because that puts us before where we were when we had the ambassador-designee to Armenia being interviewed, and

the statements that Senator Kerry read to you are the response to this committee and to Chairman Biden from the State Department because of great angst that was created as a result of her testimony. Now you've taken us back to where we were before, when you say we support whatever the commission does to get to the bottom of the historical facts.

Well, that's not what the administration has said to us. The administration in their letter—unless we're not to believe letters sent to this committee now. The administration in their letter said: "Our goal is not to open a debate on whether the Ottomans committed these horrendous acts. It is to help preserve the documentation that supports the truth of those events."

That letter by Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs Mr. Reynolds further went on: "The administration recognizes that the mass killings, ethnic cleansing, forced deportation of over 1.5 million Armenians were conducted by the Ottoman Empire. We indeed hold Ottoman officials responsible for those crimes."

Now, what I heard you respond to the question is quite different. So do you want to clear it up for me or are you sticking with your statement that we support whatever it is to get to the bottom of the facts? The historical facts as I see it have now been admitted to by the State Department and clearly stated as such. And I don't get a sense that's what you're telling us, so that puts a complication in this process. Maybe you can help us.

Ambassador JEFFREY. I'll try, Senator. Certainly everything that Assistant Secretary Reynolds wrote is U.S. Government policy and we stand by it. What I was trying to communicate was it's also important for Turks and Armenians to move forward on a joint effort to work on these issues and to come to some kind of, to the extent they can, common view of the historical facts.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, if in fact we already have come to the conclusion that the historical facts as outlined by Mr. Reynolds on behalf of the State Department in July of this year are that we indeed hold Ottoman officials responsible for those crimes, why would we support an initiative that ultimately doubts whether those are the historical facts? If the Turks seek to do it that's one thing, but why would we be supportive of an effort that ultimately undermines the very position that our State Department has?

Ambassador JEFFREY. In conflicts such as this, Senator, we believe that as a general rule—and we apply this across the board in the many conflicts that I've been involved in—we have—and it's our obligation to our own citizens and to the historical record to have—our own views, but it's also important to try to encourage the various sides on a dispute, be it this one, be it others, to try to come to some sort of joint understanding of the past and a joint way forward for the future.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you one last question on this. Would you then as the ambassador be someone who would advocate rhetorically, financially, or otherwise that the commission should be constituted and move forward?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, every effort that can be taken for people to review openly the facts of that period would be supported by me.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you, do you believe that—despite some painful legacy of the Armenian genocide, continued illegal Turkish blockade, Armenia has repeatedly offered to open diplomatic relationships with Turkey without preconditions. Do you believe that Turkey should accept Armenia's offer to establish full diplomatic and economic relations without any precondition?

Ambassador JEFFREY. We believe that Turkey should establish relations with Armenia, sir, that is correct.

Senator MENENDEZ. Without any preconditions?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Without any preconditions.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you. Let me ask you with reference to the State Department's international religious freedom report. One of my concerns reading from the report is minority religious groups, particularly the Greek and the Armenian Orthodox communities, have lost numerous properties to the state in the past and continued ongoing efforts from the state to expropriate properties.

Most particularly, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the spiritual leader of 6 million Christians here in the United States and 300 million in the world, finds themselves constrained, having his church's properties confiscated—you mentioned the Halki school—not being able to have new ordinations of priests at that location, and most recently U.S. citizens who are affiliated with the church, the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of America Demetrius, Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver, Metropolitan Nikitas from San Francisco, and others who attended the holy synod in Istanbul, were ultimately treated in a way in which we would want no United States citizen to be treated.

What is it that you would intend to do as our ambassador to Turkey to get Turkey to understand the importance of religious freedom and the respect of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which represents the spiritual leader of millions of Americans here at home?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, we would continue the progress and continue the pressing that we have done in the past. This was one of the biggest issues when I was there last time. It's something that I know that Ambassador Wilson and his predecessors have put a lot of time and effort into. We have seen some success. In 2002 the Turks changed the property law to allow the foundations for the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Jewish groups in Turkey to purchase property. That was a step forward, but not an adequate one. They changed the law again in 2006. Unfortunately, it was found unconstitutional and it is back being reviewed.

We need to move forward on that law consistent with the Turkish constitutional system and we need to take further steps. This is something that I will, if confirmed, put a great deal of effort into because I believe that it is absolutely essential for the kind of relationship that we want to continue to have.

In the case of the synod, we were pleased that non-Greek members of the synod were appointed in 2004 and we hope that they can exercise their full rights as members of the synod.

Senator MENENDEZ. Are you aware of the European Court of Justice's unanimous determination last July——

Ambassador JEFFREY. Yes, sir.

Senator Menendez:—which condemns Turkey's confiscation of the orphanage of the Ecumenical Patriarchate? Are you aware of that?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Yes, sir. This is the Kachuk Adaf Orphanage. It is another of the lines of operation, if I will, if I can, that we are pursuing. One of the reasons that we urge Turkey to establish closer relations with the European Union is to help folks resolve these sorts of problems that complicate both our relationship, as you pointed out, with Turkey, but also the European Union's.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you this. On Cyprus there are currently more than 40,000 Turkish troops in Northern Cyprus occupying that part of the country. Since 2003 when I was one of the first people to cross from the Greek Cypriot side into the occupied side, there have been more than 13 million free crossings from the occupied area to the Cypriot government and vice versa.

Is that not a clear repudiation of the Turkish position that you need to have 40,000, the most militarily—in terms of square footage, the most militarily occupied part of any part of the world?

Ambassador JEFFREY. We would be delighted to see any step towards reconciliation, any step to further defuse that situation, Senator, including withdrawals of troops. The previous effort in 2004 had a very significant withdrawal of foreign troops from the island as part of the Annan plan. We fully support a comprehensive solution and we think that any comprehensive solution would deal successfully and effectively with the troop issue.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

Mr. Cretz, what's your understanding at the moment of the Libyan contributions to the fund?

Mr. CRETZ. Currently, Mr. Chairman—first I would point out that the agreement was signed on August 15 between the United States and the government of Libya. On September 3 the fund that will receive the contributions was established.

Right now my understanding is that contributions to the fund are being solicited and that we expect that the fund will be capitalized in the near future.

Senator KERRY. Do you have any expectation on the time frame?

Mr. CRETZ. I can't give you a definite date, Mr. Chairman, but we believe that it will be in the very near future.

Senator KERRY. When you say funds are being solicited, do you know where they're being solicited from

Mr. CRETZ. This is a humanitarian fund which is open to anyone who wants to contribute. I do not know myself what the actual sources of the funds will be.

Senator KERRY. Do you—is there any expectation that American businesses anxious to secure contracts or do business may contribute to the fund?

Mr. CRETZ. Mr. Chairman, we have had three clear red lines with respect to the solicitation or the capitalization of the fund: number one, that there will be no United States taxpayer dollars involved; number two, that we will not pressure U.S. companies to contribute to the fund; and number three, that we will not tolerate any pressure being brought to bear on any U.S. companies to contribute to the fund.

Senator KERRY. Pressure is to be distinguished from an invitation?

Mr. CRETZ. Since the fund is——

Senator KERRY. Or request?

Mr. CRETZ. Yes, I would say that it is. If U.S. companies wish to make a contribution, just as any other companies, Libyan companies, European companies wish to make a contribution to that, it's certainly up to them. We have offered that, if asked, we would facilitate any contact with them about contribution with the Department of Justice with respect to any regulations and laws that might apply.

Senator KERRY. Have you been briefed on or do you have any concerns yourself as an incipient ambassador with respect to the arms sales and potential nuclear agreements between France and Libya?

Mr. CRETZ. I have not, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. And you have no opinion with respect to them? You don't have to. I'm just curious.

Mr. CRETZ. I don't have an opinion on that.

Senator KERRY. What abut potential natural gas cooperation between Libya and Russia?

Mr. CRETZ. I think as we—if we are able in fact to expand our relationship with the Libyans, we would hope that as part of that there would be more investment in the exploitation of Libyan oil as well as Libyan natural gas, not only for the benefit of the United States Government and people at some point, because it offers perhaps more stability in the oil markets, but also because it would—as we look at the situation with respect to Europe and the need to diversify sources of oil and gas, I think we would look on that as—we would look on the contacts between the Europeans and Libya as positive, as a way to diversify from any one source of oil and gas which they have now, and perhaps the Russians is a good example of that.

Senator KERRY. Do you expect the United States to try to—is there any discussion that you're aware of of our offering similar kinds of deal opportunities or engaging in discussions, regarding either arms sales or energy production?

Mr. CRETZ. With respect to energy production, we know that our companies are involved in that. We know that several American companies would like to gain further business with Libya, especially with respect to oil recovery techniques. We know that the Libyans would welcome further American investment in this area.

With respect to arms, with respect to our own potential arms sales to Libya, I would say that we hope that once we overcome—once the problem with respect to the claims is overcome fully and satisfactorily, that we will be able to begin a defense relationship with Libya at some point. This would be a relationship that would be based on—as we begin to see the prospects of whether or not we would be able to sell arms to Libya, it would be done on a case by case basis and in response to positive Libyan behavior, as we have seen in the past in what it's done with respect to WMD, renunciation of terrorism, and we hope with the fulfillment of the claims agreement.

Senator KERRY. To what degree does Libya's opposition to the presence of non-African military forces, i.e., AFRICOM, presence complicate that? And how do we anticipate their being cooperative in those efforts that we obviously face on the continent with respect

to counterterrorism, and yet they're opposed to the AFRICOM presence?

Mr. CRETZ. When the Secretary was in Libya for her historic visit a few weeks ago, she actually did engage in a discussion with the Libyans with respect to AFRICOM. I think that we discovered in that discussion that what they thought our intent was with respect to AFRICOM was really quite mistaken. I think the Secretary told the Libyans that we needed to do more work with respect to explaining to them that this was not only a security-based United States effort in Africa, but in fact it was an effort to help Africans help themselves, especially with respect to countering terrorism on the continent, and also to helping Africans help themselves with respect to maintaining and fostering political stability.

So we have work to do in that area, but I think the Secretary's visit went at least some measure in terms of dispelling what we thought—what appears to be a misconception on the Libyans on the part of AFRICOM.

Senator KERRY. Does that play out in some positive way with respect to conflicts in Chad or Darfur, Niger, and-or the other regional sort of concerns that we have?

Mr. CRETZ. Mr. Chairman, I think that we in the past, where we might have seen elements of adventurism with respect to Libya's actions in Africa, I think we've had a pretty good indication over the past few years of a willingness by the Libyan government to play a very favorable and positive role in the conflicts in Africa, specifically in Darfur and most recently as a participant, Libya's participant as a member of the Dakar Accords with respect to the conflict between Sudan and Chad.

While we may have had a difference of opinion at times with Libya with respect to tactics in bringing these conflicts to resolution, I think that the overall goal that we share with the Libyans is similar in those cases. So I think that Libya—one of the reasons I think that we want to settle the claims agreement fully and satisfactorily is that we see a lot of areas of potential cooperation with Libya in the future, specifically with respect to counterterrorism and certainly with respect to conflicts on the continent.

I would note also that Libya has been helpful in establishing a humanitarian corridor to allow goods to Darfur, and my understanding is that they have also opened up routes to help refugees in the Sahel as well.

Senator KERRY. Those efforts, obviously we appreciate them and they're important, but how do you square those—what leverage do we have to address some of the internal abuses that I cited, the human rights issues internally? Obviously, we always have to try to prioritize some of these things, but we never turn away from that no matter what our priorities. How do we leverage that?

Mr. CRETZ. Mr. Chairman, I think that first of all we recognize, we should recognize, that we have not had a high level dialogue or any dialogue basically with the Libyans for almost 25 years. So I think that we need to—as we move forward with the Libyans, I think we have made it clear that the—and they have in fact expressed a willingness to engage in a human rights dialogue with us.

When the Secretary was in Tripoli she specifically raised the case of Fathi El-Jahmi and she also told the Libyans that we would be eager to engage on a human rights dialogue on the basis of mutual respect. I think that if confirmed as ambassador I certainly would take a lead from what the Secretary did. I think that we have an opportunity to start a human rights dialogue on a high level.

Also I would note that Colonel Qadhafi's son himself, Seif al-Islam, has also publicly spoken about the need to reform parts of Libyan society. I think it will be an evolutionary process, but I think that it's one that could yield fruit in the future if we engage at with the proper means, the proper attitude, and the proper time.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Mr. Cretz.

Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Jeffrey, I focused on—you have a big charge. It's a big country. It's very important to us, and there's a whole host of issues. So that's why I'm focused on getting a good sense of what your thinking is on some of these.

If Turkey were to recognize the Armenian genocide, would the United States be willing to do so?

Ambassador JEFFREY. We would have to see at that time, Senator. I can't commit the administration to any future action.

Senator MENENDEZ. No, I realize you can't. But would you as the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey say to the administration, whoever that is in the next administration, that in fact we should recognize it as well?

Ambassador JEFFREY. We constantly review. We constantly review many things in our foreign policy processes. This one, because of the great interest in the American public and Congress, is one that gets reviewed all of the time. That would certainly be a very major factor in any review if the two sides could come to an agreement on that particular term or other issues related to the past, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, if Turkey on its own came to the evolution that in fact it made a decision that, yes, a previous, not even Turkey as we know it today but the Ottoman Empire, did what the State Department says it has and said, yes, there was a genocide, would it not be in the interests of the United States to recognize what Turkey itself has recognized?

Ambassador JEFFREY. It would be, as I said, Senator, a very important factor. But aside from being concerned about committing this or the future administration to a specific course of action or predicting it, there would be other factors that would have to be weighed, such as our general approach to other conflicts and taking positions.

The relationship between Turkey and Armenia is a major factor in the policies we take, the words we use. But there are other factors as well, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. When you take the oath, should you be confirmed by the Senate as the Ambassador of the United States to Turkey, do you know what that oath says?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Does that oath speak to an administration or does it speak to the country?

Ambassador JEFFREY. It speaks to the country, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. In that respect, one of the things that I look when we have nominees here is that when we have our—understanding fully that the State Department to a large degree is going to, and whatever administration you work for is going to, define your parameters. But when I have an ambassador here I want to be able to get straight talk so that in fact I know and can make judgments as one member of the United States Senate and of this committee, and I can't get that straight talk if I hear a constant constrainment of what is the truth or the realities and the opinions you might have in a country as it relates to questions being posed to you by members of this committee.

So I hope that we recognize that the oath is to the country and this is an institution of the country at the end of the day.

So let me ask you this question. There are a series of media accounts—I won't take them all here—that reported that Under Secretary of State Edelman and Assistant Secretary of State Dan Fried traveled to Turkey in October of 2007 to, quote, "express regret" over the adoption of the Armenian genocide resolution by the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, one that I sat in at one time.

Is it your view, should you ultimately be approved by the Senate as an ambassador, to express regret of what an institution of the United States Congress does?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, I never have and I never will express regret. This is an independent and equal organ of the United States Government. It deserves the respect of everyone in the world.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that answer.

Let me ask you one last, two last questions, and I may submit some for the record, but not to belabor your appearance here today. You know, I have spent a lot of time on the question of Cyprus and Turkey and reunification of the island. Many New Jerseyans are of descent from that country, American citizens now.

Overwhelmingly in the years that I have spent focused on this, probably the better part of 16 years in the Congress, there is a very deep belief that the solution is not between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, although that's what we would desire it to be, but that a lot of this has to do with what goes on in Ankara, and particularly the military in Ankara. How do you see your role as the United States Ambassador in trying to help what is clearly an interest of the United States to have a country that is now part of the European Union, the unoccupied part, but also that accepted our citizens when we were finding the difficulties that were taking place when our citizens had to be evacuated from Beirut in Lebanon, and accepted them with open arms and helped us—how do you see playing a role to try to move that in the right direction?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Certainly, sir. As one who was working that evacuation, I do want for the record to thank again the people of Cyprus for taking on thousands of Americans. It was a magnificent and immediately crucial effort.

Sir, on the issue of Turkey, Turkey is a major player obviously in this. Both Turkey and Greece are technically guarantor powers under the 1960 set of accords. But far more importantly, they're

both political players in this. In the case of Turkey, which is where if confirmed I would focus my efforts, it would be my job, as it has been the job of my predecessors in various positions there, to convince the Turks that it is in their own interest to find a solution to that, that their own relations, not just with us, importantly with us, but also with Greece, not with Cyprus, of course, but with the European Union, and with the region would be helped.

The more the Turks move closer to their neighbors, the better their relations, the better their trade. We see this with Greece, where, while there are still some issues, they've recently had very high-level exchanges. They have now a gas pipeline between Turkey and Greece. They have possibilities of joint military units. This is exactly what we want to see happening with Cyprus, with Armenia as well, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. A final question if I may. I read your statement, your full statement, and your 5-page statement, 14 paragraphs, has 2 that talk about all these challenges combined together, particularly in the context of Turkey's desire to enter the European Union and how there are obstacles to that.

If you were to receive the support of the Senate and be confirmed, can you give me a sense, within the myriad of issues that you will be facing, as to what type of import, attention of your time and calibration will you give to the issues that I've raised with you

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, in my last job in Turkey the issues you raised occupied a very large part of my, if you will, policy time, the time we spend into diplomatic contacts with the Turks, certainly on the order of 20, 30, 40 percent. The crisis of the day—as you pointed out, it's a large country; it borders on a lot of problem areas—sometimes push the press of business to the side. But this has been and if confirmed it will be very important elements of our policy, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you for a set of important, good questions, Senator.

Just a couple more if I can. How would you characterize, Mr. Jeffrey, the relationship right now between the AK Party and the military establishment that's so important in Turkey?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, I know enough about Turkey to say that a question of that detail requires on-the-ground talking with all of the people. If confirmed, that would be one of my priorities, and I wouldn't want to go into it in detail now. I would simply like to sketch out a few guideposts, if you will.

First of all, there was the recent constitutional court decision concerning the AK Party and the concerns that many in Turkey had about whether it was going too far in challenging the secular basis of the Turkish constitution and state. The outcome was to fine the party but not challenge the party's rule. I think that that is—the European Union has greeted that decision and, while we don't get into constitutional decisions in any real detail, I think that that portends well for stable relations between the various key elements of Turkish society, including between the military and this party.

Senator KERRY. Do you think that that relation—is that relationship tricky with respect to the ability of the Cyprus issue to be resolved?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Senator, my bias is almost everything involving Turkey is tricky to one or another degree. But I would have to say that it is a—that has always been in the past when I was involved in this an issue of some concern. As in many other cases of countries with important national security demands, challenges, and issues, the Turkish military has a say in political decisions, and that's something that we have to work with all of the actors.

Senator KERRY. Is it your judgment that Turkey would accept the withdrawal of its forces in exchange for the unification of the island?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Turkey supported in——

Senator KERRY. In a bizonal, bicommunal, federated concept?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Turkey accepted in 2004, sir, the Annan plan, which called for the withdrawal of most of the forces. I think they would go down to roughly 6,000 on each side. I think that if you could find a, as you said, bizonal, bicommunal federal solution that both sides could agree to, I think that Turkey as a whole would go along with it, as it was ready to do in 2004.

Senator KERRY. And UE accession? What's your sense of the status of that?

Ambassador JEFFREY. Sir, I didn't catch the beginning?

Senator KERRY. The EU accession.

Ambassador JEFFREY. Right now—there are 35 chapters that a country has to work its way through, and it often takes 10 or 15 years. Turkey has eight chapters opened. They have eight chapters closed. Again, as in many other cases, because of the Cyprus situation the Turks do not open their ports to Cypriot trade. They have their own arguments on why, based upon what they have explained is EU commitments before the Annan referendum on the island in 2004 concerning the Turkish Cypriots.

But in any case, the EU has decided to freeze those eight chapters. The EU is also very concerned about the constitutional court case. Because of the way that that case came out, I think, and because of the new movement on Cyprus, we would hope and expect that there would be a new impetus to moving forward on the EU.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Cretz, are you satisfied with the current state of the consular relationship between us and Libya, both the rate of travel, rate of visas, etcetera?

Mr. CRETZ. Mr. Chairman, I think there needs to be an improvement on both sides with respect to the consular issues. Because of lack of facilities, we've only been able to offer official visas in Libya, and in fact Libyans have to travel to Tunis to get their U.S. visas adjudicated. We hope that as our facility is able to that we can offer that at some point to the Libyans.

At the same time, I would hope, and certainly if confirmed as ambassador, to convince the Libyans to open up with respect to the issuance of visas for Americans and to facilitate certainly in a more productive way our official people who are going there to do certain kinds of work, and also with respect to tourism.

Senator KERRY. Are there any—have there been any closings with respect to any deals, either cultural or science or otherwise?

Mr. CRETZ. Mr. Chairman, in February I believe we signed a science and technology agreement. But as of right now we have several agreements pending, including cultural exchange agreement, a defense relationship framework agreement, a potential trade and investment framework agreement. So all these agreements in effect are in certain stages of being resolved, and I expect that if confirmed as ambassador I would hopefully oversee the conclusion of these agreements in the next several months, pending of course the——

Senator KERRY. We want you obviously to do that, and I think that progress in those areas could be awfully important. So that could be helpful to the rest of the process.

Let me just take one minute on process here. I want to check on something. [Pause.]

Senator KERRY. I'm just trying to work through, because obviously there's a good chance we're going to finish this deal on the economic deal and be out of here in a few days. Obviously, we're concerned with the notion of being able to try to move the nominations, though yours, Mr. Cretz, depends on Libya, if Libya can move rapidly.

If we're in a pro forma session here, which we may well be, then it would be possible to try to do this in an expedited fashion. I think, Mr. Jeffrey, our plan is to try to discharge you almost immediately, and then see how we can pull the pieces together in the following days.

Therefore, what I will do is I think I'll leave the record open for 24 hours only and we'll close the record out tomorrow. If there are any additional questions in writing, it'll have to be done in that time. Then I hope Libya is listening and can write a big check quickly and transfer money by wire and get an ambassador.

But we're very grateful, we're very grateful to both of you. Again, I regret, Mr. Cretz, but obviously it's beyond our control.

Let me thank you both again and your families. This is a tough time to be abroad for anyone in the foreign service at any level, may I add. This committee is particularly sensitive to that and has a lot of respect for everything that people have to put up with in that effort. We are trying—yesterday we passed out of the committee an effort to try to equalize the pay for foreign service officers, particularly in those areas where families don't follow them because their families are back here and they're paying Washington prices at lower scale. We need to address those kinds of inequities of we're going to continue to ask people to serve in these kinds of complicated places and times.

But the committee is deeply grateful to you and obviously I think the committee, both bipartisanly, has expressed deep concerns about a number of policies that have made life more complicated for the members of our foreign service and we're very hopeful that over the course of the next months, either way, that that's going to change. We look forward to continuing to work at that.

So we thank you for your presence. We thank you for your willingness to serve, and I am confident in the willingness of the Senate to confirm both of you. It's really a matter of scheduling.

We stand adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 3:58 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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