

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM J. BURNS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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NOMINATION OF WILLIAM J. BURNS

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2011

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

Hon. William J. Burns, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:33 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry, Menendez, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Rubio, and Lee.

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

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

I am very, very happy to welcome Under Secretary, former Assistant Secretary, Ambassador, so many titles, and we hope Deputy Secretary of State shortly Burns here. He has been nominated by the President to serve as Deputy Secretary of State, taking the position that Jim Steinberg has been filling ably.

And, Mr. Secretary, we are really happy that you are accompanied. I know Lisa Carty and your two daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah, are here, and we are really happy to welcome you. I hope you are not missing work or school or anything too critical to be here. But we are really happy to have you here.

And may I thank you, as well as the Secretary, for your service to our country. The hours, the days, the trips, the long time away from home, all the things that public service involves are really demanding and taxing on families, and if your family is anything like my family, I missed a few plays and a few games and a few things here and there. So we say thank you to you on behalf of everybody.

We know Ambassador/Secretary Burns very, very well, both in his current job as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, as well as the prior positions which he has so ably filled, including Ambassador to Russia and Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs.

It really is not an exaggeration to say that Secretary Burns has been at the center of some of the toughest issues of our time over the course of the last years. He has brought a steady hand, responsible leadership, thoughtful analysis to multiple crises and chal-

allenges, and he will need all of his talents and skills and experience in his new job.

We are, as we know, at a really important transitional moment in history, one of those moments that you get every so often. I cannot recall another era certainly since the fall of the Berlin Wall as fraught with peril and uncertainty, as well as presenting us such great potential. We have been inspired by the people in Tunisia and Egypt who called peacefully for freedom and for dignity and who managed to change their governments in the most impossible to predict manner.

We have been moved also by the courageous uprising in Libya where people are defiantly fighting an authoritarian dictator whose time in office has long since expired.

But we also watch with trepidation as a brutal crackdown takes place in Syria which threatens to spiral out of control and to lead to even more civilian killings.

And that is just the Middle East.

We cannot overlook our foreign policy challenges in other parts of the world. This committee is currently holding a series of hearings on how to deal with our engagement in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will spend approximately \$120 billion in Afghanistan this fiscal year alone, and that affects our ability to deal with other things across the planet.

On the broader horizon, we face significant economic and political challenges not only from China, India, and Brazil, but from emerging powers like Indonesia and Turkey as well. Indeed, we understand now better than ever how our national security and our economic security are integrally linked.

In Europe, we see how economic crises risk destabilizing governments and aggravating political divisions. All in all, the idea of a multipolar world is no longer a catch phrase. It is a very real phenomenon with direct implications for the United States and for our foreign policy.

Our own budgetary constraints will also force increasingly painful tradeoffs. We can no longer afford to be the world's first responder whenever a crisis arises. Yet, we also cannot afford to withdraw from the world. Without a robust international affairs budget, our war effort in Afghanistan will be undermined and fragile progress in Iraq will be jeopardized, not to mention hundreds of other efforts that we are engaged in around the globe.

This budget also provides vital humanitarian assistance. It fights hunger and the scourge of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in poor countries around the world. And it helps to show people the real values and aspirations of Americans. It prevents the spread of cholera in Haiti, distributes food to refugees in northern Kenya, and finances shelter for flood victims in Pakistan.

Ambassador Burns, we will need to use your experience and expertise to be a powerful voice in defense of these kinds of efforts and of the President's budget and programs. And I cannot think of anybody with better experience from a career in diplomacy and foreign policy who could carry that with greater authority and credibility up here on the Hill. So we thank you for your continued dedication to public service and your willingness to help lead the

Department of State through a very decisive period of foreign policy.

Senator Lugar.

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

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, it is a privilege to join you in welcoming Ambassador Burns once again to the Foreign Relations Committee.

Just as a point of personal privilege, I would mention that Ambassador Burns is a good friend. I was thrilled with the nomination. It brings back wonderful memories of his hospitality in Moscow, and if I can stretch things even further, to his dad, General Burns, who went with Sam Nunn and me on the first trip after the passage of the Nunn-Lugar legislation to Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine to try to think through what the implications of the act were, and what the United States could do physically. And so it is a marvelous, patriotic family. It is represented once again here today, and we are so delighted that you have accepted this new challenge.

We have often benefited from Ambassador Burns' analysis on some of the most important issues facing the United States. He is an outstanding choice to be the Deputy Secretary, and the State Department and our Nation are fortunate that he will be taking on this responsibility. Ambassador Burns would be the first Foreign Service officer to serve as Deputy Secretary in nearly 30 years. His nomination is a testament not only to his individual talents, but also to the commitment and service of the many career officers who serve our Nation every day in dangerous and challenging circumstances around the world.

Ambassador Burns' deep base of experience in the Middle East is critical as the United States forges new relationships with governments in the region and responds to transformational events. I appreciate also, as I have mentioned, his time as Ambassador to Russia. He has a thorough understanding of nuclear and arms control issues, Security Council dynamics, energy issues, and other global conditions that bear heavily on United States security and our relationship with Russia.

When Deputy Secretary Nides was before this committee last November, I stressed the importance of making our foreign policy less reactive and promoting management of the State Department that does not lose sight of global priorities. This committee has worked to promote a more strategic approach to American diplomacy. We have attempted to ensure that financial resources are efficiently utilized in support of our national objectives. I believe that policy choices must be subject to the same analysis. There is limited bandwidth within any administration to advance foreign policy priorities. While the crisis of the moment may garner press attention, lasting relationships and effective diplomacy require hard work each day.

As the Department of State manages the shifting sands of the Arab Spring and the complex transitions from military to civilian engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq, we must not miss opportunities to make strategic, long-term gains related to nonproliferation,

energy security, and international trade. It is incumbent on the Deputy Secretary of State to ensure this strategic horizon is maintained within the Department of State.

I look forward to today's discussion and to many future conversations with the nominee as we work to advance American interests and security around the world. I thank you for holding this hearing so promptly, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Lugar.

Secretary Burns, as you know, we are happy to place your formal testimony in the record and it will be there as if read in full. And we would appreciate probably just a summary if that is amenable to you. And we look forward to your testimony.

**STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM J. BURNS, OF MARYLAND,
TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE**

Ambassador BURNS. Yes, sir. Well, thank you very much, and I promise I will be brief.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, members of the committee, it truly is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to become Deputy Secretary of State. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Clinton for their confidence in me and in our diplomatic service in which I have proudly served for 29 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.

I would like to begin by expressing deep appreciation to my family, to my wife, Lisa, and our daughters, Lizzy and Sarah. 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 fifth time, Mr. Chairman, that I have appeared before this committee for confirmation. I approach this new challenges with considerable humility, with great respect for Jim Steinberg 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, unresolved regional and sectarian conflicts, extremist violence and terrorism, global economic dislocation, and transnational health, energy, and environmental concerns. It is a world in which American vision and drive are essential in crafting relations with emergent and resurgent 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 inevitably have their own realities, not always identical to ours. That does not mean that 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 there is still no substitute for setting careful priorities in the application of American power and purpose, having clear goals, 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, from supporting the universal aspirations fueling the Arab Spring to promoting global health and food security. We have our share of problems, but it is a mistake to underestimate our enduring strengths and our capacity to do big and difficult things.

That capacity will be tested in the months and years ahead. It will be tested across the Middle East where revolutions which are only just beginning will be as consequential in their own way for global order as 1989 was for Europe and Eurasia. It will be tested across Asia and the Pacific, in many respects the most dynamic and significant part of the world for American interests in the next half-century, with the rise of China, the growth of our partnership with India, the strengthening of our ties in Southeast Asia, and the deepening of our relationships with traditional allies like Japan and South Korea, all enormously important.

It will be tested in different ways in Europe where NATO remains the strongest link in our chain of overseas security partnerships, where the European Union still constitutes 30 percent of the global economy, where Turkey is an increasingly influential partner at the intersection of several crucial regions, and where the reset of relations with Russia has produced tangible results despite lingering differences. It will be tested in Afghanistan and Pakistan where success against bin Laden brings us to an important and extraordinarily challenging crossroads. It will be tested in Africa, soon to be a continent of a billion people, nearly half born since 1995. And it will be tested in our own hemisphere where the 50th anniversary of the Alliance for Progress this year is a fitting moment to focus more of our diplomatic energy and attention closer to home, and where growing partnerships with countries like Brazil and Colombia, which I visited last week, hold great promise.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward, if confirmed, to doing all I can to help President Obama and Secretary Clinton meet all these tests. I will work hard with my friends and colleagues in other agencies to promote an effective policy process. I will work hard with all of you to ensure the closest possible cooperation with Congress. And I will also work hard to support Secretary Clinton's efforts to transform and strengthen America's diplomatic capabilities for the new century unfolding 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 difficult places around the world, is not only the right thing to do, but also a powerful contribution to America's best interests.

Thank you very much again, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, members of the committee, for your consideration. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Burns follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR WILLIAM J. BURNS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to become Deputy Secretary of State. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Clinton for their confidence in me, and in our diplomatic service, in which I have proudly served for 29

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.

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Mr. Chairman, I look forward, if confirmed, to doing all I can to help President Obama and Secretary Clinton meet all these tests. I will work hard with my friends and colleagues in other agencies to promote an effective policy process. I will work hard with all of you to ensure the closest possible cooperation with Congress. And I will also work hard to support Secretary Clinton's efforts to transform and strengthen America's diplomatic capabilities for the new century unfolding 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 difficult places around the world—is not only the right thing to do, but also a powerful contribution to America's best interests.

Thank you very much again, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, and members of the committee for your consideration. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary, we look forward to having a good dialogue. I do not think there is any great controversy here and I am not sure we have to take all that long.

But let me ask you, first of all, with Tom Nides filling the position of the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, now you are coming in in the Steinberg position, can you share with the committee how you guys will divide up responsibilities of what, if anything, new might accompany your portfolio that was not there with Secretary Steinberg?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, thank you very much, Senator Kerry. I look forward very much to working with Tom Nides who is a terrific partner as the Deputy Secretary primarily responsible for management and resources issues, which is no small challenge, as both you and Senator Lugar indicated earlier.

I look forward very much to continuing the work that I have been involved in in trying to strengthen relations with emerging and reemerging powers around the world—India, Brazil, Russia; look forward to doing more work on China issues and Asia and the Pacific, given the significance of that part of the world. I hope to remain very much involved in Middle East issues, particularly with the challenges posed by the Arab Spring, as you had mentioned earlier.

But in truth, I think there is no shortage of challenges, policy challenges, before us around the world, and I look forward to doing my very best to help Secretary Clinton make progress in all those areas.

The CHAIRMAN. What, in any of those things that you just listed—is there anything in there that is different from where Secretary Steinberg was focused?

Ambassador BURNS. No, sir. I have spent a good deal of time over the last 2 years on relations with Russia, which I hope to continue; relations with India, which the Secretary and the President have invested a lot of time; and as I said, given my own background in what is never a dull part of the world in the Middle East, I expect to continue to be engaged on those issues as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Speaking of the Middle East, in light of Prime Minister Netanyahu's speech this morning and concluded visit, what is your sense of whether we can get a meaningful Israeli-Palestinian track going? Where would you say that is in your judgment after this visit?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Mr. Chairman, the President last Thursday laid out a very clear vision, I think, of how the United States at least thinks that a resumption of negotiations ought to be framed. That is based, as the President emphasized, on an appreciation strategically that the resumption of diplomatic movement toward a two-state solution is deeply in our interest, but it is also deeply in the interest of Israel and its future as a democratic Jewish state and its own security, given demographic and technological realities.

I think it is also technically important as well to try to resume diplomatic movement simply because I think all of our experience in the Middle East is that when vacuums exist to the peace process, they tend to get filled by unhelpful ideas and unhelpful actions such as the notion of moving in September in New York in the U.N. General Assembly toward a kind of symbolic isolation of Israel and movement toward declaration of an independent Palestinian state. The truth, as the President emphasized, is that that

state desperately needs to be produced, but it can only be produced through negotiations, and that is the vision that the President has tried to lay out and that we are going to work very hard to make progress toward.

The CHAIRMAN. And your reaction to the statement in the speech about tearing up the pact with Hamas? Where do you think that leaves President Abbas in terms of options and us?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, I think the reconciliation agreement, which we have all read about, between Hamas and Fatah is something the Palestinians are going to have to sort through. What President Obama did last Thursday was to pose, I think, a very clear and very legitimate threshold question for Palestinians. What is that reconciliation aimed at? What kind of Palestinian partner can Israel look at across the table? And none of us can expect Israel to sit down at the negotiating table with a party that is sworn to its own destruction. So it seems to us that the Palestinian leadership has some very important questions to address in the weeks and months ahead.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I would agree with that. I think the Prime Minister put the question to them pretty effectively today.

Coming back to the State Department for a minute, having spent years there and understanding it as you do, what do you see as the biggest challenge now for the Department itself in the context of these changes that are taking place globally and some of the demands being placed on it and us, particularly in light of the budget right now? Can you speak to the internal challenge that we do not see every day but which you are wrestling with?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Mr. Chairman, Secretary Clinton has addressed this, I think, very clearly and very eloquently in the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Initiative Review which she has launched, modeled on what the Pentagon has done for the last couple of decades. And that is aimed at making the best possible use of what we recognize are going to be increasingly tight resources, strengthening the civilian capacities of the American Government to promote American economic interests overseas, to promote important global initiatives, whether related to global health or to food security, to ensuring that within the State Department the regional bureaus and the so-called functional bureaus, those responsible for economic issues, energy, as well as human rights, work closely and effectively together, aimed at the President's priorities. In the past, there has sometimes been a kind of artificial tension between those bureaus, and I think a lot of that has been broken down through the Secretary's efforts in the last couple years, and I will do everything I can to help in that respect as well.

So I think it is incumbent upon the Department to demonstrate the best possible use of the resources that we have, to make the clearest arguments that we can about what is at stake for the United States at a moment in history when our own economic well-being depends more and more on interactions within the global economy, on trade with countries overseas, and on the efforts that our embassies and diplomatic missions can make to promote those kind of interests. So it is a tall order. It is much easier said than

done, but I think that is something over the next couple of years that is going to be extraordinarily important.

The CHAIRMAN. The last question because I know my time is running out here.

Egypt. I am uncomfortable with the amount of money that is being put on the table. I just do not think it is enough for not just us but the global community to be committing to a transition as critical as the one that is taking place in Egypt, a quarter of the world's Arab population in one country. It does not have all of the sectarian struggles of other places, but it has a very clear economic challenge ahead of it.

It seems to me, in chatting with some of the leaders within the Gulf States and the region, there is a preparedness to step up, but I do not see the kind of concentrated program or initiative that brings people together to do that. Could you speak to that for a minute?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes, sir. Well, Senator Kerry, first I would stress or reinforce the point that you made that I think Egypt's transition is going to be as consequential as any challenge that we face across the Middle East in the coming years. Egypt is by far the largest of the Arab countries, and I think if Egypt makes a successful transition, which I believe Egyptians are entirely capable of, it is going to have an enormously positive demonstration effect in the rest of the region. That political transition cannot succeed without a sense of economic possibility, economic modernization, which Egyptians themselves have to lead in but which we have a deep stake in assisting, as do other Arab States, as do our European partners, is going to be extremely important. And that is why the President last Thursday emphasized a number of initiatives that the United States intends to undertake and where we will welcome support from others.

These relate, first, to the enterprise funds that you and others in the Congress have suggested based on our experience in Central and Eastern Europe 20 years ago, proven vehicles for supporting the expansion of small- and medium-sized enterprises, a significant amount of debt relief, as much as a billion dollars over the next 3 years aimed and making use of creative ideas like debt swaps, and helping to create jobs on infrastructure projects which are desperately needed in Egypt, and also more ambitiously in the medium term, a wider trade initiative that could involve Egypt in particular but also other countries in the region, as well as our European partners and the United States.

The dirty little secret about the Arab world in recent years has been that Arab countries do not trade much with one another, and I think we can do a lot to support successful political transitions, democratic transitions, in the Arab world by holding out the possibility of those kind of ambitious trade initiatives. And I think we have a lot of interest in Europe and the President will be following up on this at the G8 summit over the course of the coming days.

So there is a lot of possibility here, but there is an enormous amount at stake too.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, it is good to hear. I am glad that it will be a topic in Deauville. I think that is great.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I want to raise a question really hypothetically today, in order to take advantage of this opportunity to talk about State Department funding for both the rest of this fiscal year, and the coming year. As you have noted, Secretary Burns, on the Senate floor we have been preoccupied almost entirely throughout the year thus far with the questions of the budget, of deficits, and debt ceiling issues. This occupies almost all of our time with a few interruptions for votes on nominations and those sorts of things.

On the other hand, here in our Foreign Relations Committee hearings, we are talking about very substantial challenges. It comes as no surprise, because you will have to be working through what we are going to be doing with regard to our Embassy in Iraq and likewise in Afghanistan, as well as all the contractors that are going to be coming over to do various things. All of these things are budget items and they cost money. It would appear that about \$8 billion has been cut from the State Department's budget request just for the rest of this fiscal year.

I met with a delegation of people from AIPAC after Mr. Netanyahu's speech today, and they wanted assurance that \$3 billion in aid to Israel is there. I had to respond, as I am telling it to you now, that we are not discussing for the moment precisely what is in any of these budgets. We are not even sure anybody has presented a budget from the standpoint of the Senate to the Congress.

So how do you manage expectations in the various countries that we serve, quite apart from anxieties, I would think, of Foreign Service officers and other personnel who are going to be in these embassies and elsewhere when you have really no idea what the budget is going to be for the State Department? And when these resolutions finally happen, how do you go about informing people or making necessary adjustments? Is any sort of back room planning going on for the contingencies that might be involved in all this?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Senator Lugar, it is certainly a challenge, as you described, and there is a great deal of back room thinking going on about how best to deal with that challenge. As I said before, it is essential for the Department to demonstrate the most effective possible use of the resources that we are provided, to make the best possible case for why we believe the resources we have requested, especially for fiscal year 2012, are in the best interests of the United States. I think, obviously, the so-called overseas contingency operation part of our request focused mainly on Afghanistan, on Iraq, is extremely important so that we can build on the success that has been achieved at such cost in recent years, but build on that responsibly.

I think it is important to remember that the State Department budget represents something like 1 percent of the total Federal budget. It is a relatively small investment. We are very well aware of the pressures on the U.S. Federal budget across the board, and again, we want to do our part very effectively.

If you look at a place like Iraq and the kind of civilian expenditure that we are requesting for fiscal year 2012, which is admittedly an increase from the request level of fiscal year 2010, you

have to weigh that, it seems to me, against the reality that the Defense Department request for OCO, for overseas contingency operations, is going to be about \$45 billion less as it transitions to civilian leadership. So the net result to that I think is a pretty good deal for the American taxpayer and a good investment of American funds in what is a crucial moment in our relations with Iraq and with that part of the world.

Senator LUGAR. Well, needless to say, we hope you will stay closely in touch throughout these months. This committee is tremendously interested, as you are, in the policies in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the safety of Americans who are serving there, and the continuity of the influence we have.

I want to pick up one other controversial point, and that is on May 12, Deputy Secretary Steinberg, when he was before our committee, said the President has conducted U.S. military operations in Libya in a manner consistent with the War Powers Resolution and will continue to do so. Last Friday, the President wrote to the congressional leadership, indicating that U.S. military operations will continue beyond the 60-day deadline specified by the War Powers Resolution, although the Congress has not authorized these operations.

This is a point of discussion and some debate. I know our chairman has offered a resolution going through various thoughts about Libya and essentially commending the President for his activities. I will not get into an argument about that. I would just say it appears to me that potentially a precedent is being set here that, in terms of our overall foreign policy history, is not a good one.

Now, specifically people may come to a conclusion that foreign policy can be directed at humanitarian goals, namely stopping civilian killings that could occur all over the world at various times. The President might say that we need to act quickly because otherwise people are going to be lost. But conceivably this could fit under the War Powers Resolution even though there is not a declaration of war or a commitment to use military power of the United States.

But our engagement in Libya is drifting well beyond 60 days. Calls to the administration to clarify what we have spent already in Libya, in addition to what we are about to spend and what we might spend to help reconstruction efforts in Libya at some point in the future have not been forthcoming. You cannot solve that during this hearing today.

Let me just say that it is a source of concern for me and I think for others. It ought to be, I think, a concern for everybody. I think it is important to pin down when the United States is going to use military force, to have the proper checks and balances with the Congress, to use even the leeway of the 60 days, which the War Powers Act does, but not to move well on beyond that with almost imagination. So I am hopeful that you will convey my serious concerns to the State Department, as you are confirmed, and that we can have more conversation about it.

Ambassador BURNS. I certainly will, Senator. And I appreciate the importance and seriousness of the concerns that you raise. I also appreciate the fact that there has been longstanding debate, including within the Congress, about the War Powers Resolution.

As the White House press secretary said last Friday, the President believes that our actions regarding Libya have been and remain consistent with the War Powers Resolution. The President also indicated in the letter that he sent to the congressional leadership last Friday his firm conviction that it is extremely important, when engaged in any military action, even a limited military action of the sort that we are engaged in in support of the coalition in Libya, that we engage with, consult with, and have the support of the Congress. And that is why the President welcomed the introduction last night of the bipartisan resolution cosponsored by Senator Kerry, Senator McCain, and other members along those lines. But I will certainly convey the concern.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks very much, Senator Lugar.

Mr. Secretary, I ask your indulgence. I have a meeting that I need to go to in a few moments. Senator Casey is going to preside in my absence.

I just want to thank you again. I think it is obvious from the tone and questions here that there is no issue of your being confirmed, I think, and we want to try to move to get it done as rapidly as we can and look forward to continuing our relationship with you once you get in there formally.

So, Senator Casey, I recognize you and I thank you for chairing in my absence.

Senator CASEY [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Under Secretary Burns, we are grateful for your public service, your appearance here today and your ongoing commitment to engage in and accept the responsibility of public service yet again. We do not have enough time to list all of the positions that you have held, but they have all been difficult and they have all been positions of significant responsibility. So we thank you for that.

Also, thank your family as well. As you pointed out in your statement, when you serve the public, they do as well by extension, and I know the support they give you. So we are grateful for that.

I wanted to turn first to Iran. I do not need to recite for you the challenges that Iran presents for the region and the Middle East and the world. We are, of course, concerned about two basic areas. One is their nuclear capability and their determination to have a nuclear weapon in my judgment and I think in the judgment of others. In addition to that, even absent that, even if that were not a threat, as it is, their demonstrated support for terrorism throughout the region and well beyond the region, especially when it comes to their support for Hezbollah and Hamas, as well as others.

So I would ask you a couple of questions in this area. There was a 2011 annual worldwide threat briefing by our director of national intelligence, and it states "Iran has the scientific, technical, and industrial capacity to produce enough highly enriched uranium for a weapon in the next few years if it chooses to."

We know that one strategy alone does not a successful solution make, but we know that we have sanctions in place. I am one of the Senators cosponsoring legislation today to further enhance those sanctions. But we know that sanctions are part of it and they are working and they are necessary even though we want to do more in that area.

We also know that diplomacy plays a huge role here, and your work has demonstrated that.

So we have got more to do to hold the regime accountable. I just wanted to get your sense based upon your experience and also in light of the position that you are going to be assuming in the event of your confirmation, which I am confident about. What can you tell us about how you will use the position of Deputy Secretary of State to be able to push forward an agenda that would lead to both a diplomatic strategy, as well as to keep the pressure on the Iranian regime in other ways?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you very much, Senator.

I think we remain very firmly committed to enforcing all of the many laws that we have available to us now, as well as international understandings, such as U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929, to maximize the pressure on the Iranian regime to engage seriously in diplomacy on the nuclear issue, something we have not seen to date.

Earlier today, we announced a series of significant new measures with regard to sanctions against Iran, including seven new entities, companies, designated under CISADA, as well as 16 new entities or individuals designed under the so-called INKSNA sanctions against Iran, North Korea, and Syria. I think those are significant steps forward and we are continuing to look at other steps that we can take to demonstrate our seriousness and, beyond our seriousness, the seriousness of the international community on these issues.

It is instructive that the European Union yesterday also announced about 100 new companies or firms that they are sanctioning in continuation of the international effort against Iran.

We have a strong platform on which to build over the course of the last year, I think an unprecedented set of sanctions built on Resolution 1929, what the EU did after that, what we did nationally, what a number of our other partners around the world have done. It is having an impact on Iran. It has not yet produced the kind of serious willingness to engage in diplomacy that we had hoped for, and in the absence of that indication of seriousness, we are going to continue to try to step up the pressure in every way that we can.

Senator CASEY. The question that Middle East peace—or I should say the challenge that that presents to us got, I think, more difficult in the last couple of weeks. We could point to the last couple of months as being a time period within which it got more difficult, more complicated, even as complicated as it always is because of a number of developments. One of the developments which in my judgment makes it exceedingly more difficult is the unity government between Hamas and Fatah and the decision made by President Abbas to form that unity government, what that means for the region and for any kind of successful peace process.

In the aftermath of that, I and a number of Senators sent a letter to President Obama. This letter is dated May the 6th. I will not read all of it, obviously, but the one line that I think is particularly relevant and important—and I wanted to get your reaction to this—is we say in the last paragraph of this May 6 letter—and I am quoting—“we urge you”—urging the President here—“to make

clear to President Abbas and to the international community the United States opposition to a Fatah-Hamas unity government that does not fully accept the Quartet Principles.” Those principles, meaning that Hamas must renounce violence, recognize Israel, and agree to abide by past agreements.

In light of that condition or set of conditions not having been effectuated or agreed to, what can you tell us about how the administration views not just the peace process more generally but specifically the peace process through the lens of this difficult question?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

It is obviously a very serious concern. The President was quite clear in his speech last Thursday in posing what is really a threshold question for Palestinians about what efforts at reconciliation or unity are really aimed at because none of us can expect Israel to sit down at the negotiating table with a party that is sworn to its destruction, as the President underscored. And so I think in the coming days and weeks, the Palestinian leadership has some very important questions before it about what this reconciliation agreement means, about how it is going to translate into a unity government, about what the policies and positions of that government are going to be, and whether or not that makes it possible for there to be a resumption of negotiations. We have made clear that we are prepared to do our part, but the Palestinians need to demonstrate their willingness to be that kind of a partner in negotiations.

Senator CASEY. I am out of time, but I would urge you, of course, and the State Department, as well as the administration overall and the President, to continually reassert that policy because repetition on a question like this is very important to get that message out.

Thank you very much.

We will move to Senator Rubio.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Congratulations. The fact that this is not full today is a good sign that your nomination is going well. I wanted to personally thank you for your service to our country and to your family for the sacrifice that being in the Foreign Service means to families. So we are grateful for that.

I have three quick questions. One is really more of your impressions on something.

In the time that I have been here and on this committee, which has been a great experience so far, it is obviously very apparent the world faces some major issues, big problems. And clearly no nation on earth can solve any of these problems by themselves. The Israel-Palestinian issue, Syria, Libya, Egypt, North Korea. I mean, you name it. It takes coalitions to basically address these. And coalitions have to be put together and they have to be led. And right now, we probably are the only nation on earth that can do that.

My impression—and this is just something that I think others have discussed in the past, but I was wondering what your impressions are—is many of the international institutions that are now in place are really creatures of the cold war, post World War II. What is your assessment? It may not be a fair question in this forum. Maybe we could talk about it later. Maybe you have not

given it a tremendous of thought, and perhaps you have. But what is your assessment of our existing institutions in terms of their ability to deal with the realities of the 21st century? It is dramatically different than just 20 years. And I mean all of them. They are all important, but the United Nations, NATO, here in this hemisphere, the OAS. Have we reached a point where maybe we should start on a global scale having a conversation about either retooling some of these organizations and institutions to really kind of line up more with the realities of the 21st century and the kind of challenges we are facing?

Ambassador BURNS. That is a very important point, Senator. I think some of that is underway already, but I think it needs to be approached with greater vigor and determination because whether you look at some of the important regional organizations like the OAS, for example, which I think has itself made clear the importance of reform and updating to meet a different set of challenges in the 21st century or at global institutions like the United Nations, the U.N. Security Council where the administration has made clear the importance of updating the Security Council to reflect the realities of the 21st century, or looking at the global financial institutions, the World Bank, where a great deal of work has gone into this already, but where, if you look at the kinds of economic challenges that we and countries around the world face, those institutions are going to need to adapt. So it is a longer conversation, but I think it is a very important one.

Senator RUBIO. Just kind of building on that, obviously there is a lot of concern and you hear a lot of talk about the rise of China, what that means, but also in the context of that, I think there is opportunity to find real partners to take on some of these issues. And not just China. I mean, Turkey and Brazil, India. I mean, these are countries we hope to encourage to get involved with other nations to deal with some of these issues. That is a real challenge. What are your thoughts on what we can do here in the Senate and beyond to be constructive in that regard?

Ambassador BURNS. I do not think we face a bigger challenge, and I think that is why you have seen in this administration and also in the last administration a lot of effort focused on some of those relationships like India, Brazil as you mentioned as well, both in terms of strengthening our own bilateral relationships and partnerships with those countries, but also encouraging them to play a more active role, in the case of India, across Asia and the Pacific where I think India is emerging as a more and more influential player. And in the case of Brazil, working not only on issues in our own hemisphere, but also increasingly on the kind of global issues, whether it is in food security or energy or other areas where we have a great deal in common.

So I cannot think of a bigger challenge as we look out over the coming years and decades than spending a lot of time and attention on those relationships and helping to deepen the stake of those countries in the kind of stable international system that serves our interests and promotes our values as well.

Senator RUBIO. I have two quick questions on specifics.

The first is a couple of weeks ago we met with some of the folks that were here on behalf of the Libyan transitional council. I apolo-

gize if this was covered in the testimony earlier. They had come and basically what they asked for is access to some of these funds that have been frozen, either direct access to the funds or a line of credit secured by those funds. Is there any update? I know Senator Kerry was working on some legislation of some sort regarding that issue. What is the latest on efforts, if any, to provide those funds or make something available?

Ambassador BURNS. It is something which we are very much committed to. We are working with the Congress with a variety of committees here to try and develop legislation which will enable us to do this, in other words, to get access in one way or the other, as you described, to frozen assets so that it can be used to meet the humanitarian needs of the Libyan people. And we are confident that we will be able to do that. We want to work very closely with the Congress to do it because there is a real sense of urgency connected to this.

Senator RUBIO. And the last question—and it is one that I think we are doing well on and should continue to build on—is the State Department's view globally as a leader on trafficking in modern day slavery, largely in part to the Trafficking in Persons report that has demonstrated an ability to influence governments' capacity and their willingness to combat this kind of criminal activity.

What do you envision are some of the steps we can take to institutionalize these policies and procedures and continue to make that a core principle of our foreign policy? I think it is an important issue. I think we have taken the leadership on it globally, and I would imagine you would consider that to be a priority as well. Any thoughts on how we build on our successes there already?

Ambassador BURNS. I think it is a difficult challenge, and we have work to do in not only streamlining the process but ensuring that it is a high priority in our agendas with other governments. And I think as you said, Senator, we have made good deal of progress in countries where, in their own self-interest, not as a favor to us or to the trafficking in persons process, countries that made significant strides to deal with this problem.

Senator RUBIO. And I am going to sneak one quick one in. It is important but it is topical.

Yemen. A careful balancing act between a nation whose resources have been used to assist in the war on terror but also an increasingly dysfunctional situation that looks untenable. It is a much broader question. I know the administration is grappling with what the right approach there is. Any updates on that?

Ambassador BURNS. No, I mean, just to express at this moment anyway deep disappointment with the fact that President Saleh in Yemen chose once again not to follow through on his commitment to make a peaceful transfer of power. This is an issue on which we have worked closely with the Gulf Cooperation Council states. We will continue that. But this is a very fragile moment, as you said, and we will do everything we can to encourage movement in the direction of a peaceful transition. There is a lot at stake here in Yemen.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you. Congratulations.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Senator Rubio.

I will be relinquishing my gavel to Senator Menendez who is our next questioner.

Senator MENENDEZ [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, thank you for your service to our country. I appreciate what you have done over a long period of time.

Let me start off by saying something positive on the State Department. I have been one of those who have been pressing really hard about our sanctions regime on Iran, and I am very pleased to see that the Department has listed about seven different companies who are engaged in activities related to the supply of refined petroleum products to Iran, including the supply of gasoline, and they come from various countries. So that is a very good step forward, and I am thrilled to see it.

Yesterday I introduced legislation, that I coauthored with Senators Kyl and Lieberman, with Senators Casey, Gillibrand, Collins, and Kirk, among others as cosponsors, to further pursue the closing of loopholes that we believe exist particularly with the Iran sanctions regime. Part of what we call for in that legislation is for the State Department to undertake a diplomatic initiative to qualitatively expand the U.N. sanctions against the regime.

Are you committed, if you are confirmed, to robust enforcement of our sanctions regime and pursuing more vigorous efforts at the United Nations and in our bilateral relationships to ensure that we are doing everything in our power to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes, sir, I certainly am.

Senator MENENDEZ. And since you are going to be, in essence, the chief counselor to the Secretary of State, is that what you will be advocating for in that position?

Ambassador BURNS. I certainly will, Senator. And I think, as you mentioned, the further actions that we took this morning under the CISADA sanctions, the seven entities designated there, as well as 16 under the INKSNA, I think underscores the commitment of this administration to follow through.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, I want to follow up on your answer to Senator Casey about the Fatah-Hamas. I was also the author of that letter.

I listened to the President's speech very intently. I read it once it was printed. And when he gets to the point about Fatah-Hamas, he says the Palestinian Authority will have to convince Israel that in fact—how am I supposed to deal or negotiate with someone who, as part of that entity, is committed to obliterate my existence?

But he did not say that we will invoke U.S. law which says that if you have an unreformed Hamas, U.S. taxpayer dollars will not flow to such an entity. Is it your understanding that if, in fact, we have an unreformed Hamas, that U.S. law calls for the suspension of those funds to a Palestinian Authority that includes Hamas?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, we are certainly committed to applying U.S. law, and our view of Hamas has not changed. It is a foreign terrorist organization and we do not engage with Hamas.

We will have to see how the so-called reconciliation agreement translates in terms of a government of unity, as well as the policies and positions of that government. There is a distance between where we are today and seeing those realities. And we will cer-

tainly have to make our judgments accordingly, but we will certainly apply U.S. law.

And I think in the meantime, it is important for us, until we reach that point, to continue to plan to provide support to the very worthwhile efforts of people like Prime Minister Fayyad who has made enormous progress over the last few years that would have been very hard to predict a few years ago in creating the institutions for an eventual Palestinian state.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate your answer. Let me just say I think it will be very hard for those of us who have cast votes in support of helping the Palestinian Authority, as part of a Middle East package, to be voting to send U.S. taxpayer dollars to an entity that includes an organization recognized by the United States Government as a terrorist one. And I always understand the diplomatic speak and I get nervous about it. I think it should be very clear that there will be a very strong will in the Congress of the United States to not have U.S. taxpayer dollars go to such an entity. The definition of a unity government may be of interest to the State Department. What is of interest to those of us who have a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of this country is not to have U.S. dollars flow to a terrorist organization. And so I understand distinctions, but I hope distinctions at the end of the day do not get so blurred that we will be on a collision course.

Let me ask you about a different part of the world. We are losing our Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere. I chair that subcommittee. We do not have an Ambassador to Mexico. These are incredibly important assignments. And I do not get a sense that at a time in which the hemisphere is continuously a challenge to us that we are as committed as is necessary. I know one just became a reality, but the other one has existed. What is your expectation, and what is it that you will do when you get to the State Department to make this a critical focus?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, you are absolutely right. They are extremely important posts. The Secretary is firmly convinced of the high priority that needs to be attached to both of those posts, and we are moving as quickly as we can, working with the White House, toward sending up nominations because it is very important to fill those posts for all the reasons that you said. This is a critical moment for the hemisphere and for our interests in it.

Senator MENENDEZ. Especially on Mexico, which has been open, I hope we will get someone who both understands the United States-Mexico relationship, will not have the challenge that we had most recently, and can be very meaningful. And I will be pursuing that with the Secretary's office and hopefully with you upon your confirmation.

There is something that is pretty outrageous going on at State that I have been pursuing for the 19 years that I have been in the Congress—House and Senate. And that is diversity at the State Department. It has the worst record of any of the Federal Departments, which is incredibly disappointing to me. And what demonstrates the Department's indifference to this issue is that the State Department failed to even provide data for 2009 at the OPM for its annual report to the President on Hispanic employment in

the Federal Government. It was the only—"only" underlined—Federal agency not to respond.

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Senator, I am not aware of the lack of response, but if that is the case, we will fix that because the Secretary is certainly not indifferent to the issue of diversity and has made extraordinary efforts to try and ensure that the State Department, both the Foreign and Civil Services, reflect one of the great strengths of the United States, which is its diversity. Certainly the Department, the Foreign Service in particular, is a more representative place than it was when I joined the Foreign Service 29 years ago. And this is the result not only of the efforts of Secretary Clinton but Secretary Powell, Secretary Rice before. So I promise to make this a high priority because I share your conviction that it is extremely important, and I do believe we have made progress in recent years and we will keep at it.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that, and I raise it because you are going to be in a position to affect it. I chaired—and I will close on this—the nomination hearing for Deputy Secretary Nides when his confirmation process was before the committee. And I asked him about the Department's dismal record. This is a record that goes back in time. It is not this Secretary, but the Department's history. It still is the worst Department in the Federal Government.

And in Nides' oral and written response, he agreed that this was a priority for the Department, that there is more that could be done, and that the Department was going to find innovative ways to improve minority recruitment, retention, and the subjectivity as to whether or not you can orally express yourself, which I always found interesting. But yet, we do not even have a response to OPM. The only Federal Department that did not respond.

So I hope we can change that and I look forward to working with you to do so.

Ambassador BURNS. I will certainly do everything I can working with Tom Nides and with the Secretary on this issue because it is a high priority and we need to demonstrate that—

Senator MENENDEZ. I prefer that we get a response that we can work with instead of a legislative response.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, congratulations. I can think of no one who is better qualified to do the job that you are about to undertake. I have great admiration for your adroitness as a diplomat, but also your wealth of knowledge.

I want to get in three or four questions here, not in terms of great length of prefatory remarks.

First, I have two serious concerns about the Libyan situation as you will recall. In fact, the last time you were before this committee was the day before, or the day of, the U.N. vote on the Libyan situation. This is sort of in the middle of an exchange that we had. I had said that in terms of international law it becomes rather awkward when we support a movement yet to be fully defined in its attempt to overthrow a government which we still formally recognize. And your answer was that yes it is certainly a

complicated proposition, which is very “Burnsian,” shall we say, but precise.

Do we still have diplomatic relations with the Qadhafi government under the definition of international law?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, Senator, we have suspended our diplomatic operations—

Senator WEBB. So is it basically where we still were on March 18, 2011?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes, sir.

Senator WEBB. We have diplomatic relations but we have suspended them. We have not broken them.

Ambassador BURNS. That is correct, sir.

Senator WEBB. Are we then considering recognizing this other entity? Has it been vetted? What is going on here?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, we have the issue of recognition under review of the transition national council. What we have done over the last couple of months I think is strengthened the practical ties we have to the group. We have developed a much clearer understanding of it. I think it is a credible representative of a wide spectrum of Libyans. We have a diplomatic office in Benghazi now.

Senator WEBB. To cut to the chase, we still have not severed diplomatic relations with the Qadhafi government against which we are participating in the use of military force.

Ambassador BURNS. That is right, sir. We have suspended our diplomatic operations.

Senator WEBB. But not broken; not severed them.

Ambassador BURNS. Yes, sir.

Senator WEBB. I just find that extremely odd.

The second concern that I have is with respect to the precedent for the unilateral decision by a President of the United States to use force in an environment where we were not under attack, not under a threat of attack, not actually implementing a treaty, not rescuing American citizens, and we were not responding directly to an incident as we were in 1986, when I was at the Pentagon. We retaliated in Libya, as far as I can tell, for the notion of a humanitarian situation that existed outside of the realm of the United States vital interests if you listen to what Secretary Gates was saying. That disturbs me in terms of precedent. What comes out of this? Have we established a new precedent, or what is your thought on that?

Ambassador BURNS. Well, I think what led to the President’s decision was a variety of factors. I mean, first, you did have an imminent humanitarian catastrophe. I have no doubt but that you would have seen a blood bath in Benghazi had there not been outside intervention.

Second, you had an unprecedented call from the Arab League to the Security Council to intervene to protect civilians.

Third, you had a number of our closest NATO partners, the same people we look to for cooperation in places like Afghanistan, who were urging us to join them in acting.

Fourth, you had a wider set of stakes, you know, the countries on either side of Libya, Egypt and Tunisia going through their own revolutions in very fragile states themselves. And the unrest in Libya could easily have further aggravated those—

Senator WEBB. I understand the logic that was given, and I am empathetic with a good bit of it. But there were a lot of counter-vailing logics as well. There were key U.N. abstentions—China, Russia, India, Germany—I think there were five but cannot pull the fifth one up out of my head right now. I find it really troubling, and particularly now 2 months later, that a unilateral decision by a President of the United States in an environment when these other factors were not present that has been ongoing and could set a very disturbing precedent for how decisions are made for the use of force. I am going to lay that down. It is something for further discussion.

The TIP report was mentioned. I want to commend to you the results of a hearing that I held on this. I hope you will look at it because I think the legislation is getting ready to be renewed. I think there are some inconsistencies in the way that we are carrying out an otherwise well-intentioned policy that have particular implications in Asia. This was the focus of the hearing. The benchmarks that we have been using are convictions rather than a nation with a very settled rule of law that does not actually get to convictions and also comparing a country against itself, when the implication is that they are being compared against other countries.

The classic example that came up in that hearing was that we have given Nigeria a 1 in our TIP reports, we have given Japan a 2 and Singapore a 2 Watch List. As you know, these are very stable societies who are able to deal with the rule of law in a way comparable, in many cases, to our own. I think that we need to fix the law so that we measure the right things as we put these policies forward because it is causing a great deal of resentment among people who are otherwise our close friends.

Ambassador BURNS. No. Senator, I read the transcript of that hearing, and I think it was very helpful. I mean, it is a complicated process to go through, but I think you raise some very legitimate questions which we will sort through.

Senator WEBB. I hope we can work with you on that because we are going to come up with some suggestions as to how we can implement the intentions of this policy but in a way that our friends and people whose governmental systems are pretty stable can understand.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Seeing no other members, Ambassador, thank you for your appearance here today; your answers.

The record will remain open for 48 hours. We urge you, if you get any questions, to answer them as expeditiously as possible so that we can have your nomination move as expeditiously as possible.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:41 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

ROLE AS DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

Question. With Tom Nides filling the position of Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, how will the two of you coordinate policy initiatives and resource capabilities? What issues do you expect to oversee in relation to Deputy Secretary Nides?

Answer. I look forward to close and continuous coordination with Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Nides on the full range of issues on the U.S. foreign policy agenda. I also seek the closest possible cooperation with Congress as we pursue a robust agenda to advance U.S. interests and promote prosperity, security, and universal human freedoms throughout the world.

LIBYA

Question. I understand that the formal recognition of the Transitional National Council would have important legal and political ramifications. But the administration seems to be inching toward a kind of political recognition. Members of Congress and senior administration officials have engaged with Council members, the administration has begun to provide the Council with nonlethal assistance, and the State Department has established a de facto diplomatic presence in Benghazi. On May 19, 2011, the President of the United States, referring to the Council, stated that “the opposition has organized a legitimate and credible interim council.” What are the practical and political implications of the President’s statement about the TNC? What are the factors being considered and potential obstacles with regard to a more formal political recognition?

Answer. The issue of recognition remains under review and we are continuing to assess the capabilities of the TNC as we deepen our engagement with the opposition. Last month, we welcomed TNC Executive Council President Jibril and Finance Minister Tarhouni in Washington. We also have sent our highest level representative yet to Benghazi with a personal message of support from President Obama and an invitation to open a representative office in Washington—an offer the TNC accepted. We continue to encourage other nations to do the same. We have recognized the TNC as a legitimate and credible interlocutor for the Libyan people. Special Envoy Chris Stevens continues to meet with as broad a spectrum as possible of Libyans involved in the opposition writ large, not just the TNC.

International support for the TNC is deepening, through steps we have taken collectively in the context of the Libya Contact Group and beyond, on the economic and diplomatic fronts. We together are working to put the TNC on firmer financial footing, taken steps to license oil sales by the TNC, and embraced the idea that a future Libyan Government should honor any financial obligations the TNC assumes on behalf of the Libyan people. The international community is providing nonlethal supplies and deepening diplomatic ties.

The TNC has consistently rejected terrorism and extremist influences and declared their respect for the human rights of all Libyans. The TNC and other members of the opposition have also truly opened up parts of Libya to the international community and NGOs for the first time in 40 years. The TNC has expressed its dedication to a peaceful transition to an inclusive, democratic government. In that regard, it has announced a roadmap that sets out its vision to bring democracy to Libya, including convening an interim national assembly and drafting a constitution after Qadhafi has left power.

Question. What sorts of assistance if any is the administration prepared to offer the TNC at this stage?

Answer. We are assessing and reviewing options for the types of assistance we could provide to the Libyan people, and are consulting directly with the opposition and our international partners. The President has directed up to \$25 million in transfers of nonlethal items from U.S. Government stocks to key partners in Libya such as the Transitional National Council (TNC). The list of potential “non-lethal commodities” that have been or will be provided was developed based on consultations with the TNC and our own assessment of what is useful and available, and includes medical supplies, boots, tents, personal protective gear, and prepackaged rations. The first shipment, including Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) arrived in Benghazi on May 10. The Departments of State and Defense will continue to work closely with our partner nations and the Libyan TNC to coordinate on the types of

nonlethal assistance to be provided, in an effort to make the assistance as effective as possible and minimize duplication of effort.

In terms of financial assistance, we have been supporting the Libya Contact Group's efforts to establish a Temporary Finance Mechanism (TFM) and a Libyan Information Exchange Mechanism (LIEM) that would facilitate much-needed financial contributions and other in-kind assistance to the TNC. We are strongly encouraging our international partners to assist the TNC directly or through one or both of these mechanisms.

The administration is also discussing legislation with Congress that would permit the use of a portion of frozen regime assets for broadly humanitarian purposes in Libya. Under proposed legislation, humanitarian assistance would include basic life-saving and life-support help, including commodities and subsidies needed to maintain basic living conditions among the population—for example, access to water, sanitation, food, shelter, and health care. This list is necessarily nonexhaustive, as circumstances could arise that would make other types of assistance, e.g., utilities (electricity, fuel), necessary to maintain basic living conditions among the population. This would not include offsetting the cost of our military action in Libya.

Question. What planning is underway to support a stable political transition in post-Qaddafi Libya?

Answer. As we continue to deepen our engagement with the Libyan opposition, we are encouraged by their commitment to democratic principles and their roadmap for a political transition following the departure of Qadhafi from power. It will ultimately be up to the Libyan people to choose their own leaders and government structures, and to address the reconciliation of a Libya marred by 40 years of dictatorship and the regime's use of brutal force against civilians. Any transition will have to look at creating institutions that respect the integrity and sovereignty of a united Libya and that reflect the Libyan people's genuine aspirations for freedom, democracy, and a responsive and transparent government. We believe that the U.N. should have the lead role in coordinating international support for a political transition in Libya. We are working very closely with our international partners to explore the goals and priorities in a post-Qadhafi Libya, and develop the most effective ways in which the international community can contribute. As the TNC has pointed out, Libya is an oil-rich country and will be well positioned to bear many of the costs of a post-Qadhafi transition.

Question. How would you assess NATO's performance in operations over Libya? Are members of NATO in full agreement as to the scope of the Security Council's authorization to use force in Libya? For example, are there differences of opinion among coalition members as to the extent to which targeted attacks on regime forces are authorized by Resolution 1973? If so, please describe those differences.

Answer. We have made significant progress in Libya since NATO, acting in response to an unprecedented call from the Arab League to the United Nations Security Council, launched Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR (OUP) on March 27, 2011. Since that date, NATO and its coalition partners have flown more than 9,000 sorties, including 3,443 strike sorties. Within days, we had averted an imminent humanitarian catastrophe in Benghazi, where there would likely have been a bloodbath were it not for outside intervention. In addition, we have loosened the regime's grip on Misrata and have significantly degraded Qadhafi's naval, air, and land forces. Throughout OUP, NATO has exercised great care to minimize the danger to civilians.

Regarding alliance cohesion, on April 14 NATO Foreign Ministers made clear the three military objectives of the NATO mission: NATO and our partners will keep up the pressure until all attacks and threats of attack against civilians have ended; the regime has verifiably withdrawn all military and paramilitary forces; and full, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access is guaranteed to all Libyans in need of assistance. NATO Allies and partners are united in recognizing these objectives. Other coalition members also strongly back NATO's efforts in support of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973, though they recognize—as do we—that this crisis cannot be resolved by military means alone. The international community has also imposed a variety of sanctions and pressure on the Qadhafi regime. Moreover, NATO decided June 1 to extend the mission for another 90 days beyond June 27.

EGYPT, TUNISIA, AND THE ARAB SPRING

Question. Rampant unemployment, particularly among youth, has been one of the drivers of the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions earlier this year and remains a significant challenge for both countries going forward. How will the administration

use economic support to help facilitate long-term economic and political stabilization in Egypt and across the region?

Answer. The events of the past 5 months provide us a historic opportunity to help the Egyptian and Tunisian Governments close the gap between their current economic realities and their citizens' aspirations. Although both countries face significant challenges, economic modernization is consistent with, and can help reinforce, their democratic transitions.

We recognize the importance of helping both governments meet their short-term economic stabilization requirements as well as longer term economic modernization needs. These two objectives are not mutually exclusive, but they do require flexible, creative approaches—including, where appropriate—repurposing our current and planned assistance programs to meet new requirements. For example, in Egypt we are restructuring our economic support around four key pillars: support for economic policy formulation, support for economic stability, support for economic modernization, and the development of a framework for trade integration and investment.

Support for economic policy formulation: We will offer the Egyptian people concrete support for economic policy formulation alongside our democratization efforts. We will use bilateral programs to support economic reform preparations, including outreach and technical assistance from our government, universities, and think tanks to individuals, NGOs, and political parties.

Support for economic stability: President Obama announced that the United States will provide Egypt with up to \$1 billion in debt relief under a debt swap arrangement. This package can help turn the debts of the past into investments in Egypt's future.

This bilateral initiative is part of a broader multilateral strategy in which we are working closely with our international counterparts to leverage resources. In light of the economic dislocations associated with regional transitions, we are galvanizing financial support from international financial institutions, multilateral investment banks, and other regional actors to help meet near-term financial needs.

On May 27, G8 leaders initiated the Deauville Partnership, which will maximize G8 and multilateral support behind Egypt's and Tunisia's transitions. It commits Partnership Countries to help address underlying economic challenges and meet financing needs through a multifaceted approach. These international efforts will ensure that there is a multiplier effect to our bilateral assistance.

The G8 also called on the IMF to respond to the Arab Spring by developing a sound macroeconomic program to help meet external financing needs, as well as for multilateral development banks to deliver enhanced, front-loaded and coordinated assistance in support of Egypt's reform program and development goals.

Recognizing the role that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) played in Central and Eastern Europe's transitions, we are committed to working with our international counterparts to support a reorientation of the EBRD to support transitions in the region.

Support for economic modernization: Egypt and Tunisia will need to build a stronger private sector, which will increase entrepreneurial activity and generate new jobs. To this end, we would like to establish Enterprise Funds for Tunisia and Egypt to stimulate private sector investment, promote projects that support competitive markets, and encourage public/private partnerships. In addition, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) will create a 10-year loan guarantee facility (LGF) in Egypt which could provide up to \$700 million in loans to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), supporting over 50,000 local jobs. OPIC will also seek to provide up to \$1 billion in guarantees and/or loans to public/private partnerships in order to promote growth in mutually agreed-upon sectors of the Egyptian economy. As in all similar structures, OPIC will stipulate the uses of the funding and ensure that there will be no budget cost to OPIC or the American taxpayer. Through the interest rate charged, the Egyptian Government will bear the cost of the financing.

Support for trade: Because Egypt and Tunisia have not enjoyed the benefits of trade integration, we are prepared to begin robust discussions with Egypt and Tunisia and their regional counterparts on a set of strategic trade initiatives.

Question. How satisfied is the administration with the ongoing political transition occurring in Egypt?

Answer. The interim Egyptian Government, led by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), has taken some important steps in the right direction. For example, the SCAF has stated its commitment to lasting reform and free and fair elections. The SCAF has also begun clarifying procedures for September's parliamentary elections. A new political parties law has reduced the burden on political

parties applying for registration, and the elections will likely include participation from a wide range of political parties, some of them new.

The SCAF has also revised the political participation law to include the right to vote using a national identification card and to ensure full judicial supervision of elections. These reforms will promote the transparency required for effective elections that instill public confidence.

We welcome these signs of democratic progress, even as we recognize that the SCAF faces no shortage of challenges. Egypt's youth leaders and new political parties must scramble to organize themselves in time for the September elections. The draft electoral regulations do not address whether the 64-seat quota for women in Parliament will remain in effect. The SCAF met with representatives of youth groups on June 1, but many activists continue to criticize the lack of transparency in SCAF decisionmaking. Recent interrogations of bloggers, journalists, and judges critical of the SCAF and military raise further concerns about the military's commitment to freedom of expression. Concerns also remain about the military's treatment of protesters and the use of military courts to try civilians. The U.S. Government continues to raise these concerns with SCAF officials.

Question. President Obama stated in his speech on May 19 that the United States must prioritize Tunisia and Egypt as they transition to people-powered democracies. Egypt has always held a priority position, however, Tunisia has not. How will the Department increase resources to match the potential in Tunisia to become a successful and independent democracy in North Africa?

Answer. If confirmed, I will maintain this administration's commitment to helping secure a transition that delivers democratic results and sustainable economic development for the people of Tunisia. The administration has identified approximately \$30 million to help Tunisians prepare for the series of elections on their horizon, to increase participation in a pluralistic, competitive political culture, to promote transparency and accountability, to support indigenous justice and rule of law processes, to support youth employability, and to advance private sector development.

Of the approximately \$30 million in assistance we have identified for Tunisia, the Department of State's Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) is providing \$20 million to support Tunisian efforts during their democratic transition. These funds are being channeled through Tunisian and international NGOs to shape an independent, professional, and pluralistic media sector, build a vibrant civil society, strengthen democratic political parties, develop a sound framework for free elections, enact economic reforms, and expand entrepreneurship. MEPI has already awarded initial grants to both Tunisian and international NGOs and continues to seek innovative proposals through a year-long open competition.

USAID is providing approximately \$10 million in support for elections and inclusive political processes. For example, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives is starting a program to encourage a peaceful and lasting political transition in the interior governorates of Tunisia. This program will encourage new and emerging groups to contribute to the national dialogue and will also promote stabilization through small-scale community development projects.

Finally, because trade and investment will be critical to creating jobs and building a more robust Tunisian economy, we are working with the Department of Commerce, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), and private sector business advocacy groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to promote increased interest and opportunity for American businesses in Tunisia. We are working with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) to facilitate financing for small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and startup companies. We are also working with the Departments of Commerce and Treasury to encourage the legal and economic reforms needed to facilitate more open trade and private sector investment.

In addition, we continue to support the establishment of a Tunisian-American Enterprise Fund to stimulate private sector investment, promote projects that support competitive markets, and encourage public/private partnerships, and look forward to continuing our work with Congress on this effort.

Question. What changes will be made within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and at U.S. Embassy Tunis?

Answer. Embassy Tunis and the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs have established a new political/economic reporting officer position in Tunis, and have requested a political analyst position that we expect to be filled for 2012. Public Diplomacy is funding the creation of a new locally engaged staff member to work on outreach, particularly engaging Tunisian youth and exploring new technologies and social media. Embassy Tunis has also requested an additional Assistant Regional Security

Officer position to meet new requirements created by an ever-changing security environment.

Two Foreign Service officers will travel to Tunis on temporary duty to assist with increased demand for political and economic reporting in the leadup to the Tunisian elections. An officer from the Secretary's office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization's Civilian Response Corps will cover a 12-week gap this summer, focusing on investment and bilateral economic issues, requests for assistance and advocacy from U.S. businesses, and outreach to U.S. companies doing business or considering doing business in Tunisia. The political reporting officer from the Civilian Response Corps will develop relations with new political party activists within the Islamist Nahda party and observe the elections scheduled for July 24. With the increase in bilateral assistance, USAID's Office of Civilian Response has provided two officers on a temporary basis to assist post with elections assistance and grants administration.

Question. In light of Tunisia's unique importance as the first country in the region to undergo a revolution and begin the transition to democracy, what is the U.S. Government doing to foster a sustainable political transition and long-term economic stability in that country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will maintain this administration's commitment to helping secure a transition that delivers democratic results and sustainable economic development for the people of Tunisia. The administration has identified approximately \$30 million to help Tunisians prepare for the series of elections on their horizon, to increase participation in a pluralistic, competitive political culture, to promote transparency and accountability, to support indigenous justice and rule of law processes, to support youth employability, and to advance private sector development.

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In addition, we continue to support the establishment of a Tunisian-American Enterprise Fund to stimulate private sector investment, promote projects that support competitive markets, and encourage public/private partnerships, and look forward to continuing our work with Congress on this effort.

Question. In his May 19 speech, President Obama said "we must also build on our efforts to broaden our engagement beyond elites." How does the State Department plan to translate that statement into policy?

Answer. The popular movements for democracy, economic opportunity, justice, and dignity across the Middle East and North Africa are empowering new actors—many of them ordinary citizens never before involved in politics—who are challenging traditional elites. Throughout the region, youth, civic activists, women, and entrepreneurs are finding their political voices and helping to shape the future of their countries. If confirmed, I will continue the Department of State's engagement with and support for these nonelite actors through a broad range of outreach tools and assistance programs. As we leverage this unique moment in history, we will maximize every opportunity to engage with people in the region who share our values and our commitment to democracy.

Our Ambassadors and Embassy officials are engaging actively emerging actors across the region, encouraging meaningful political and economic reform, and stronger commitments to respect the rights of all men, women, and children. We are using the expertise, leverage, and partnerships developed by democracy assistance programs, through the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), to provide support to individuals and organizations throughout the region. These programs enable locally led change and pave the way for civil society actors and organizations to lead democratic change in their countries.

In Tunisia and Egypt, we are moving U.S. civil society support into the countryside and out of the capitals and larger cities. In Egypt, current DRL programs focus on: coalition-building, party-strengthening, and public opinion research and analysis training in advance of upcoming parliamentary and Presidential elections, advocacy training and capacity-building for independent organized labor, and professional training for independent citizen journalists and bloggers. All of these programs include women and youth components. In Egypt, MEPI's local grants program is expanding in size and providing civic education training to women in rural areas to help them become advocates for their communities' needs, and imparting entrepreneurial and business skills to girls from poor regions of Cairo. In Tunisia, MEPI has invested \$20 million through local and international Non-Governmental Organizations. With high unemployment in the Middle East, especially among young people, we believe that our outreach must capture the youth's entrepreneurial spirit, reward creativity and promote skills that lead to jobs and opportunity. For example, MEPI funds the "Generation Entrepreneur Project," which empowers 22,000 young people throughout the Middle East to begin their own entrepreneurial ventures. A MEPI funding recipient, the Education for Employment Foundation (EFE), provides fellowship and internship programs to place Arab youths in EFE's employable-skills training at affiliate organizations throughout the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in Washington, DC, and Spain. MEPI currently funds successful EFE projects in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

Additionally, MEPI funds programs for nonelite students. For example, the Student Leaders program has brought over 1,000 young people from the region to the United States for training, most of whom have never traveled outside of their home countries. They develop leadership skills and expand their understanding of civil society, as well as the democratic process and how both may be applied in their home communities, and upon their return home, they are eligible to apply for seed funds for relevant projects. Additionally, MEPI's Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program provides scholarships per year to high school students in the Middle East and North Africa who are economically disadvantaged, but who have the drive and energy to be leaders. They learn in a U.S.-accredited university in the region, take a civic engagement course and study abroad in the United States, participating in an internship in the United States. MEPI has recruited an additional 51 students for the upcoming fall semester.

Furthermore, we have focused on utilizing technology to maximize our outreach to nonelites, including youth. For example, in Egypt, we are focusing on online voter education and rights education, and are helping to create an online monitoring and watchdog presence in advance of the elections.

Additionally, MEPI's initiative, E-Mediat: Electronic Media Tools, Technology & Training is a public/private partnership that helps grassroots organizations in the Middle East and North Africa use digital technology to tell their stories, build membership and connect to others around the world.

SYRIA

Question. President Obama signed Executive orders on April 29 and May 18 imposing sanctions on Syrian individuals and entities, including President Bashar al-Assad himself. What effects do you anticipate the sanctions and mounting international political pressure will produce?

Answer. We expect that our sanctions, and those imposed by the EU and other countries, will make clear to the Syrian people, the Syrian Government, and its allies that the international community will not stand idly by while human rights abuses are committed, and that we will hold individuals accountable for human rights violations. As Secretary Clinton has said, "Every day that goes by, the position of the government becomes less tenable and the demands of the Syrian people for change only grow stronger." We believe that the mounting international pressure will underscore to the Asad regime that it must end its use of violence and commence a process of political transition that responds to the aspirations of the Syrian people.

Question. How is the United States coordinating sanctions efforts with the EU, Turkey, and Arab countries? What about organizations like the United Nations, the GCC, and the OIC?

Answer. We are working closely with numerous countries that share our aim of ending the violence and support a democratic transition in Syria. We have coordinated directly with our allies in the European Union, who imposed an arms embargo and their own targeted sanctions on May 9 and May 23.

We led the call for a special session on Syria at the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva on April 29. That session passed a strong resolution condemning the Syrian Government and calling for an investigation by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition, we actively lobbied at the United Nations to prevent Syria from being elected to the U.N. Human Rights Council. Our lobbying efforts against the wholly inappropriate Syrian candidacy resulted in Syria withdrawing its candidacy on May 11. We will continue to look at other multilateral for additional opportunities to pressure Asad and his regime. We also are in frequent contact with our regional partners in the GCC and Turkey, and at senior levels are urging them to use their influence over the Asad regime to cease its human rights abuses and begin the transition to democratic and representative government.

Question. What tools beyond sanctions are being considered to further pressure the Syrian Government to refrain from using violence against protestors and address the legitimate demands of its people?

Answer. We continue discussions with our U.N. Security Council partners on action to condemn the Syrian Government's brutal repression of its citizens. Another session of the U.N. Human Rights Council is underway and we are working with our partners on the Council on next steps there, as well. As the demonstrations and the violence against them has shown no signs of abating in more than 12 weeks, it is critical to hold Syria's leaders accountable for the unjustified and reprehensible violence they persist in using against peaceful protestors as well as the widespread arrests of activists and their family members. If we do not see any movement toward ending the violence and the implementation of a meaningful democratic transition, we will continue to work with our international partners on how we can apply additional pressure.

HAMAS-FATAH UNITY

Question. In his May 19 speech, President Obama said, "the recent announcement of an agreement between Fatah and Hamas raises profound and legitimate questions for Israel: How can one negotiate with a party that has shown itself unwilling to recognize your right to exist?" Have senior PLO and PNA officials offered a response to this question?

Answer. As the President made clear in his May 19 remarks, this is a threshold question for the Palestinians, one that the Palestinian leadership will need to address in the weeks and months ahead. We believe that President Abbas remains committed to peace. President Abbas has made clear that he supports PLO commitments renouncing violence and recognizing Israel. He has remained firm in his faith that an independent Palestine living side by side with Israel in peace and security is both possible and necessary.

While we understand the general outline of the Fatah-Hamas agreement, many substantive, and vital, details that could affect our peace efforts remain undetermined or subject to further negotiation or implementation. What is important now is that the Palestinians ensure implementation of that agreement advances the prospects of peace rather than undermine them. We will continue to watch as President Abbas and the Palestinians make these important choices.

Question. How will a potential Fatah-Hamas interim government impact American support for the Palestinian institutions? What factors will the State Department use in evaluating this new government?

Answer. We will ensure that U.S. policy is fully consistent with U.S. law.

Our position on Hamas has not changed; Hamas is a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. As the new Palestinian Government is formed, we will assess it based on its policies and will determine the legal and policy implications for our relations with, and assistance to, the PA. Right now, the current Palestinian Authority government remains in place under the leadership of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad. As such, U.S. assistance to and contact with the PA is continuing.

Our assistance funding has been critical to progress in building capable Palestinian institutions, including the improvements to the PA Security Forces (PASF). The PASF play an essential role in helping to ensure public security for both

Israelis and Palestinians. The PASF remain under standing orders to maintain law and order and pursue terrorist elements, and security cooperation between the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the PASF continues.

Question. Debates are ongoing in both Washington and Baghdad on whether there should be a successor agreement to the U.S.-Iraqi Security Agreement, which requires that all U.S. military forces withdraw from Iraq by December 31, 2011. Does the State Department have an opinion on the advisability of renegotiating the terms of this agreement? How does uncertainty about the future American presence in Iraq impact on planning for size and scope of the State Department mission in 2012 and beyond?

Answer. The President is committed to implementing the 2008 U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement by withdrawing all of our troops by the end of 2011, and we continue to work toward this transition.

Any post-2011 U.S. military mission would require a formal request from the Iraqi Government, and to date, no such request has been made. If the Iraqi Government were to make such a request, it would be given serious consideration.

Whether we get an Iraqi request for some continued U.S. military support beyond 2011, it is essential that we continue with our currently planned civilian presence so that it will be mission-capable by October 1, 2011. Our civilian-led mission after 2011 will continue to support the President's goal of a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant Iraq, through engagements and programs that will help solidify our long-term economic, political, and cultural partnership and support Iraq's reintegration into the region and the global economy.

YEMEN

Question. What factors will the United States use in evaluating assistance in Yemen going forward with regard to economic assistance, security cooperation, and democracy and governance?

Answer. The United States employs a two-pronged strategy in delivering assistance to Yemen: We provide military equipment and training in support of counterterrorism (CT) operations while also delivering economic and governance assistance that curbs the long-term drivers of instability and extremism. We are constantly assessing the needs of the Yemeni people and the strategic priorities of the United States. For our security assistance, we will continue to evaluate the threat of terrorism against the U.S. homeland—most prominently manifested in al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)—as well as the capacity and willingness of the Yemeni Government to tackle this threat. We believe that AQAP represents a clear and present danger to the U.S. homeland as exemplified by recently attempted attacks; however, we will closely monitor and evaluate our assistance to ensure we meet all legal requirements and that it is not misused.

Yemen suffers from extreme poverty and soaring unemployment and population growth rates. The Yemeni riyal is declining against world currencies, the Central Bank of Yemen is printing riyals to finance government programs, and prices of key commodities are rising. The ongoing political crisis has exacerbated the already challenging economic conditions. Yemen's future economic recovery will require a comprehensive stabilization and investment plan supported by substantial international assistance. As the needs will be great, we will work to ensure that our programming is coordinated with other international donors and will continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our program as we help the Yemeni people meet these challenges. Our humanitarian and development programming continues to the extent possible in the operating environment. We are prepared to increase our democracy and governance assistance in a period of political transition that would lead to elections and capacity-building for a newly formed government.

Question. How has the ongoing unrest in Yemen affected U.S. assistance efforts and bilateral counterterrorism cooperation?

Answer. As a result of the ongoing unrest, our Embassy in Sana'a is on departure status and has reduced its personnel. Our assistance, as well as program monitoring and evaluation, is necessarily limited by our minimized presence and a lack of freedom of movement. However, we continue our programming and counterterrorism cooperation to the extent possible in the fluid environment.

IRAN

Question. What effects have the Arab Spring had on the pro-democracy movement in Iran?

Answer. As in other parts of the Middle East, there continues to be deep-rooted dissatisfaction among the Iranian people with their government. As President Obama recalled in his speech on the Middle East, peaceful protests in the region began in the streets of Iran 2 years ago. While the opposition movement in Iran has not been able to stage any significant antigovernment protests in recent months, a substantial divide continues to exist between the government and the governed. While it hypocritically applauds the universal rights of others in the region, the Iranian Government continues to restrict the free flow of information, and intimidates, arrests, and convicts those Iranians whose views are known to be at odds with the ruling establishment. It also assists Syria in suppressing its opposition.

As we do throughout the region, the administration provides training and tools to civil society activists to foster freedom of expression and the free flow of information on the Internet and via other communication technologies. These new technologies empower citizens to achieve their own aspirations by helping people raise their voices, share information, and strengthen their ability to act collectively.

Question. What is the status of the P5+1 process?

Answer. Preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon continues to be one of the administration's top foreign policy priorities. Our P5+1 partners (China, France, Germany, Russia, and the U.K.) and we are committed to a negotiated solution to resolving concerns over the nature of Iran's nuclear program. The P5+1 remains unified and committed to the dual track approach of clear-minded engagement and pressure to persuade Iran to abide by its international obligations and bring transparency into its nuclear activities.

The United States and our P5+1 partners have made clear our genuine commitment to dialogue, and came prepared to negotiate with Iran when we met in December 2010 in Geneva and again in January 2011 in Istanbul, but it has been clear Iran is yet unwilling to engage seriously. The May 8 letter from Supreme Security Council Secretary Jalili to High Representative Ashton contained nothing new to indicate any change in Iran's willingness to negotiate seriously with the P5+1. In the interim, we will continue to work closely with our partners in the P5+1 and beyond to vigorously implement UNSCR 1929, to coordinate further measures, and to implement U.S. sanctions law.

The United States and its P5+1 partners remain committed to pursuing a diplomatic solution. The door remains open, and the choice is Iran's to make.

Question. Does the State Department have an opinion on S. 1048, the "Iran, North Korea, and Syria Sanctions Consolidation Act of 2011"?

Answer. We strongly support the goal of preventing Iran, North Korea, and Syria from acquiring nuclear weapons. For example, we have assembled a strong international coalition and have secured the toughest multilateral sanctions against Iran to date. In addition, we have been using all the tools provided by Congress. On May 24, the Secretary imposed sanctions on 7 companies for violations of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act (CISADA), enacted on July 1, 2010, and also imposed sanctions on 14 entities and 2 individuals under the Iran, North Korea and Syria Nonproliferation Act.

The administration is always looking for additional ways to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The Department is closely examining S. 1048, and we look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress on this and any other legislation aimed at achieving our shared goals.

BAHRAIN

Question. On May 17, incumbent Deputy Secretary James Steinberg visited Bahrain with Near Eastern Affairs Assistant Secretary Jeffrey Feltman and National Security Council Senior Director Puneet Talwar. What message did Secretary Steinberg deliver to Bahraini Government officials and what was their response? What was the reason for not including nongovernmental figures on his schedule?

Answer. Deputy Secretary Steinberg, Assistant Secretary Feltman and NSC Senior Director Talwar met King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa and other senior Bahraini officials during their brief visit to Manama May 17. Deputy Secretary Steinberg stressed U.S. Government concerns regarding the Government of Bahrain's crackdown, including detentions of opposition figures and demolitions of places of worship, and emphasized the need for accountability for those responsible for human rights violations. He also urged the Government of Bahrain to take proactive steps to create a positive environment for reconciliation and credible dialogue, noting that a resolution to the crisis in Bahrain requires a political solution,

not a security solution. Deputy Secretary Steinberg also reinforced the longstanding strategic ties between our two countries, including our cooperation on confronting the threat posed by Iran.

Deputy Secretary Steinberg's visit was focused on sharing U.S. Government concerns with the Bahraini leadership. Assistant Secretary Feltman has conducted several meetings in recent months with civil society representatives, including leaders of the mainstream opposition and the National Unity Gathering. Additionally, our Embassy maintains regular contact with a broad spectrum of actors in Bahraini society.

Question. How have Bahraini Government officials and citizens responded to President Obama's call last Thursday to release peaceful protestors and engage in a national dialogue?

Answer. King Hamad lifted the State of National Safety on June 1, which has resulted in a shift of responsibility for maintaining law and order from the Bahrain Defense Forces (BDF) to the civilian Ministry of Interior. Our Embassy has noted a reduction in the deployment of military assets in Manama and other parts of Bahrain. On May 29, King Hamad delivered a televised speech, in which he stated that comprehensive and unconditional dialogue will begin in early July. We consider these two developments to be positive initial steps in creating a positive environment for reconciliation and credible political dialogue, as well as addressing human rights concerns. I should emphasize that leadership is needed from all sides to make such a dialogue possible.

Question. Will the government's recent actions have any implications on the United States-Bahraini relationship?

Answer. As the President noted on May 19, mass arrests and brute force are at odds with the universal rights of Bahrain's citizens and will not end legitimate calls for reform. Senior Bahraini officials' recent public statements indicate that the Government is taking steps to create a positive environment to foster reconciliation and meaningful political dialogue. We welcome such statements and strongly support participatory processes that lead to concrete reforms that meet the aspirations and needs of all Bahraini citizens. Bahrain remains an important strategic ally of the United States though, as a longstanding friend and partner, we will continue to speak up if actions on the ground do not lead to reconciliation and credible dialogue.

AFGHANISTAN

Question. How important is it to prevent al-Qaeda from reconstituting in Afghanistan, as opposed to doing so in Pakistan, in Yemen, or elsewhere?

Answer. Our goal is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda everywhere. It is particularly important that we prevent al-Qaeda from reconstituting in Afghanistan, where it would not only be in a position once again to plan attacks against the U.S. homeland—as it did before 9/11—but also to threaten Afghanistan's young democracy, our allies and partners, regional stability and our interests worldwide. The targeting of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan is one of our primary goals—the group's return would be a significant strategic victory for the group, emboldening it to plot globally and drawing new recruits to its cause.

Question. Every war needs an end point, and this one is unlikely to come in the form of an enemy's unconditional surrender. Could the death of Osama bin Laden provide a legitimate pivot-point marking the end of major U.S. combat operations?

Answer. The core goal of the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan remains to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and to prevent its return to Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden's death deals a significant strategic blow to al-Qaeda. It sends an unmistakable message about the strength of the resolve of the United States and the international community to stand up against extremism and those who perpetuate it. It also provides a unique opportunity to make progress on ending the conflict in Afghanistan through the mutually reinforcing processes of transition, reconciliation, and reintegration.

Our aim is to assist in achieving a responsible and irreversible transition to full Afghan responsibility by 2014. Pursuant to this goal, we are committed to begin a drawdown of our forces in Afghanistan in July, though the pace and scope has not yet been determined. Concurrently, our diplomatic surge aims to bring the Afghan conflict to an end and chart a new and more secure future for the region by supporting an Afghan-led political process to split the weakened Taliban off from al-Qaeda and reconcile those who will renounce violence and accept the Afghan Constitution with an increasingly stable Afghan Government, leaving al-Qaeda isolated and on the run. We will continue working toward achieving these important goals.

Question. What should our core goal be for an end state in Afghanistan after 2014? What is our absolute barebones requirement in terms of American national security interests? What level of American troop presence would be required after 2014 to safeguard these national security interests, and for how long?

Answer. The core goal of the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan remains to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and to prevent its return to Afghanistan. We are actively working to achieve the conditions in Afghanistan that would support this outcome. We are committed to achieving a responsible and irreversible security transition to full Afghan responsibility by 2014, beginning with an initial drawdown of our forces in July, at a scope and pace yet to be determined, and a shift in the civilian mission away from stabilization activities to an even greater focus on capacity-building and long-term, sustainable development. We are in discussions with the Government of Afghanistan to define our enduring commitment through and beyond the end of transition in 2014. Our aim is a normalized relationship with an increasingly stable and fully sovereign Afghanistan.

Regarding the American troop presence, the Department of Defense is best placed to answer questions about specific troop strength and the duration necessary to maintain our national security interests in Afghanistan in 2014 and beyond. The Secretary noted in her February 18 speech to the Asia Society: “The United States will always maintain the capability to protect our people and our interests. But in no way should our enduring commitment be misunderstood as a desire by America or our allies to occupy Afghanistan against the will of its people. We respect Afghans’ proud history of resistance to foreign occupation, and we do not seek any permanent American military bases in their country or a presence that would be a threat to any of Afghanistan’s neighbors.”

PAKISTAN

Question. Are the goals of the United States and Pakistan regarding Afghanistan reconcilable, or are they so divergent that serious tension is inevitable?

Answer. Our relationship with Pakistan has never been an easy one, and it is no secret that we have not always seen eye to eye on all issues. Tensions in such a consequential relationship are inevitable. Nevertheless, Pakistan has been a key partner in our common struggle against al-Qaeda and, like us, is committed to its defeat.

In Afghanistan, the United States and Pakistan share a commitment to working together to achieve peace and reconciliation. Pakistan shares our understanding that Afghanistan is the keystone to regional stability. As Secretary Bashir said on May 23, “peace and stability in both countries is interdependent and there can be no peace in Afghanistan if there is turmoil and instability in its neighborhood and vice versa.” In the trilateral process that Secretary Clinton launched in May 2009, and which has met twice this spring, we are jointly pursuing a vision of an Afghanistan that is secure, stable and economically prosperous. During his trip to Kabul in May, Foreign Secretary Bashir reiterated Pakistan’s solidarity, support, and partnership with Afghanistan.

In her speech to the Asia Society in February, Secretary Clinton laid out the U.S. strategy on reconciliation and identified Pakistan as a pivotal player in that effort. Pakistan has welcomed the opportunity to work with us on achieving a political settlement in Afghanistan and we are both committed to continuing our regular trilateral discussions with Afghanistan to enhance cooperation and to lay the groundwork for an effective reconciliation process.

Question. If we want to send a message to the Pakistani military, do you think the decisionmakers in the security establishment would be most influenced by potential cuts to military aid, or development assistance?

Answer. U.S. civilian and military assistance support the United States national security interests by strengthening Pakistan’s stability and prosperity, and its capacity to combat extremism. Cutting or reducing aid at this time would significantly and negatively influence Pakistani capability and willingness to coordinate with us on key national security goals. Further, it would feed into the narrative that the United States is not committed to a long-term partnership with Pakistan—reducing our ability to achieve our national security goals and stabilize Pakistan.

Developmental assistance improves Pakistan’s capacity to address critical infrastructure deficits and basic civic needs, improves economic opportunity in areas most vulnerable to extremism, and strengthens Pakistan’s capacity to implement economic and political reforms that reinforce stability. Enhancing the Government of Pakistan’s capacity to provide key public services to its citizens weakens the insurgency’s appeal.

Likewise, instability in Pakistan caused by a failure of the security establishment in its campaign against violent extremists would be a great victory for terrorist organizations that are a serious threat to Pakistan, its neighbors, and U.S. interests.

In the long term, U.S. assistance promotes a more tolerant, democratic, pluralistic Pakistan. In addition to the immediate counterterrorism benefits of our civilian and military assistance, it is in our long-term national security interest to continue to seek and strengthen Pakistan's currently weak civilian government while also equipping the security services to actively fight insurgents and terrorists that threaten the country's stability.

Question. There has been much discussion of whether the actions of Pakistan might trigger conditions of Kerry-Lugar-Berman or other laws—but the administration is always able to cut back on security aid as a matter of policy rather than law. Are there any specific actions we would have to see from the Government of Pakistan to avoid a cutback in security assistance?

Answer. The Secretary has been clear and consistent about our expectations for this relationship. We look to the Government of Pakistan to take decisive steps against al-Qaeda and its affiliates that will make Pakistan, America, and the world safer and more secure. When Secretary Clinton was in Pakistan in late May she had direct, candid, and constructive conversations with Pakistan's civilian and military leadership about our interests in the region, and I believe they are aware of our hopes and expectations. Additionally, through the Enhanced Partnership With Pakistan Act of 2009, we impose baseline conditions that Pakistan must satisfy, through specific actions, to ensure continued security assistance. Our cooperation with Pakistan has led to significant progress in our common struggle against terrorism, and we hope this progress will continue.

SOMALIA

Question. Somalia poses the greatest security threat on the African continent to American interests. That same situation makes it a very dangerous place, but other missions nonetheless have been able to maintain a diplomatic presence there. The safety of our personnel is of paramount importance, but these personnel are the very people who point out the high price we pay in terms of crafting and overseeing a Somalia policy by not having a diplomatic presence on the ground. What can be done to help establish such a presence in Somalia?

Answer. The security environment in Mogadishu is tense as al-Shabaab attacks continue against the Somalia Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). While AMISOM has recently expanded its area of operation and U.S. security sector reform efforts are underway in support of the TFG National Security Force (NSF), local conditions do not yet support a more permanent U.S. diplomatic presence. Reestablishing a U.S. diplomatic presence in Somalia depends on developments within Somalia and the continued improvement of political and security institutions. Of note, AMISOM is already providing security at the airport, sea port, Villa Somalia and other key sites in Mogadishu. The United Kingdom and France transit Mogadishu regularly, as do U.S. contract companies, though no Western nation has an embassy in Mogadishu at this time. U.N. and African Union (AU) staff transit there as well. As security permits we will seek to expand the ability of U.S. personnel to travel into Somalia, including Mogadishu, Bossaso, and Galkayo, for brief visits.

Pending a decision to establish a formal, permanent presence in Somalia, a security assessment would need to take place to find a viable location from which to operate. The U.S. Government does own a 178-acre compound in Mogadishu—site of the U.S. Embassy that was completely destroyed in 1991—but we do not know who controls the compound or its condition. In addition, appropriate host nation security elements, or augmenting forces, would have to provide the necessary protection for any U.S. diplomatic facility. The operating environment would need to be permissive enough to carry out diplomatic operations in pursuit of U.S. policy goals. Last, adequate funding would also need to be provided to stand up and maintain any fixed diplomatic presence in Somalia.

Even without a permanent presence, we continue our outreach efforts in Somalia under the Dual Track policy. On Track One, we continue to support the Djibouti Peace Process, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as our primary effort to stabilize Somalia and to repel al-Shabaab's advances in Mogadishu. We are continuing our political and security sector support to the TFG and AMISOM in close partnership with the U.N., AU, and other international stakeholders. On Track Two, we are deepening our engagement with the regional Governments of Somaliland and Puntland, as well as

with local and regional administrations throughout South-Central Somalia who are opposed to al-Shabaab, but who are not affiliated with the TFG.

SUDAN

Question. The new Republic of South Sudan will face enormous challenges. What do you see as the top priorities for state-building in the new South Sudan after July? How can the United States help promote an inclusive approach to government and a participatory and transparent approach to the creation of a constitution to safeguard the rights of all South Sudanese?

Answer. The Southern Sudan Referendum was a historic milestone in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) has made progress in building the backbone of a functioning government since the signing of the CPA in 2005, with the assistance of United States and other stakeholders. Moving forward, it is critical for the new Government of South Sudan, with ongoing support from international partners, to continue this long-term process and to institutionalize inclusion, transparency, and accountability, while improving the delivery of basic services. The government also needs to prioritize the adoption of long-term security and economic arrangements with the North, and deal with internal armed movements and militias. Support from the international community will be imperative for the newly independent state of South Sudan to emerge as a stable and prosperous member of the community of nations, and for a peaceful coexistence with the North.

Managing the expectations of its people will be central to the government's efforts, as improvements in transparency, accountability, delivery of basic services and security will take time. This will require the South to refocus on investing in people, building a healthy political discourse, and setting spending priorities. We are encouraging the Government of Southern Sudan to demonstrate its commitment to democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights to its people and the international community by fostering inclusive, democratic institutions; encouraging the development of robust civil society; fully involving opposition groups in the political process; and rooting out corruption.

CHINA AND INDIA

Question. China's and India's potential rise to great power status may be the defining story of the 21st century. With its growing economic clout, China needs to do more than abide by international norms, although that is important. We need Beijing to help contribute to strengthening the international system that has helped it prosper. China can play an enormously influential role in addressing regional challenges in the Korean Peninsula, Iran, Afghanistan, and in Sudan. Encouraging China to see that its own interests will be served by assuming greater responsibility in the international system will be one of your most important tasks—it's certainly one that has occupied a lot of time for your predecessor. Given how much China's leaders remain focused on addressing significant domestic challenges, how would you engage China to take on greater responsibility in securing peace, stability, and prosperity in the international system?

Answer. While Beijing has made clear that domestic challenges such as continuing China's economic development are a top priority, Presidents and Obama agreed during Hu's January state visit that our two countries must continue to work together to solve common challenges. The United States engages China on a broad range of key global issues such as producing balanced global growth, stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, and combating climate change. Our two nations are also working together on a range of shared security challenges, including our efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, realize a denuclearized North Korea, counter violent extremism that threatens our stability and prosperity, and support the North-South peace process in Sudan while also addressing the human rights situation in Darfur. The United States appreciates the positive contributions China has made on these issues. The administration recognizes that much more needs to be done, however, and repeatedly raises this in meetings with senior PRC officials. During the recent Strategic & Economic Dialogue, Secretary Clinton had in-depth discussions of regional and global security issues with her counterpart, State Councilor Dai Bingguo. If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, I will continue to press Beijing for greater progress in these areas.

Question. In recent years, a bipartisan consensus has emerged that India's rise is in America's interest. Our two countries are also in the early stages of building stronger habits of cooperation, and can ill-afford to take this relationship for granted. There is a risk that, amid a crowded foreign policy agenda full of daunting

challenges, we do not pay adequate attention to building this partnership, allowing relations with India's neighbors to define our interactions with New Delhi. You spoke at great length about this very subject during the first United States-India Strategic Dialogue launched last summer in Washington. If confirmed, what steps will you take to realize the potential of this growing friendship?

Answer. I couldn't agree more that India's rise is deeply in the strategic interest of the United States. We are fortunate to enjoy a bipartisan consensus on this issue. Over the last decade, three U.S. administrations and two Indian Governments led by different parties have transformed the relationship. Growing connections between our societies—over 100,000 Indian students study at American universities, bilateral trade quadrupled in the last decade, and 3 million Indian-Americans are playing a vibrant role here at home—have provided further ballast to the relationship. We are the world's two largest democracies, both diverse, tolerant societies; two of the world's largest economies; both increasing our stake in global stability and prosperity, especially across Asia-Pacific. Relationships thus anchored are not easily blown off course.

We are indeed faced with unprecedented foreign policy challenges and competing priorities, especially in South Asia, but over the last several years we have carved out for India a prominent place. India's neighbors are indeed important, but as I said last year, "We refuse to accept the notion that somehow we can have strong relations with only one country in South Asia at a time . . . the only 'hyphen' that we will pursue with respect to our relationship is the one that links the United States and India."

Developing the habits of cooperation required to make our partnership with India succeed will continue to take hard work and patience, which I believe the President, the Secretary, and I are fully committed to maintaining. The administration has made clear since the outset that the United States-India relationship was a cornerstone of our engagement in Asia and "a defining partnership of the 21st century." The longest single foreign visit of President Obama's administration to date was a 3-day visit to India in November 2010, the first stop on a trip to four major Asian democratic partners. Secretary Clinton will build on President Obama's successful visit when she returns to New Delhi for the second annual Strategic Dialogue this summer. Our Strategic Dialogue is the centerpiece of our effort to elevate India to the ranks of our most important global partners. Its initial phase has achieved its goal of broadening engagement on bilateral, regional, and global challenges, and generated meaningful, sustained interaction with a wide array of officials, business figures, and civil society representatives. This year's Strategic Dialogue will consolidate these gains, showcase our accomplishments, and refocus on our strategic priorities. There remains still greater potential in this relationship. The administration attaches great importance to our strategic consultation with India on regional affairs, including the broader Indian Ocean and Pacific region. The Strategic Dialogue will present a key opportunity to underscore our support for India's potential as an engine of economic prosperity and integration in the South Asia region.

I am also committed to advancing the United States-India trade and economic relationship, which is already moving ahead by leaps and bounds: India is now our 12th-largest trading partner, up from 25th in 2000, and has the potential to become one of our top five trade and investment partners, with particular success in the area of high technology trade. Another objective will be to expand our consultations with India on security challenges, including maritime security, counterpiracy, and ensuring free access to other "shared domains," including outer space and cyber space. We also hope to achieve even more on defense sales. India has purchased more than \$8 billion of U.S. military equipment over the past decade and we are well positioned to help India achieve its goals as it spends more than \$35 billion on defense over the next 5 years. The recent finalization of the \$4.1 billion tender for 10 C-17 aircraft illustrates how American technology companies are learning to navigate the Indian procurement system.

EUROPE, RUSSIA, AND TURKEY

Question. Vladimir Putin has recently been signaling his interest in returning to the Russian Presidency. What would the implications of the removal of the "tandem" and Putin's return to sole power for U.S.-Russian "Reset"? What are the natural next steps in the "Reset"?

Answer. The question of who will lead Russia after the 2012 Presidential elections is a matter for the Russians themselves to determine. We will continue to cooperate with Russia, regardless of who sits in the Kremlin, precisely because our policy toward Russia is based on our interests rather than our assessment of individual officials.

In terms of the “reset,” President Obama has announced that our two headline goals for 2012 are resuming missile defense cooperation with Russia and finalizing Russia’s accession to the WTO. At the recent G8 summit in Deauville, President Obama and President Medvedev committed to working together to find an approach to missile defense that is consistent with the security needs of both countries, maintains the strategic balance, and deals with the potential threats we both face. Cooperation on missile defense is a priority within the broad scope of our engagement to address mutual security challenges, bilaterally and through multilateral channels. Of course, even as we pursue cooperation with Russia, the Obama administration remains committed to deploying all four phases of the European Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defense in Europe to protect our European allies and deployed troops against the Iranian missile threat.

On WTO, we believe that Russian membership will benefit U.S. economic interests directly not only by increasing market access for U.S. exports, but also by integrating Russia into a system of fixed rules governing trade behavior and providing the means to enforce those rules and Russia’s market access commitments. The Peterson Institute, a nonpartisan think tank, estimates that U.S. exports to Russia could double as a result of that country’s accession to the WTO. Lifting Jackson-Vanik and extending Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to Russia is also a key component of this year’s legislative trade agenda and necessary for the United States to benefit from the WTO disciplines and improved market access resulting from Russia’s accession.

Question. In the past 10 years Turkey has pursued a far more assertive foreign policy in the Middle East. How would you characterize Turkey’s position in the region given the events of the past year: the impact of the Arab Spring and the further deterioration of its relations with Israel following the flotilla incident? Do all of these recent events strengthen Turkey’s position or weaken it?

Answer. Turkey is an increasingly influential partner at the intersection of several crucial regions. Its growing economy, active foreign policy agenda, and stable democratic system all contribute to its growing influence in the region.

Turkey has used its influence to good effect during the Arab Spring. For example, Turkey has assumed a leading role in delivering humanitarian assistance to Libyans. Elsewhere in the region, Turkey has declared its commitment to abide by UNSCR 1929—a commitment we continue to urge them to implement vigorously—and Turkey shares our goal of preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Turkey continues to work closely with us to promote regional stability, and Turkey remains an important and committed ally of the United States and member of NATO. As with any ally, we sometimes have different perspectives, yet the strength of our bilateral relationship allows us to address such differences forthrightly when they arise. We continue to encourage Turkey to improve relations with Israel, and have been candid with Turkey about our concerns over its contacts with Hamas, though we have welcomed Turkish support for a two-state solution. Turkey’s tensions with Armenia and Cyprus also diminish its regional influence, and we have urged Turkey to improve relations with each of these countries.

Question. Is there a window of opportunity to secure the unification of Cyprus in the coming months? What is an appropriate U.S. role in that process and will we have an Ambassador ready to take advantage of that window when the current U.S. Ambassador rotates out this summer?

Answer. The United States strongly supports the Cypriot-owned, Cypriot-led negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations Good Offices Mission led by Alexander Downer to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicomunal federation. The talks have been ongoing for over 2½ years, and while some progress has reportedly been made, the parties have yet to reach convergence on a number of salient issues, including property, territory, and security and guarantees. President Obama noted in his 2010 Cyprus National Day statement that “the United States is confident that a resolution meeting the aspirations of both communities is attainable.” We continue to hold this view.

United Nations Secretary General Ban ki-Moon is scheduled to meet with the leaders on July 7 in Geneva. We are hopeful that the leaders of both communities will take advantage of this meeting and seize the opportunity in the coming months to intensify their efforts.

The U.S. Government is not a participant in the negotiations, but we have offered to provide any help that both sides would find useful. As a friend to all the people of Cyprus, we will continue to urge the leaders of both communities to engage constructively in the negotiations and support the Cypriot-owned process as the best way to reach an agreement.

It is our aim, with the consent of the Congress, to have a new Ambassador in place in a timely manner.

CYBERSPACE AND CYBERSECURITY

Question. The President just released an “International Strategy for Cyberspace,” which, among other things, asserts that the United States will “respond to hostile acts in cyberspace as we would to any other threat to our country,” including reserving the right to use all necessary means to defend the country. This represents one of the administration’s boldest assertions of the use of force when it comes to cyber issues. Given problems of attribution (determining which country is responsible for initiating cyber attacks) and definitional ambiguity (i.e., does a denial of service attack that knocks out phone service for 8 hours in Detroit constitute a material attack on the United States?), is such a statement premature?

Answer. The International Strategy makes clear that there is a possibility of “hostile acts” in cyber space, and the United States will respond to such hostile acts as it would to any other threat, using appropriate standards of evidence of sponsorship. The International Strategy does qualify that we will exhaust all options before military force whenever we can and that we will act in a way that reflects our core values and is in accord with international law. Based on threats and capabilities seen today from adversaries’ actions in cyberspace, such a statement is not premature and hopefully will contribute to the development of a framework of deterrence in the cyber arena.

Question. Is there a formal decisionmaking process in place to determine a potential military response to a cyber attack? Which agencies would be responsible for determining a U.S. response to such an attack?

Answer. We foresee no difference in the decisionmaking process for responses to a hostile act in cyberspace than in response to hostile acts occurring through other means. Any military operation requires careful review for consistency with policy, laws, and regulations (such as the Law of Armed Conflict). Foreign policy considerations always play a prominent role in such deliberations.

U.N./MULTILATERAL/G20

Question. The United States has seen significant success in the Human Rights Council, since joining in 2009. Unfortunately, most lawmakers and most Americans are unaware of the successes. How do you characterize the importance of the USG work on the Council, and the importance the Council’s work plays in changing the behavior of states, and promoting and protecting fundamental freedoms in individual countries? Should the State Department do more to publicize these successes?

Answer. The recent successes in the Human Rights Council—especially victories on freedom of religion/expression (by ending the “defamation of religions” resolution), LGBT rights and the human rights situations in Libya, Iran, and Syria—have been extremely important, both in terms of USG efforts to improve the Human Rights Council as an institution and in terms of USG overall goals for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.

These recent successes are a direct result of U.S. engagement at the Human Rights Council. Until the United States joined the Human Rights Council in 2009, it was unable to effectively focus on human rights situations in any specific country other than Israel. Now other countries such as Iran, Syria, Libya, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, and Tunisia account for more than half of the country-specific situations addressed by the Council. Until this year, the “defamation of religions” resolution—a resolution that legitimized blasphemy laws and other restrictions on free speech—was the Council’s primary response to questions of religious intolerance. U.S. leadership brought an end to this resolution and made sure it was replaced with a consensus resolution that supports dialogue and education.

The Human Rights Council is still far from perfect. In addition to the biased, disproportionate focus on Israel, it still has a membership that consists of several countries that work to shield themselves and each other from scrutiny of their human rights record. Our focus is on session-by-session improvements, which so far has yielded impressive results, but more work needs to be done.

However, the real benefit of U.S. engagement with the Human Rights Council is the effect it has on the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. On this point, the protests of censured governments and the praise from human rights defenders for U.S. successes on the Human Rights Council provide overwhelming proof that the victories in the Council actually matter and have real effect. Human rights defenders from all over the world tell us it really makes a difference to them when the Human Rights Council takes action.

With respect to publicity, U.S. successes in the Human Rights Council have received more attention from the media in recent months, especially after the special sessions on Libya and Syria and the March regular session. The successful efforts at the regular Council session in March to establish a Special Rapporteur for Iran, to end the “defamation of religions” resolution and to deliver a cross-regional statement in support of LGBT rights received significant and widespread press coverage, including in the New York Times, the Economist, and the major wire services. The Economist’s article was particularly complimentary, saying that the defeat of the defamation resolution “vindicated” the administration’s view that both the Human Rights Council and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference “can respond well to constructive engagement.” After the special session on Syria, National Public Radio ran two pieces—one on “All Things Considered” and another on “Weekend Edition Saturday”—that not only recounted the successful special session, but also highlighted U.S. efforts over a 2-year period to improve the Human Rights Council as an institution.

However, the level of press attention to U.S. efforts in the Human Rights Council is not yet commensurate with the significance of recent successes, and the Department will continue to explore ways to publicize these important victories for both human right and U.S. foreign policy.

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Question. Trafficking in humans is one of the most horrific crimes and abuses on our planet. We are about to see the release of the 2011 Trafficking in Persons report. That annual report has been credited both with vastly improving the behavior of governments, and with creating a negative perception of the issue in many countries. How do you perceive the TIP report as a tool?

Answer. The annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report is a comprehensive assessment of governments’ efforts, including those in the United States, during the reporting year to prosecute traffickers, protect trafficking victims, and prevent trafficking. It serves as a unique diplomatic tool to initiate bilateral and multilateral discussions and collaboration, to assess patterns and trends in human trafficking in order to confront it more effectively at home and abroad, and to identify specific priority areas and countries for anti-TIP foreign assistance. Over the last 10 years, we have seen a great deal of progress, including the passage of new antitrafficking laws in more than 120 countries, improvements in victim identification and services, and increasing numbers of prosecutions. Countries are increasingly taking significant strides against trafficking, not as a favor to us, but because they recognize it is in their own self-interest to deal with this problem. The TIP Report will continue to serve as our primary tool to assess human trafficking and to promote sustained efforts by governments to combat trafficking.

Question. Moreover, it is well known that the process within the Department is combative and adversarial. How can regional bureaus be incentivized to feel greater ownership over the issue?

Answer. Under Secretary Clinton’s leadership, the Department of State has made this issue a foreign policy priority and incorporated it into our bilateral and multilateral engagement. As the Secretary has stated, we are “raising this issue at the highest diplomatic levels abroad.” This includes the efforts of regional and functional bureaus, as well as our officials in embassies abroad. Through several region-specific TIP reporting officer conferences we have brought together Washington and embassy officials working on TIP to review emerging trends, as well as reporting requirements and evaluative criteria for the TIP Report. These conferences enable reporting officers to share best practices on engaging foreign governments and encouraging real progress on the country-specific issues identified in the TIP Report, and contributed to greater collaboration in compiling the annual report.

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BARBARA BOXER

Question. Mr. Burns, as you know, the State Department is currently considering a Presidential Permit for the Keystone XL pipeline. Some concerns have been raised about the impacts of the pipeline and the adequacy of the State Department’s analysis of its impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (or NEPA).

One concern is the safety of the pipeline and whether the potential for pipeline spills has been fully evaluated. According to recent news reports, the existing Keystone pipeline, which commenced operation in June of last year, has already experienced spills, which pose environmental and public safety threats. Will you commit

to ensure that the safety of the pipeline is fully evaluated and addressed, in consultation with appropriate Federal agencies that oversee pipeline safety and oil spill response?

Answer. The State Department is committed to evaluating all safety concerns related to the proposed pipeline and ensuring those concerns are addressed. The Department has been in consultation with cooperating federal agencies throughout its review of the Presidential Permit application for the Keystone XL pipeline. To address pipeline safety concerns, the Department has consulted extensively with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and reviewed the measures put forward by the applicant to ensure the pipeline's safety. Further, TransCanada has agreed to 57 additional conditions regarding the construction, operation, and maintenance of the pipeline developed in close consultation with PHMSA, as is detailed in Appendix C of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

On April 15, 2011, the Department made available for public comment a SDEIS on the Keystone XL pipeline Web site, "www.keystonepipeline-xl.state.gov," and subsequently issued a Federal Register notice of this public comment period, which expires on June 6, 2011. 76 Fed. Reg. 22744 (April 22, 2011). Section 3.13 of the SDEIS provides a review of pipeline safety considerations, standards, and regulations, and reviews potential types of releases and spills for the proposed pipeline. This section of the SDEIS provides further information regarding recent spills and incidents associated with TransCanada and Keystone as well as a review of U.S. pipeline spill incident history.

Question. Mr. Burns, in granting a Presidential Permit for a pipeline, the State Department must determine whether the project is in the national interest. Questions have been raised about whether the pipeline will increase air pollution and whether the pipeline will help to advance the administration's clean energy goals. Given these concerns, what factors will your agency be weighing when determining if this project is in the national interest?

Answer. Factors that have been considered in previous national interest determinations on major crude oil pipelines include:

- Environmental impacts of the proposed projects;
- Impacts of the proposed projects on the diversity of supply to meet U.S. crude oil demand and energy needs;
- The security of transport pathways for crude oil supplies to the United States through import facilities constructed at the border relative to other modes of transport;
- Stability of trading partners from whom the United States obtains crude oil;
- Impact of a cross-border facility on the relations with the country to which it connects;
- Relationship between the United States and various foreign suppliers of crude oil and the ability of the United States to work with those countries to meet overall environmental and energy security goals;
- Impact of proposed projects on broader foreign policy objectives, including a comprehensive strategy to address climate change;
- Economic benefits to the United States of constructing and operating proposed projects; and
- Relationships between proposed projects and goals to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to increase use of alternative and renewable energy sources.

See Supplemental Draft EIS, Section 1.3, pp. 1–6. This list is not exhaustive, and the State Department may consider additional factors in the process of determining the "national interest."

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

Question. While I am glad the administration applied the Comprehensive Iran Sanction, Accountability, and Divestment Act sanctions law and sanctioned several foreign companies, it appears we continue to sanction companies in countries where the United States does not have close ties, such as Venezuela and Belarus. Chinese firms continue to conduct business in the Iranian energy sector while other international companies withdraw and President Obama's Special Advisor for Non-proliferation and Arms Control Robert Einhorn admitted as much in March, saying "clearly [Chinese firms] have some investments in Iran."

- Would you agree with Mr. Einhorn that Chinese companies have made investments in Iran's energy sector?
- Has the State Department opened investigations into Chinese companies for violating the Iran Sanctions act? Please identify which ones.

Answer. We watch developments in Iran's energy sector extremely closely, including possible Chinese investment. We intend to continue to implement and aggressively enforce our sanctions laws in pursuit of our shared goal of keeping Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

We have seen reports that Chinese companies have made investments in Iran's energy sectors, although we have not seen credible evidence that any Chinese companies have finalized new upstream investments or refinery construction projects since the July 1, 2010, passage of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability and Divestment Act (CISADA).

As you may know, Secretary Clinton made a decision related to some foreign companies and the rationale for that decision was communicated to Congress via a classified report. We would be happy to brief you on the details in a classified setting.

Question. I understand several companies received waivers from the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act sanctions under existing authorities. When the waiver authority expires, will State sanction the companies that are currently receiving waivers?

Answer. To date, the Secretary has not waived sanctions on any entity. We would be happy to discuss the Secretary's use of other authorities under ISA in a classified setting.

Question. Is it true that of the 16 companies sanctioned under the recently announced Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA) sanctions, 13 of the companies targeted had already been sanctioned by the United States?

Answer. The United States had previously sanctioned 12 of the foreign persons that were just sanctioned under the recent INKSNA. The United States sanctioned the following foreign persons for the first time under the recently announced INKSNA sanctions: Belarusian Optical Mechanical Association (Belarus), Dalian Zhongbang Chemical Industries Company (China), SAD Import-Export Company (Iran), and Xian Junyun Electronic (China).

Question. When will the State Department send the 2008, 2009, and 2010 Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA) Reports to the Hill?

Answer. The Department submitted the 2008 INKSNA report to the Hill on May 23, 2011. The Department will send the 2009 and 2010 reports to the Hill once it completes assembling and evaluating the information required by the act. Currently, the Department is clearing and coordinating the candidate 2009 INKSNA cases with the Intelligence Community and we are working to identify cases that meet the criteria for reportability for the 2010 INKSNA. We would be happy to brief you in greater detail.

Question. When will the State Department send the latest Arms Control Compliance Report to the Hill as required by 22 U.S.C. 2593?

Answer. This administration is committed to ensuring that Congress receives a rigorous and comprehensive report. This year's report, primarily reflecting activities in 2009 and 2010, is undergoing final State Department and interagency review and should be submitted to Congress soon.

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

FATAH-HAMAS

Question. What is your view on whether the United States should work with a Palestinian Authority government that includes an unreformed Hamas? Do you support, pursuant to U.S. law, suspending aid to the Palestinian Authority, if after reviewing the situation it is determined that Hamas will not comply with Quartet conditions?

Answer. We understand there is real concern in Congress about the implications of the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation agreement signed on May 4. The administration has similar concerns. We will ensure full compliance with U.S. law.

Many substantive, and vital, details of the agreement remain undetermined or subject to further negotiation, and we are in constant dialogue with the Palestinians about how the deal will be implemented. We are not opposed to reconciliation per

se, but to Hamas involvement in a Palestinian Authority government if it does not accept Israel's right to exist, renounce violence and terror, and agree to abide by previous commitments.

Until a new Palestinian government is formed and we have an opportunity to assess it based on its policies and positions, it is important for us to continue to support the very worthwhile efforts of the current Palestinian Authority government, under the leadership of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad, to build the institutions for an eventual Palestinian state—an area of enormous progress over the last several years.

Question. Where do you see the peace process heading in light of President Abbas' decision to reconcile with an unchanged Hamas?

Answer. As the President said on May 19, the drive for a lasting peace that ends the conflict and resolves all claims is more urgent than ever. The status quo between Israelis and Palestinians is not sustainable. Neither Israel's future as a democratic Jewish state, nor the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians to govern themselves in a sovereign state can be secured without a two-state solution that is achieved through serious and credible negotiations that address issues of concerns to both sides.

The reconciliation agreement between Hamas and Fatah poses a vital question for the Palestinians, one to which Palestinian leaders will have to provide a credible answer. None of us can expect Israel to sit down at the negotiating table with a party that is sworn to its destruction.

Ultimately, the lack of a resolution to this conflict harms Israel, harms the Palestinians, and harms the interests of the U.S. and the international community. That is why, even though we know how hard it will be to get beyond the current impasse, we will continue to press ahead with the parties to resolve the core issues in the context of a peace agreement.

Question. Please comment on Egypt's role in bringing about the agreement and whether their involvement foreshadows a change in their longstanding relationship with Israel?

Answer. The United States supports reconciliation efforts that enhance the prospect for peace. The Egyptian Government has reaffirmed many times since the beginning of the revolution its commitment to all international treaties and obligations, including the Treaty of Peace with Israel, which is the basis of Egypt's longstanding relationship with Israel. We have made clear to the Egypt Government the importance of this treaty to peace and stability in the region. We do not believe that Egypt's role in facilitating the Hamas-Fatah reconciliation agreement foreshadows a change in that country's relationship with Israel.

DIVERSITY AT STATE

Question. For many years I have urged, advocated, and legislated on behalf of enhancing Hispanic diversity at the Department within the civil service and Foreign Service. Despite my efforts and the commitment of successive Secretaries of State, today, Hispanics make up just 5 percent of all State Department employees and just 3.9 percent of Foreign Service officers. The average amongst Federal agencies is 8 percent. State's numbers are disappointing.

What is even more disappointing—and which seem to demonstrate the Department's continued indifference to this issue—is that the State Department failed to even provide data for 2009 to OPM for its annual report to the President on Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government. It was the ONLY Federal agency to not respond.

- What specifically are you doing to improve diversity at the Department in the Foreign and Civil Service? Are you attempting to limit “in status” postings for civil service jobs that inhibit diversification? Do you have a diversification goal and a plan at how to arrive at that goal by a specified date? Are you working to increase the number of Hispanic Presidential Management Fellows or Hispanic students participating in cooperative education programs? Will the Department comply with OPM's request for 2010 data for their annual report to the President on diversity?

Answer. The Department of State's continuing recruitment goal is to identify, inspire, and employ qualified Americans with diverse backgrounds and experiences to effectively carry out our foreign policy. We aim to have a workforce that represents, at a minimum, the diversity found in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Professional Workforce demographic.

Hispanics make up 5 percent of State Department Civil Service employees, 3.9 percent of Foreign Service officers, and 6.1 percent of Foreign Service Specialists. The number of self-identified Hispanics who took the Foreign Service Officer Test during FY10 was 2,219, up from 1,465 in FY09 or 10 percent of the total (approximately a 50 percent increase). In 2010 the Department hired 36 Hispanic Foreign Service Specialists, or 7.4 percent of all new Specialist hires, and 32 out of 826 Foreign Service Generalists, or 3.9 percent.

Department of State's large-scale recruitment efforts

We recognize there is still much work to be done to ensure the Department reflects the rich diversity of our Nation. Several of our efforts are often cited as "best practices" and are successful in attracting outstanding diverse talent to pursue Department careers. We use a combination of "high tech" and "high-touch" tactics to identify and encourage the diverse talent we seek.

Sixteen senior Foreign Service officers, also known as Diplomats in Residence, are based at targeted campuses around the United States. Each Diplomat in Residence has regional responsibilities, collectively visiting hundreds of colleges and universities and meeting with professionals seeking to change careers. On campus, Diplomats in Residence work in partnership with career counselors, diversity coordinators, and directly with students to identify talented career candidates from a range of backgrounds and experiences. The Diplomats in Residence work in partnership with Washington, DC-based recruiters to identify and contact potential candidates for all Department careers through Web-based resources and strategic partnerships with like-minded educational and professional organizations serving diverse populations, including Hispanics.

In FY 2010, the Department spent \$40,000 on advertising in Hispanic print and electronic media. Marketing studies demonstrate that minority professionals use social media at higher rates than nonminority professionals. Our public outreach is integrated with a comprehensive marketing and recruiting program that includes leveraging new media and networking technologies (Facebook, Linked-In, Twitter, YouTube), direct sourcing, e-mail marketing, and online and limited print advertising with career and niche-specific sites and publications (Hispanic Business, NSHMBA, LatPro, Saludos, LATINASstyle). In addition, the Department spent over \$250,000 on general diversity media and Department-specific diversity networking events.

The Department's Recruitment Outreach Office developed and hosted Diversity Career Networking Events as a tool to target a diverse range of professionals for Department of State careers, specifically highlighting deficit Foreign Service career tracks. In FY 2010, events were hosted in Los Angeles; Denver; Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Las Cruces, NM; Miami; New York and Washington, DC, reaching over 1,000 candidates including African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and women.

In addition, over 900 Department employees have volunteered to support our strategic outreach, highlighting the diversity of our existing workforce and leveraging existing networks of internal affinity groups like the Hispanic Employment Council in Foreign Affairs Agencies (HECFAA).

"In status" postings for Civil Service jobs

All Department of State vacancy announcements are advertised according to merit procedures. Under those procedures managers have the option of determining the area of consideration. This area of consideration "Status Only" versus "Open to Public" is determined by how widely the manager feels he/she needs to recruit in order to obtain a reasonable pool of well-qualified candidates. Approximately half of our vacancy announcements are advertised "Open to the Public" which provides many opportunities for applicants outside of the Federal workforce to apply for positions at the Department of State. The Department continues to urge managers to be as inclusive as possible and to properly consider all candidates when making selections for positions.

Cooperative education programs

The Department strives to achieve diversity throughout its workforce through various career-entry programs, including the Presidential Management Fellowship program. All qualified applicants referred to the Department by the Office of Personnel Management are given full consideration. The Office of Recruitment conducts regular outreach to institutions that serve Hispanics in order to increase the pool of applicants from the Hispanic community and promote awareness of entry-level employment opportunities.

Our outreach to college students plants the seeds of interest in global public service and promotes a long-term interest in our internships, fellowships, and careers.

In FY 2009 the Department funded an additional 100 paid internships for recruitment purposes. In 2009 and 2010, with the support of the Director General, our Diplomats in Residence identified outstanding, diverse candidates for those internships, providing them the chance to experience work in Washington, DC, and embassies and consulates around the world.

Twenty-three percent of these 100 paid interns were Hispanic. Through this program one Hispanic employee, a first generation American, had the opportunity to experience diplomacy in action working in our Embassy in Guatemala last summer. Another Hispanic employee, a Gates Millennium Scholar and recipient of a paid internship, had the opportunity to represent the United States at our mission to the Organization of American States. Both of these outstanding students are still working at the Department in student positions even after their internships ended.

Two particularly successful student programs are the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Undergraduate and Graduate Fellowships and the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Fellowship. These ROTC-like programs provide financing for graduate school and paid professional experience in Washington and at our embassies to highly qualified students, in exchange for their commitment to the Foreign Service. Diplomats in Residence help recruit candidates for these fellowships, which have been essential to increasing the presence of underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service. In FY 2010, 17 out of 120 (14.17 percent) Pickering Fellows and 7 out of 40 (17.5 percent) Rangel Fellows were Hispanic.

Compliance with OPM's request for 2010 data for Annual Report to the President on Diversity

The Department of State has been working closely with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to ensure that it is compliant with the diversity data reporting requirements. In 2009, we experienced complications with our submission (Attachment A). This was partially due to a change of formatting requirements, and partially due to the complexity of reporting data about our different workforces, the Civil Service and the Foreign Service.

Unfortunately, by the time these issues were resolved, the publication deadline had passed. These issues have since been addressed with OPM and the Department has submitted its information for the 2010 diversity report (Attachment B).

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The above mentioned attachments were too voluminous to include in the printed hearing but will be retained in the permanent record of the committee.]

PAKISTAN

Question. Our relationship with Pakistan has reached a strategic turning point. U.S. security-related assistance to Pakistan has increased by 140 percent since 2007 to \$2.7 billion in FY 2010. In terms of total assistance we are in for more than \$4 billion annually and they seem to dislike us more than ever. At a time when we are contemplating cutbacks to foreign assistance programs and scrutinizing every domestic program to ensure maximum effectiveness, it is incongruous to be providing enormous sums to the Pakistani military unless we are certain that it is meeting its commitment to locate, disrupt, and dismantle terrorist threats inside its borders.

- Do you believe the Pakistani military is committed to ceasing support to extremist and terrorist groups and preventing al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and associated terrorist groups from operating on the territory of Pakistan?
- Will you be undertaking a review of security assistance for Pakistan in light of recent events and under what condition would you consider withholding assistance?
- Are you concerned that the tremendous growth in U.S. Security assistance to Pakistan could further destabilize relations between Pakistan and India? How certain are you that reimbursement funds provided to Pakistan under CSF are not being used to bolster Pakistan's aggression toward India?

Answer. Our relationship with Pakistan has never been an easy one. It is no secret that we do not always see eye to eye, including about how to most effectively counter shared threats to our security. Nevertheless, Pakistan has been a key partner in our common struggle against terrorism and is committed to fighting terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda and the Pakistani Taliban. As President Obama has said, "the fact of the matter is that we have killed more terrorists on Pakistani soil than just about any place else. We could not have done that without Pakistani cooperation."

The key question now is whether Pakistan is prepared to do more. We know that al-Qaeda and its affiliates have been a source of great pain and suffering to Paki-

stan's leadership, people, and security forces. We are also confident that joint action by Pakistan and the United States against al-Qaeda and its affiliates will make Pakistan, America, and the world safer and more secure. We have made clear that we look to the Government of Pakistan to urgently take decisive steps against al-Qaeda and its affiliates.

The Department is continually reviewing its security assistance programs to ensure that disbursements are meeting our foreign policy goals and objectives, and benefiting the U.S. taxpayer. This is certainly the case with respect to our assistance to Pakistan.

The Department remains committed to ensuring that U.S. security assistance and military sales do not significantly alter the prevailing military balance in any region. We carefully review all military sales to ensure they do not contribute to instability in South Asia. The careful consideration is also given to the review of all requests for reimbursement through Coalition Support Funds, to ensure that reimbursements are made only for expenditures that support Operation Enduring Freedom.

RESPONSES OF WILLIAM J. BURNS TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. The administration has taken steps that indicate growing support for the Transitional Council, and Ambassador Cretz has said that they are "worthy of our support." Yet, the administration refuses to recognize the Council as the legitimate Government of Libya.

- How is U.S. nonrecognition of the Council impacting our choices and freedom of action to promptly end the conflict in Libya?
- Would recognition of the Council facilitate the issue of providing assistance to the Council by transferring ownership of and confiscating the frozen Libyan assets?

Answer. While we have not officially recognized the TNC, we have taken significant steps to bolster its legitimacy, including high-level meetings, inviting it to open an office in Washington, appointing an envoy to Benghazi and providing it with up to \$25 million in nonlethal military assistance. The President is also discussing legislation with Congress that would permit the use of a portion of frozen regime assets for humanitarian and civilian purposes. As proposed, authority would be given to vest frozen assets within U.S. jurisdiction, consisting of directly owned property of the Government of Libya and its related entities, including the Central Bank of Libya. In addition, we have also taken steps to strip legitimacy from Qadhafi's diplomatic presence, including suspending Libyan Embassy operations in Washington (and U.S. Embassy operations in Tripoli); and urging countries worldwide to do likewise.

The issue of recognition remains under review and we are continuing to assess the capabilities of the TNC as we deepen our engagement with the opposition. As part of that effort, our Envoy to Benghazi continues to meet with members of the TNC, as well as a broad spectrum of civil society groups and Libyans involved in the opposition. The TNC has consistently rejected terrorism and extremist influences and declared their respect for the human rights of all Libyans and we believe that it is a legitimate and credible interlocutor for the Libyan people. We continue to highlight the TNC's role as a legitimate and credible interlocutor for the Libyan people in international fora like the Libya Contact Group, the U.N., and elsewhere.

Question. The Gadhafi regime relies heavily on foreign mercenaries to perpetuate its regime in Libya. Recent reports indicate that these mercenaries include members of POLISARIO Front—a separatist group that claims certain Moroccan territory and whose members live in camps within Algerian territory.

- What is Algeria's role in the rebellion against the Gadhafi regime?
- Is the United States aware of POLISARIO presence in the Libyan conflict?
- What specific measures is the administration taking to keep Libya's neighbors from providing support to Gadhafi?

Answer. We are working closely with the Government of Algeria to ensure that UNSCR 1973, which Algeria has committed to supporting through the Arab League, is fully implemented. Algeria shares our desire to see an end to the bloodshed and violence in Libya and has long been a strong bilateral partner and a regional leader in counterterrorism efforts.

The United States cannot corroborate any reports of a presence of the POLISARIO Front in the conflict in Libya.

Working together with our partners in the Libya Contact Group, the United States is taking political, economic, and diplomatic measures to isolate the Qadhafi

regime. Since the conflict began in February, we have been in regular contact with other countries in the region, emphasizing the importance of implementing strong sanctions against the regime, including enforcement of the arms embargo, asset freeze, and travel bans under UNSCRs 1970 and 1973. We have also demarched countries worldwide, encouraging them to suspend diplomatic ties with the regime and to refuse to receive Qadhafi's envoys, unless those envoys were willing to discuss the departure of Qadhafi from power. We are continuing to work with the Contact Group, African Union, and Arab League to increase the pressure on the regime and set the stage for an inclusive political transition in line with the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people.

Question. Since 2003, Congress has provided more than \$30 billion in U.S. assistance to Pakistan, nearly \$20 billion in economic aid. This has been explained as an effort to build up an enduring relation with Pakistan and to improve their civilian capacity.

- Through what process or metrics is the administration ensuring that development projects funded through the Pakistan Partnership Act enjoy meaningful input from the recipient communities?
- What metrics is the administration applying to assess the success or failure of its development policies in Pakistan?

Answer. The USG has provided approximately \$6.4 billion in civilian assistance to Pakistan since FY 2002. In executing that assistance, we work closely with Pakistan to strengthen the civilian government's ability to foster growth and meet the needs of its own people over the long term.

A little over half of the FY 2010 planned civilian assistance will be implemented through Pakistani organizations, including federal or provincial government agencies and nongovernment organizations. We have established consultative processes on implementation, design, and accountability mechanisms. We consult with a range of local stakeholders to ensure their buy-in and input.

As an illustration of how metrics are used in implementation, USAID has a performance management plan that lays out both short-term and long-term goals for each sector in which they manage assistance, and track progress against those goals. For example, in the energy sector a high-level goal is "increased domestic energy supply" with a lower level goal of "improved efficiency of current power generation and distribution," measured by "the megawatts of energy added as a result of USG-supported efforts."

USAID is also putting in place a stand-alone project that will provide third-party monitoring evaluation across the entire USAID portfolio.

Question. Pakistan's security agencies have been under scrutiny for its alleged links with and even material support for Islamist militants operating both inside and out of Pakistan. U.S. Government suspicions have peaked with the circumstances surrounding bin-Laden's death.

- What is the most effective way for the United States to convince Pakistan's security institutions to embrace more proactive counterterrorism cooperation?
- Would a strong U.S. commitment to success in Afghanistan help on that matter?

Answer. The United States and Pakistan have worked together on many counterterrorism programs and activities in recent years that have increased pressure on al-Qaeda and the Taliban. This cooperation has been due, in large part, to Pakistan's vital interest in protecting its own territory and people, who have been ravaged by terrorism. Pakistan remains a key ally in our common struggle against terrorism and continues to battle terrorist groups. However, both we and the Government of Pakistan recognize that much more needs to be done immediately.

Recent terrorist attacks in Pakistan against both security forces and civilians remind us once again of the sacrifices Pakistan has made in its fight against insurgents who seek to destabilize the country, and of the necessity of proactive, resolute action against all violent extremists. Joint action against al-Qaeda and its affiliates will make Pakistan, its neighbors, the United States and the world safer and more secure. We have made clear that we will do our part and we look to the Government of Pakistan to urgently take decisive steps.

We have also made clear to Pakistan our enduring commitment to achieving peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan and of Afghanistan's importance to regional stability. We will continue working with Pakistan to achieve those goals, including through the trilateral process that Secretary Clinton launched in May 2009, and which has met twice this spring.

Question. President Lobo and former President Zelaya of Honduras signed an agreement that has opened the way for Honduras to be finally reinstated to the Organization of American States. President Lobo has agreed not to pursue corruption charges against Zelaya, who has returned to Honduras.

- (A) What role did the United States have in those negotiations?

Answer. The U.S. Government followed with great interest the developments that led to an accord signed on May 22 by Honduran President Porfirio Lobo and former President Jose Manuel Zelaya. Since the June 2009 coup d'etat that removed President Zelaya from power, the United States has remained an active player behind the scenes and in public, in Washington, through our Embassy in Honduras, and several of our overseas posts. We worked with the international community, as well as our partners in the hemisphere to underscore that the conditions that led to Honduras' suspension from the OAS had been resolved, and that the time had come for Honduras to be fully reintegrated into the organization.

The initiatives by the Governments of Colombia and Venezuela were undertaken in the context of efforts to reintegrate Honduras by the Central American Governments, the United States, and Canada that made possible the May 22 agreement. Central American Governments and the Dominican Republic helped create the climate that enabled the Colombian and Venezuelan effort to succeed. The Organization of American States played a constructive role in advancing this initiative.

- (B) What is the effect of this situation on the rule of law and independent institutions in Honduras?

Answer. The political crisis in 2009 revealed weaknesses in Honduras' democratic institutions. Furthermore, the economic slowdown caused in part by the political crisis deprived the Government of Honduras of the necessary resources to enable its law enforcement and judicial institutions to confront the menace of youth gangs and drug trafficking organizations.

While we remain very concerned about the human rights situation, since the inauguration of President Porfirio Lobo in January 2010, following the successful negotiation of the Tegucigalpa-San Jose Accord and the holding of free and fair elections, Honduras has made significant progress in fortifying its rule of law institutions. Much work still needs to be done, and the U.S. Government has resumed its wide-reaching assistance programs, which include resources and technical support for Honduran police and prosecutors to help bolster their efforts to adequately investigate and prosecute alleged human rights abuses. Additionally, Honduras' reintegration into the OAS means Honduras will benefit fully from the OAS capacity to promote good governance.

- (C) How confident are you that Mr. Zelaya will play a positive role in Honduras?

Answer. We welcomed the decision of the Honduran Supreme Court resolving the criminal cases against former President Zelaya in accordance with Honduran law. While the United States Government did not take a position on how the cases should be decided, we hope that their resolution, and former President Zelaya's return to Honduras on May 28, have contributed to national reconciliation. We will continue to urge former President Zelaya to remain constructive in whatever role he chooses to play.

- (D) What impact would this situation have on the political process and the integrity of democratic institutions in neighboring countries?

Answer. The unanimous condemnation by Western Hemisphere governments of the 2009 removal of former President Zelaya demonstrated commitment by those governments to the rule of law. That universal opprobrium, coupled with Honduras' suspension from participation in the Organization of American States and the loss of vital foreign assistance and foreign direct investment, provided a cautionary tale to actors in neighboring countries who might contemplate antidemocratic activities. The response to the political crisis in Honduras has shown that regional states and multilateral institutions stand ready to defend democracy in a region that once tolerated long periods of authoritarian rule and repeated military interventions in civilian rule. Honduras's neighbors understand that the health of democratic institutions in one Central American country has implications for the democratic institutions in all of them.

Question. There is a perception for regional bureaus and embassies that working against human trafficking is a zero-sum game and that they should fight for improved rankings in the TIP report even if the evidence is marginal.

- Will you commit to work to ensure that embassies and assistant secretaries recognize that this is an important issue to you and that they should intensify their work to foster progress in human trafficking in their country or region?

Answer. The fight against human trafficking is important not only to me, but also to Secretary Clinton, and it is a major policy priority for this administration. One of the most important tools we have in addressing Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is the annual Trafficking in Persons Report, which takes into account not only the findings of our colleagues at embassies around the world, but also information submitted by foreign governments, nongovernmental organizations, and a wide range of civil society actors. The end result is a report that represents Department-wide collaboration and consensus, with critical input from our officers and ambassadors in the field.

These efforts do not constitute a zero-sum game. Over the 10 years since the report was first published, more than 120 countries have adopted new antitrafficking measures, victim identification has improved, and prosecutions are on the rise. Time and again, governments have credited the TIP Report as a factor motivating consistent action to address trafficking. If confirmed, as Deputy Secretary of State, I will ensure that fighting human trafficking remains a foreign policy priority, and I will work to strengthen our international efforts to combat this heinous crime.

Question. An international arbitration panel has determined that the Russian Government expropriated Yukos and owes compensation to all investors in Yukos. As you stated in February, 2011, “there are a number American investors in Yukos with several billion dollars’ worth of investments at stake. However, U.S. shareholders do not have an investment treaty under which they can bring claims against Russia. I understand that some U.S. shareholders in Yukos have petitioned the State Department to espouse their claims against Russia.

- Since there is no other effective means of redress, will the State Department use espousal to secure compensation for the U.S. shareholders in Yukos?

Answer. Promoting the rights of U.S. investors is one of the U.S. State Department’s top priorities in Russia and worldwide. The Department is monitoring closely the significant claims brought by Yukos investors from many different countries in international court and arbitration proceedings. We expect these decisions to shed light on many of the complex legal issues at stake in this matter. While the United States does not have a bilateral investment treaty with Russia, the Department has raised the matter of American shareholders’ claims with the Russian Government and will continue to stress the interest of the USG in seeing these claims addressed in a manner consistent with customary international law protections for foreign investments.