

NIGERIA AT A CROSSROADS: THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

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NIGERIA AT A CROSSROADS: THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:00 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The subcommittee will come to order. And good afternoon to everyone.

Let me, first of all, thank our very distinguished witnesses, Ambassador Nagy and Ramsey Day, for doing double duty 2 days straight. You were there yesterday doing what I thought was a tremendous job on the whole of Africa and today with a very specific focus on Nigeria. So thank you, above all, for your leadership but also for spending a considerable amount of time with the full committee and now the subcommittee. So thank you.

The reason why we have called you back is to focus on Nigeria, obviously. And let me say how we do believe that the upcoming election is an inflection point. February 19th could be a great day, and we are hoping that it will be, but there are still some unanswered questions, and perhaps you could provide some insights to those questions.

Nigeria is so large and robust that, as the saying goes, as Nigeria goes, so goes Africa. Having been there so many times, I believe that is true. They are wonderful, wonderful people. There is a great deal of faith there, both Muslim and Christian. But there are also some problems brought by a minority number of people that continues to plague the large masses of people who suffer from those problems.

Its economic and political leadership in sub-Saharan Africa, like I said, is extremely important. A stable and prosperous Nigeria contributes to stable and prosperous neighbors. Conversely, an unstable Nigeria wracked by poverty and violence does not contribute to the well-being of its own citizens nor of its neighbors but could lead to a destabilization.

Nigeria today is clearly at a crossroads. We are seeing continuing violence along ethnic and religious lines, exacerbated by economic, social, and political tensions coinciding with this upcoming major election. The incumbent, President Buhari, is seeking a second con-

secutive term, but, in a way, it is his third overall if you count the fact that he served as head of state from 1983 to 1985 following a military coup which installed him.

President Buhari won election in 2015 in part because he promised to end Nigeria's endemic corruption and defeat the terror group Boko Haram. Since then, however, he has, frankly, disappointed. Boko Haram has been somewhat contained, and it still remains a threat, though, in terms of actual violence, the total deaths attributable to Boko Haram now is surpassed by clashes instigated in large part by well-armed Fulani extremists, which is often labeled the herder-farmer violence.

In the first half of 2018, per the International Crisis Group, over 1,300 Nigerians have been killed in this conflict in Nigeria's Middle Belt. It is a horrible loss of life. Though the greatest number of victims in this particular conflict are Christian farmers, other groups in the country have suffered, including Nigeria's Shia Muslims in the state of Kaduna, who were targeted by government forces in 2015 in what is known as the Zaria massacre.

Igbo, who predominantly come from the south and who still remember the brutal war for Biafran independence nearly half a century ago, are also feeling alienation, particularly after a call in 2017 by a radical group for Igbo to be cleansed from northern Nigeria and forced to return to their traditional homeland in the south.

I think many others are very concerned about the apparent inability, perhaps even reluctance, of the Nigerian Federal Government under President Buhari to stop the violence or even, at times, to unequivocally condemn the attacks. This concern is exacerbated by the fact that, in any election, politicians seek to maximize the support of their base, and, in this particular case, it is President Buhari's ethnic and religious base which is contributing to much of the tension.

Thus, it is critically important that political leaders such as President Buhari, religious leaders such as the Sultan of Sokoto, and institutions such as the cattlemen's association, Miyetti Allah, all of whom have influence among the Fulani, unequivocally condemn the attacks and use their power and influence to promote peace and reconciliation.

In that regard, there have been a number of proposals aimed at promoting peace, which should be commended. As president of the Senate, Dr. Saraki, who is in the audience today—and welcome; thank you for being here—is himself a Muslim leader who sought to create the Religious Equity Commission, which aims at promoting peace among different religious groups.

On one of my trips I made to Nigeria, I met with Archbishop Kaigama, the archbishop of Jos, which was the center of much of the conflict and where many of the churches were firebombed. We met with survivors from those churches. Archbishop Kaigama worked closely with the imam who was his counterpart in humanitarian and peace-building projects. And I can tell you, the respect and admiration for each other was actually awe-inspiring. They both said nothing but superlatives and how they wanted to work together for peace in the Jos area.

Thus, there are a number of hopeful initiatives in Nigeria which can be built upon. And I am looking forward to hearing from our

two very distinguished witnesses today about what our Government is doing to promote peace and stability in Nigeria and what we are doing to help ensure a free and fair election followed by, depending on the outcome, a peaceful transition of power.

And let me also say how we are all looking forward to insights you could provide to this subcommittee fresh on the heels of the framework that was announced this morning, which I hope you will spend some time conveying your impressions of it and where it will lead in terms of U.S. policy vis-a-vis the subcontinent.

I would like to now yield to my good friend and colleague, Karen Bass.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this critical and once again timely hearing.

And I want to thank our witnesses. Long time no see. You are here for a second day, and we definitely appreciate you taking the time to be here again. You know that your presence here is important because it does send a message that the United States remains committed to engaging across the African continent.

We all know that Africa is a region of strategic importance and diplomatic relevance. The U.S.-Nigeria relationship is one of the most important in Africa, given Nigeria's size and political and economic role in the region.

Nigeria will hold Presidential elections on February 16th and gubernatorial and legislative elections just a few weeks later. These elections are highly anticipated and also expected to be highly contested. This has led some analysts to argue that the elections could lead to fragmentation of the party, defections to other parties, or even violence.

While concerns of violence have grown, positive signs have emerged. Just yesterday, 70—70, wow—Presidential candidates, including the main opposition candidate, pledged to hold a peaceful vote. While this hearing is focused on the election, it would be useful for you to provide us an update on broader issues affecting the country, such as security concerns, including the ongoing conflict with Boko Haram and the Niger Delta militants.

Nigerian security forces have been accused of serious human rights abuses. The State Department's 2017 human rights report documents allegations by multiple sources of extrajudicial and arbitrary killings as well as torture, periodically, in detention facilities, including sexual exploitation and abuse, use of children by some security elements, looting and destruction of property. I am very interested in knowing how we are holding them accountable.

On the economic front, I would be curious to know if Nigeria has diversified its AGOA exports beyond petroleum. Given that Nigeria is one of Africa's largest consumer markets, are we doing anything to help facilitate opportunities for American business?

Returning to the topic of this hearing, some may recall that the 2015 elections were also very competitive and were viewed as a critical test for the country's leaders, security forces, and people. They were widely held as historic and as demonstrating Nigeria's commitment to democratic principles. My hope is that the country will have another peaceful election so that they can continue to address the economic and security challenges facing the country.

Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Ms. Bass.

Let me introduce, first, the Honorable Tibor Nagy, Jr., the Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

Ambassador Nagy has served over 30 years, 20 of which were spent in Africa as the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, the United States Ambassador to Guinea, and was Deputy Chief of Mission in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Togo. Ambassador Nagy has also won awards for his management of the United States Embassy in Lagos, Nigeria, during political and economic crises.

Following his retirement from the Foreign Service, Ambassador Nagy served as vice provost for international affairs at Texas Tech University, where he lectured on Africa, foreign policy, international development, and U.S. diplomacy.

Ambassador Nagy arrived in the U.S. as a political refugee from Hungary. He received his B.A. from Texas Tech University and MSA from George Washington University. He has been married to his wife for 47 years, and the couple has three adult children—the first triplets born in independent Zimbabwe.

We welcome you back again. I am not sure what you are doing tomorrow, but perhaps you want to come back again tomorrow as well.

We will then hear from Mr. Ramsey Day, who serves as Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Africa Bureau at USAID.

Prior to joining USAID in January 2018, Mr. Day was the senior director for the Center for Global Impact at the International Republican Institute. Mr. Day has held numerous positions within the international development and foreign policy communities, both in the U.S. and various overseas posts.

He served as country representative for USAID in Montenegro and at the USAID headquarters in Washington, DC, within the Legislative and Public Affairs Bureau and as Chief of Public Liaison, where he led the Agency's public outreach efforts. He was also Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor for USAID Europe in the Eurasia Bureau, advising the Assistant Administrator and other officials on development policy, communications, and legislative issues.

Mr. Day holds a B.A. from the University of Mississippi and a master's in public administration focusing on international global affairs from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Thank you both for being here.

And, Ambassador Nagy, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE TIBOR P. NAGY, JR., ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador NAGY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With your permission, I have submitted a longer version of my remarks for the record, and I will read the abbreviated version.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection.

Ambassador NAGY. Thank you very much, sir.

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the upcoming elections in Nigeria. I am also pleased to be joined by my USAID colleague Ramsey Day.

The Department of State views Nigeria's February 2019 national elections as a critical test which could have significant consequences for the democratic trajectory of not only Nigeria but the entire continent.

The 2015 elections, although by no means perfect, was a step forward, resulting in Nigeria's first-ever democratic transfer of power to a nonincumbent party.

In advance of the 2019 elections, the United States does not support any candidate, only a free, fair, transparent, and peaceful democratic process that reflects the will of the Nigerian people.

Through diplomacy, robust public engagement with youth and civil society, and democracy and governance programs, we are helping Nigeria strengthen its democratic institutions and processes.

The U.S. Government has developed a strategy with three main objectives: One, support of free and fair electoral process, including technical assistance to Nigeria's election institutions, civil society, and political parties, as well as U.S. Government monitoring of the election around the country.

Two, prevent and mitigate electoral violence, including conflict monitoring, peace-building programs, and peace messaging.

And, three, support civil and political engagement, including Nigerian election observings and vote tabulation, social media campaigns to engage youth, get-out-the-vote campaigns, voter education, and efforts to counter disinformation.

To advance our strategy, we have high-level diplomatic engagement from Washington as well as officials based in Nigeria. Earlier this year, President Trump welcomed President Buhari to the White House and conveyed our expectations for a credible election. And two Secretaries of State, USAID Administrator Green, and many others have traveled to Nigeria or met with senior Nigerian officials to underscore our commitment as well.

The State Department also hosted the Nigerian Independent National Electoral Commission, or INEC, chairman in late October to observe U.S. preparation for midterm elections and discussed challenges surrounding Nigeria's elections. During this visit, INEC Chairman Yakubu observed early voting in Maryland and met with congressional staff, U.S. electoral experts, and U.S. Government officials, to include USAID Administrator Green and Under Secretary for Political Affairs Hale.

I recently returned from Nigeria as part of my first trip back to the continent, and it was great to be back where I served as Charge d'Affaires in 2016 and Deputy Chief of Mission from 1993 to 1995 and convey our expectations and concerns for the elections in person. I met with leadership from the two main political parties, INEC Chairman Yakubu, civil society organizations, delivering public messages on the elections with key stakeholders.

That is just a summary of our Washington-focused diplomatic engagement on these elections. Our Ambassador and the mission in Nigeria are working to advance our goals every day.

My colleague from USAID will tell you more about USAID programs in support of our three objectives.

And I assure you, the U.S. Government will remain intensely focused on the Nigerian elections in the coming months. I know

many of you are watching the elections closely, and we share many of your concerns.

We are monitoring and messaging to mitigate a few areas of risk that could jeopardize a fair process. Examples include: Potential attacks on the legitimacy of INEC and the electoral process for political gain; intimidation by security forces; attacks on election institutions or violence toward voters, observers, or electoral officials; an inability of internally displaced persons or persons with disabilities to vote; voter suppression; armed gangs for voter intimidation and other drivers of electoral violence; and widespread vote buying.

On November 18, the start of official campaigning, our mission in Abuja released a statement with 25 like-minded missions to express our desire to see free, fair, transparent, peaceful elections. We will be watching closely for instigators of violence or those attempting to undermine the democratic process.

I can tell you from my experience that I fear there will be some violence, as has been the case with previous elections. But I only anticipate localized violence, not nationwide conflict.

We are already seeing increased tension as the election approaches, as politicians turn to identity politics to improve their popularity, with potentially serious consequences for national unity. Nigeria has weathered such tensions before, but the U.S. Government takes the risk of any loss of life extremely seriously.

While in Nigeria, I asked officials from both major parties to sign pledges that their candidates would conduct peaceful campaigns, and both major candidates have now signed such a peace pledge.

In assessing potential hotspots for violence, we look at places that are historically volatile around elections, such as Rivers and Borno states. We look at states that are currently tense, especially if state-level politics are contentious, like those in Benue, Plateau, as well as those in high-stakes locations with large populations, such as Kano. We regularly engage with civil society organizations in these hotspots and support their peace-building efforts.

USAID programs and our public diplomacy campaigns also support peace campaigns across the country, such as #VoteNotFight. Through our YALI network Nigeria campaign, Nigerians made over 10,000 pledges to boost voter participation, reject violence, and vote with integrity.

As I said in a speech in Nigeria, only the Nigerian people can determine lasting solutions and a path forward toward peace and stability. 2019 indeed will be a significant year for Nigeria. It will be 20 years since the country returned to democratic rule. And this election's youngest voters have never known a Nigeria without democracy. The upcoming elections provide Nigerians an opportunity to shape their country and solidify its place as a democratic leader in Africa.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Nagy follows:]

**Statement of Assistant Secretary Tibor Nagy
Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State
House Foreign Affairs Committee
“Development, Diplomacy, and Defense: Promoting U.S. Interests in Africa”
Wednesday, December 12, 2018**

Thank you Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify today on U.S. policy toward Africa, and to my colleague and friend Ramsey Day of USAID here with me today. I also want to express my gratitude to Chairman Royce and other members for your longstanding interest in Africa.

Today’s hearing comes at an opportune time. We are at a critical juncture for the relationship between the United States and the nations and people of Africa. Africa faces an uncertain and challenging, but by no means predetermined, future. The choices we make now will affect not only our relationship with the continent, but will have ramifications worldwide.

Africa is facing a demographic tsunami. Its population will double by 2050 to around 2.5 billion people, 50 percent of whom will be under the age of 24. Challenges with infrastructure, corruption and terrorism continue, and China is asserting itself on the continent economically, militarily, and politically. We must remain a positive alternative, and make clear that engaging with the United States will mean greater prosperity and security for Africa.

I am very fortunate to be in my current position. Virtually my entire career centered on Africa, much of it living there in eight different countries. Since my first diplomatic assignment forty years ago, Africa has changed dramatically.

I recently concluded two trips to the continent, in West Africa and East Africa, where I also addressed the African Union. Let me assure you of this: Our potential with Africa is limitless! With every challenge there is opportunity, and we must capitalize on our successes.

Here I would like to articulate some of the focus areas of the Bureau of African Affairs.

First, we are promoting stronger trade and commercial ties between the United States and Africa, working with our African partners to build a level playing field across the continent's markets. African governments need to increase transparency and fairness in their commercial environments to attract more business, and have predictable policies, laws conforming to international standards, and a credible dispute resolution process.

Second, more than 60 percent of sub-Saharan Africa, 600 million people, is below the age of 25, representing 40 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's unemployed. We are working to match American investment and ingenuity with the dynamism and entrepreneurial spirit of young Africans; anchoring them to their countries, and keeping them from resorting to migration, militancy, or crime.

A third area is working to advance peace and security through partnerships with African governments and effective regional mechanisms.

Finally, we are focused on countering the Chinese narrative and setting the record straight. The United States has a longstanding

commitment to Africa, as a partner positively supporting economic growth, good governance, rule of law, enhanced gender equality, and health of the African people.

Let me begin with the promotion of stronger trade and investment ties. Everywhere I speak to an African audience, I emphasize we seek to do business not just **in** Africa, but **with** Africa.

Our promotion of free trade agreements with the United States communicates to Africans that transparency, fairness, and good governance attract U.S. investment, and we hope to negotiate a first-ever Free Trade Agreement with a Sub-Saharan African country.

Trade has greatly expanded. Under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, or AGOA, from 2000 to 2016 U.S. investment in sub-Saharan Africa increased from seven to 29 billion dollars, providing opportunities for hundreds of thousands of Africans. Since 2000, U.S. exports to Africa rose from six to more than 14 billion dollars last year, and U.S. imports from Africa totaled nearly 25 billion dollars, a total two-way trade of 39 billion dollars in 2017, up 5.8 percent from 2015.

The U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation provides assistance to the world's poorest countries who demonstrate commitment to good governance, economic freedom, and investing in their citizens. This week, I attended a ceremony with Secretary Pompeo where MCC and the Government of Senegal signed a 550 million dollar compact that will modernize Senegal's power sector to increase economic growth and reduce poverty through improved access to electricity.

The BUILD Act, which President Trump signed into law in October with strong bipartisan support, will establish the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. This new law consolidates, modernizes and reforms the U.S. government's "development finance" capabilities. Africa is the largest regional exposure totaling more than six billion dollars and the BUILD Act will help mobilize additional private sector investment.

With our second focus, we go beyond investing in **Africa**, to investing in **Africans**.

Through the Young African Leaders Initiative, or YALI, we equip the next generation of Africans with leadership and entrepreneurship

skills. The YALI Network, a virtual community of more than a half million members, helps young Africans develop skills and connections needed to make change in their communities.

Our third focus, promoting peace and security, is essential to secure Africa's opportunities and prosperity. We support African-led efforts against terrorism and other transnational threats. U.S. assistance has brought some success in the Lake Chad region, Somalia and elsewhere, and we seek burden-sharing opportunities with non-African actors as well.

We have provided training to peacekeepers from more than 20 African countries, with substantial impact. Ten years ago, Africans comprised only 40 percent of the continent's peacekeepers. Now that figure has exceeded 60 percent. U.S.-funded programming is vital to these forces, as it is to the G5 Sahel Joint Force and African-driven efforts in the Lake Chad region to counter terrorism in West Africa.

Our African partners are working to ensure stability and defeat terrorist organizations in East Africa as well. The AMISOM mission composed of regional states is helping Somalia become more stable and

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.
Mr. Day?

STATEMENT OF MR. RAMSEY DAY, SENIOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the upcoming elections in Nigeria.

I also want to thank my State Department colleague and friend, Assistant Secretary Tibor Nagy, for his excellent description of our concerns and challenges in supporting Nigeria's electoral process.

USAID is deeply committed to supporting free, fair, transparent, and peaceful elections in Nigeria. We know that Nigeria's success in achieving sustained, broad-based advancements in economic and social development for its people can only be achieved if good governance is a daily reality for all Nigerians.

Since the 2015 election, our support has provided continuity in assisting stakeholders with gubernatorial off-cycle elections and in the lead-up preparations to the 2019 general elections. Our programmatic efforts have been in partnership with the U.K.'s Department for International Development, or DFID, in addition to regular coordination with civil society groups as well as multilateral and bilateral donors.

USAID's programs align with the three objectives that Assistant Secretary Nagy has laid out, that the election be credible, peaceful, and inclusive.

First, we assist Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission, or INEC, to institutionalize key reforms that ensure a more credible and accountable electoral process. USAID continues to work with its partners to support INEC through training both resident electoral commissioners on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and judges who will adjudicate any suits brought after the elections.

Second, as Assistant Secretary Nagy has also indicated, we don't expect large-scale nationwide violence, though history does tell us there will likely be some localized conflict, particularly in areas that are already suffering from chronic instability. We continue to work with local organizations, international development partners, and, of course, our Nigerian counterparts to encourage peaceful participation and tolerance.

And to mitigate the risk of violence, USAID has included violence prevention efforts into all of our programs nationwide. One example, of course, is the Vote Not Fight campaign, already referenced, whose peace ambassador is a leading Nigerian performance artist. Another campaign is the Stop Violence Against Women in Elections, which works with local civil society organizations.

In addition, USAID supports INEC by engaging civil society organization in each geopolitical zone to do live conflict mapping. And we will share this information with INEC.

Third, USAID programs strengthen Nigerian civil society's capacity to monitor the elections. Local partners are preparing to field over 3,000 domestic observers for the 2019 electoral process. These

observers are trained in conducting parallel vote tabulations, or PVTs, using a systematic methodology that independently measures official voting results. When PVTs confirm official election results, they can increase confidence in the electoral process.

Our programs also work with Nigerian major political parties to become more representative and responsive to their citizens and to increase their oversight of government programs.

USAID is also funding an international election observation mission to provide impartial observation of the electoral process, enhance the credibility of the elections, and to support the peaceful transition of power. In addition, this mission will highlight the need for inclusivity so that women, youth, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, and other marginalized groups have full access to participate in the electoral process.

And as you have heard me say, USAID's goal is to end the need for foreign assistance. Administrator Green has emphasized that it is our core belief that each country must lead its own development journey. And we are focused on ending the need for foreign assistance not because we wish to retreat from our friends but because but we believe in them.

USAID is committed to encouraging peaceful elections. The 2015 election was historic, as it marked for the first time in Nigeria's history that there was a peaceful transition of power to a non-incumbent party, an illustration of the country's commitment to democracy. Our interest is and always will be in the integrity of the electoral process and that it accurately reflects the will of the Nigerian people.

So thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Day follows:]

Statement of Ramsey Day
Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Africa
United States Agency for International Development
Before the
House Foreign Affairs Committee
on
DECEMBER 12, 2018

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, members of the Committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to testify before you today as the Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Africa at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). I would like to extend a special thank you to this Committee and your colleagues in Congress, whose long-time bipartisan commitment to the peoples of the African continent has provided the foundation for USAID programs and the springboard for their success. Whether meeting with you here in Washington or at USAID missions overseas, USAID staff always value the opportunity to discuss the Agency's work and demonstrate how our investments there are making a difference in people's lives.

Some Americans see only Africa's seemingly intractable problems, but I truly believe that Africa's future is bright. The investments and commitment of the American people to the people of Africa are paying off, and USAID has set its priorities to capitalize on the region's emerging opportunities. Under Administrator Green's leadership, USAID is focusing its resources, policy tools, and engagement in places where the conditions are right to establish and sustain progress.

U.S. assistance in Africa saves lives; spurs trade and investment, and advances peace and security.

Take the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for example. This program is a powerful expression of the compassion and generosity of the American people. In 2016, a PEPFAR assessment showed the first evidence of the epidemic becoming controlled in three key African countries: Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These same countries have also reduced new HIV infections by as much as 76 percent since the start of PEPFAR. With continued aggressive focus, analysis, and partner alignment, the U.S. Government is poised to help control the HIV epidemic in 10 African countries over the next four years. PEPFAR has provided 12.8 million men, women and children in sub-Saharan Africa with antiretroviral medicine, meaning they can now live long, healthy lives with HIV.

We are also seeing progress on The U.S. President's Malaria Initiative. In fact, this past January, during the 30th African Union Summit, Madagascar, The Gambia, Senegal and Zimbabwe were honored for reducing malaria cases by more than 20 percent from 2015 to 2016. PEPFAR and the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative together have significantly improved the health status of Africans, especially children. Under-five mortality rates in Africa dropped 50 percent between 2000 and 2015.

We work through PEPFAR and with all of our partners in the fight against these devastating diseases to empower communities and countries to gradually assume ownership of their own healthcare challenges. That means incentivizing reforms, strengthening in-country capacity. We are helping prepare a generation to claim their rightful leadership roles, propelling them on their journey to self-reliance.

USAID's generosity extends beyond development. The United States is also the world's leading humanitarian donor. USAID is providing humanitarian assistance across the continent, including in Nigeria, South Sudan, and Somalia, where conflict and instability are fueling food insecurity and displacement. USAID disaster response experts have been deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to help respond to the current Ebola crisis there and we continue to support Ebola preparedness efforts in neighboring countries. And even as USAID mobilizes the best of American generosity to feed hungry people and provide lifesaving aid, we also work to prepare vulnerable populations against future shocks and equip countries with the tools they will need to feed themselves.

In a country like South Sudan, which has been embroiled in conflict for the past 5 years, I saw firsthand that USAID assistance is literally saving the lives of women, men, and children, providing clean water, basic health care, and emergency food to people across the country. I visited South Sudan this past May and was incredibly inspired by what USAID is doing to assist the people and uplift the country. From life-saving food and nutrition assistance for infants on the brink of starvation, to a youth center where young people learn computer skills and access the Internet, television and radio, to a traditional authorities court that helps resolve disputes and break cycles of violence, USAID is making an impact.

USAID also looks to the opportunities presented by trade and international investments – they are among the fastest ways for Africa to boost its economic growth, which is in the interest of the U.S. We advance enterprise-driven solutions to unlock the continent's growing markets. We work closely with the private sector to identify and resolve the binding constraints to investment. We believe that by leveling the playing field for free, fair, transparent investment, African nations can increasingly tap the trillions of dollars in private-sector resources needed to advance the continent's development and ultimately eliminate the need for unsustainable foreign-backed loans.

One area where we are using a market approach -- or private sector engagement -- is the power sector, an area where we greatly appreciate Chairman Royce's leadership with the enactment of the Electrify Africa Act. Nearly two out of three people in sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to electricity, which limits access to quality health care, education, and economic opportunities for more than 600 million people.

Power Africa, a whole-of-government effort with the Departments of Commerce, Energy, and others, but led by USAID, employs a partnership approach to engage U.S. Government agencies, international donors and finance institutions, host-country counterparts, and the private sector, to level the playing field and encourage investments in electricity infrastructure.

Power Africa, along with more than 160 public- and private-sector partners, about half of which are U.S. companies, seeks to add 30,000 megawatts and 60 million connections of electricity in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. Partnering in this way has leveraged billions of dollars in additional financing critical for development of the sector.

To date, Power Africa has helped 119 projects, comprising over 9,500 megawatts, reach financial close. Power Africa has helped add 12.5 million new electrical connections, which means more than 57 million people have access to electricity who did not have access prior to the initiative's launch.

Additionally, through Power Africa's investment in Beyond the Grid, USAID is helping to accelerate off-grid electricity access, focusing on two strategic priorities – household solar and micro-grids – to add 25-30 million new connections by 2030, in support of achieving Power Africa's overall goal.

Another facet of our work seeks to enhance the ability of African businesses to supply the U.S. market.

In Madagascar, where 80 percent of the world's vanilla is sourced, USAID partnered with Baltimore-based McCormick and Company and the National Cooperative Business Association to counter the corruption degrading the quality of vanilla exports. The result is better wages for farmers in Madagascar and direct access to high-quality products for American businesses.

In addition, USAID's Trade and Investment Hubs in East, West, and Southern Africa help to transform African economies and deepen the U.S.-Africa trade and investment relationship. They work on the ground to reduce regional trade barriers, deepen regional economic integration and promote trade and investment under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, legislation that this committee championed. The Trade and Investment Hubs have directly leveraged \$1.3 billion in African exports under AGOA.

The Trade and Investment Hubs attract investment and leverage private-sector partnerships with businesses ranging from micro-enterprises to multinational corporations.

Since 2010, the Trade and Investment Hubs have created 46,000 African jobs. Many of these jobs are held by women who tend to invest job-related income into their families and communities. The Trade and Investment Hubs have also assisted 2,300 private enterprises and non-governmental organizations working on food security.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, growth in agriculture has been associated with reductions in extreme poverty. The Global Food Security Act continues to demonstrate the U.S.'s commitment to ending global poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. Thanks to your strong support, the Feed the Future initiative has made an incredible impact.

In countries like Ethiopia and Ghana, Feed the Future investments have improved agricultural productivity, boosted harvests, and connected farmers to markets. For example, in Ethiopia, poverty dropped by more than 12 percent in Feed the Future target regions between 2013 and 2015.

Our work in Feed the Future focus countries in Africa reduced child stunting by an average of 32 percent between 2012 and 2017 in the regions where we work. Stunting occurs when a child is subjected to chronic malnutrition early in their lives. By reducing stunting, children's growth is not limited by impaired brain development, lower IQ, weakened immune systems, and greater risk of serious diseases.

Feed the Future is helping governments in our partner countries create better policies and systems for food security and to ultimately help them move away from vulnerability to self-reliance. In Africa, Feed the Future partner countries have increased their domestic investments in agriculture by 25 percent, a rate four times that of African countries as a whole and representing an additional \$719 million per year.

And it's not just a handful of individual countries that are seeing the positive impact USG assistance brings. United States assistance has had a transformative impact across sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2000 and 2015, the percentage of Africans living in extreme poverty declined from 57 to 41 percent.

However, we cannot talk about a successful economic future for African countries without addressing peace and security. USAID works with our African partners to address the underlying factors that allow transnational organized crime, violent extremism, and internal conflict to flourish. Central to these efforts is citizen-responsive democratic governance. According to the latest survey of African citizens, democracy is the preferred form of government. A 2016 study by USAID shows that there has been an unprecedented wave of social and political protest across Africa, with citizens voicing their demands for services, accountability, and citizen-responsive democratic governance. While we have witnessed recent declines in political rights and civil liberties in some countries, the long term trend points to the fact that more than half of all Africans today live in functioning democracies that are demonstrably freer than the regimes that previously dominated the continent.

The United States helps advance democracy, human rights and good governance in Africa by promoting the rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms, credible and legitimate election processes, a politically active civil society, and accountable and participatory governments. Working in partnership with African governments and civil society in countries as diverse as Kenya, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, our support strengthens governance institutions and protects the democratic gains that have been made across the continent. I believe that democracy, human rights, and governance underpins all other development programming, and this is a key priority for USAID.

USAID is also combating the threat of wildlife trafficking in countries across sub-Saharan Africa. Wildlife trafficking is a major threat to biodiversity. The value of wildlife and wildlife products, and the minimal risk of punishment for poaching or illicit trade, have attracted the involvement of transnational criminal organizations. Illicit wildlife is one of the largest black markets in the world, worth tens of billions of dollars.

Through more than 65 projects in 25 countries, USAID and its partners are making it more difficult for people to poach, move and sell wildlife products across borders. This helps secure our natural resources and fight the criminal networks that threaten security and the rule of law, and undermine development progress.

In southeast Angola, USAID funded comprehensive management plans for the newly created Luengue-Luiana and Mavina National Parks. The plans will bring jobs to the 12,000 people in the area, and improve the management of more than 6.8 million hectares of important habitat—an area larger than West Virginia.

Supporting and protecting these resources also protects local communities' ability to raise their own food, and make their own income – key elements of global prosperity and self-reliance.

Our focus is on helping countries on their journey to self-reliance. USAID's goal is ending the need for foreign assistance. As Administrator Green has said, it's our core belief that each country must lead its own development journey. We are focused on ending the need for foreign assistance not because we wish to retreat from our friends, but because we believe in them.

If a country is willing to take on the difficult journey to self-reliance, we want to walk alongside them on that journey. At USAID, we are looking towards the day when we transition to a new kind of relationship that moves beyond traditional assistance. An enduring relationship, in which countries move from recipients of aid to partners to fellow donors.

We tailor our programs, and the partnerships we forge, to address each country's unique journey to self-reliance, and to build their capacity to manage their own development.

Administrator Green has set a clear path forward for the Agency, and we are excited to advance his priorities. The dedicated staff in the Bureau for Africa gladly continues in USAID's tradition of supporting African partner countries on their development journey to progress beyond assistance.

On a personal note, I am honored to be here, deeply committed to USAID's goals and the integrated role that it plays with the Department of State and the Department of Defense in advancing U.S. policy and national security objectives.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Day.

Let me begin by asking—I know that, in July, the U.K. and USAID signed an agreement, an MOU, or added to the MOU, to increase the amount of money, I think it is \$60 million over 6 years that we anticipate; \$34 million since 2014.

And I am wondering if you could maybe break out even further how that money is being used. You have given us, I think, a little taste of that, both of you. But, specifically, is it going into ballot security, ensuring that the integrity of the process is protected?

And, secondly, let me ask you, if I could, about the clergy, Christian, and the Muslim imams and the other leaders. Are they being mobilized to send those same messages about, to prevent and mitigate electoral violence, the whole idea of vote and shun any kind of violent attacks?

I mean, if there is a crescendo, I would think such words and actions by the two major faith groups of people there, it could have, I think, a very good, calming effect. And I know you have thought of that, so if you could speak to that.

And the election monitors. How many people are we talking about? Are they coming from Europe? Are they coming from the EU? Are they coming from here too? You know, total deployment anticipation? Where will they go? Or is that to be decided as we get closer?

I know, because I chaired the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly, that election monitoring is critical to ensuring that ballots are counted right, that people don't vote twice—all the problems that could plague an election. And then, when a verdict is given, if it is a positive one, based on the evidence, it further legitimizes the outcome.

So if you could delve further into that election-observation side of it as well.

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As you noted, we have a tremendous partnership with DFID, and all of our programs are, of course, in support of the three kind of objective areas that Assistant Secretary Nagy mentioned.

Much of that is technical support to INEC. So we have, ultimately, three partners: The International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, as well as IFES, the International Federation for Electoral Support. So the technical support to INEC is through IFES. And then the International Republican Institute supports political party strengthening, encouraging responsive platforms to the citizens.

And then we have a robust program with civil society organizations working on activities, everything from get-out-the-vote campaigns, to the PVTs, voter education. And then, of course, there are major issues about misinformation all throughout Nigeria, and so a lot of our civil society partners will work on many of those issues as well.

In terms of the election observation mission, there are kind of three primary components to that. There is the local observers, the local monitors, which are generally Nigerian. And that is by far the largest component of this, roughly around 3,000 observers. And they will be in, I believe it is 775 or 774 polling stations all around the country.

The international observers come from all around the world at the invitation of IRI and NDI. Generally, about 40 members will be in that delegation, and they will be distributed all around the country, roughly around 12 states. They are in consultation with INEC and amongst themselves to determine where they will actually be deployed, but we can get you information about where they ultimately are decided upon. I don't believe those decisions have been made yet, but we can certainly check on that.

And then we also have an Embassy observer commission from the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, where there will about 30 or 40 staffers that will also go out into the country as well.

So it is a robust observation mission. And you are absolutely right, it is critical.

Mr. SMITH. In terms of access to media, it is very often the case where there is a state-run media, but especially where opposition candidates can't get their views out. Is that presenting any problems? It is not the day of election that matters only; it is everything that precedes it.

Mr. DAY. You are absolutely correct. Our electoral support program has been going since the previous election. So it is important to know that these programs didn't start just a couple of months ago; they have been going on for months.

Now, some of the technical items will be coming together pretty soon. When we talk about the printing of manuals and the actual ballots that IFES is also advising INEC on, those, of course, come together in the last several months prior to the election. But the political party support, the civil society support has been going on for years.

Mr. SMITH. There were reports in The Vanguard that the accounts of leading opposition candidate Governor Peter Obi have been frozen by the government. There have been reports by Premium Times that the top Presidential challenger's sons' apartment was raided in Abuja.

Furthermore, we have received a report and a copy of a memo by a Nigerian Embassy targeting a Nigerian human rights lawyer for testifying before this committee.

Is the U.S. concerned of repression against opponents by the Nigerian Government? And what are we doing to ensure that Nigeria does not violate the rights of citizens who have those contrary views?

Ambassador NAGY. Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are absolutely concerned with those activities and those reports.

And I would like to just make a general comment. When I went to Nigeria, one of the things I was specifically looking for was the activities of our Embassy, how engaged they were in this whole process, how closely they were following the elections. And I have to tell you, of all the Embassies I have seen during my career, I have never seen one as hyperactive and as actively involved in following these events day to day.

Ambassador Symington deserves commendations for marshaling the resources for sending his officers everywhere in Nigeria, for maintaining an ongoing active engagement, especially with the Middle Belt violence, with dialogue on all side with the imams,

with the pastors, with the various churches, with the groups, with the Nigerian Government.

While I was there, as I mentioned, I was there just for a couple of days, but he set up sessions with me for the leaders of both political parties, for the electoral commission, and then with a whole group of civil society who would be following the elections.

So, personally, I was so impressed that our mission is so engaged to pursue exactly these types of things. Wherever there are human rights violations, they will complain about it, they will take it to the people involved.

While I was there, the Osun state run-off had gone on, which had not gone off very well because there are reports of security forces intimidating the voters. And we went to the Foreign Ministry. Ambassador Symington met that right on, talked about it. I just have to say that I have been impressed with the activity that that mission has displayed.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that.

And final question. The higher the visibility, I think, shown by other governments toward this election, the better. I am wondering if there is any—and maybe you mentioned it, Mr. Day, but—African Union top leaders who might be traveling, including observers on election day. And perhaps Secretary Pompeo could consider going to send a message that there be a free and fair, transparent, and violence-free election.

Mr. DAY. Thank you. I have not seen the makeup of the international observation mission yet. I don't know that the invitations have been sent out. But we can certainly check, and we will keep you posted.

Ambassador NAGY. And, of course, Mr. Chairman, I don't know the Secretary's travel schedule, but I will be happy to pass that on.

Mr. SMITH. Please do. I think it would send a very clear and a very positive message.

Ambassador NAGY. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Bass?

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Nigeria's election commission received generally positive reviews of its administration of the 2015 elections. Were there areas where further improvements in election administration were needed? And if so, have they been addressed?

Several groups involved in monitoring the pre-election environment, including IRI and NDI, have identified challenges that could potentially undermine the credibility of upcoming elections, including delays in finalizing the legal framework for elections. President Buhari recently refused to sign into law revisions to the Electoral Act. How might that affect the upcoming election?

Mr. DAY. Thank you, Congresswoman.

In terms of kind of the progress that INEC has made, you know, as the Assistant Secretary mentioned, he and I have both met with Chairman Yabuku in the last several months. And I think our impressions—I certainly can't speak for the Ambassador, but my own impressions were that there is significant capability there and there is significant political will, which I think is absolutely critical to the success of these elections and any elections.

Ms. BASS. Uh-huh.

Mr. DAY. You know, there certainly are significant challenges. One of the items that I think we have been certainly encouraged at, in kind of watching INEC over the last several years, is that they have been responsive to recommendations.

For example, there was an issue in 2015 that continues to be an issue in some of the gubernatorial issues that we saw in Ekiti and Osun about voter privacy. And we have made those recommendations known to INEC, and we have noticed that they are changing the configurations of some of the rooms. As well as they have banned cell phones in the voting booths, so you can't take a picture and then go prove to others that you have voted in the proper way.

Ms. BASS. Uh-huh.

Mr. DAY. And so they have been responsive, and that is certainly an encouraging sign.

That said, there are still tremendous both mechanistic challenges as well as administrative challenges and budgetary challenges as well. So still challenges remain, without question.

Ms. BASS. You know, I wonder how you ban cell phones. Do you search people before they go—you know, so is it just something that they encourage people not to have cell phones? You don't have to answer that.

You mentioned a couple of the violence prevention programs, and I wanted to know if you can give a little more detail. Like, what is the Vote Not Fight and the Stop Violence Against Women campaign? Because I believe you said we are supporting the programs. I just wondered, what do the programs do?

Mr. DAY. We can get you more details on the actual programmatic activities of those. So we will submit those to the record.

Ms. BASS. So I also wanted to know how they are dealing with hate speech, and are there any groups monitoring hate speech during the campaign period?

I think it is kind of important for us to look at the issue of hate speech in other countries, because we could probably learn from them, since hate speech is a problem before our elections too, especially considering before the midterm we had four acts of domestic terrorism right before our election. Maybe there is something that we could learn from our countries on hate speech.

Ambassador NAGY. Yes, the Embassy considers hate speech a very important issue, and they are monitoring it actively and will challenge it where it comes up.

Ms. BASS. What do they do?

Ambassador NAGY. In addition to the—they do it with the radio. They do it with press reports. They also do it with the amount of—we have a considerable number of local employees at the Embassy who follow events around the country. In addition to Embassy Abuja, of course, we have Consulate Lagos that also does that. And as with any other Embassy, we get a considerable amount of reporting from the larger community, from local organizations.

Ms. BASS. So you are describing—will you respond to the hate speech?

Ambassador NAGY. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Ms. BASS. Okay.

Ambassador NAGY. Publicly with media letters, with going to the Nigerian Government, with actually going to the local government.

Ms. BASS. And the hate speech is not coming from the government though.

Ambassador NAGY. No.

Ms. BASS. That was a question. It is not.

Ambassador NAGY. No.

Ms. BASS. It is coming from the political parties?

Ambassador NAGY. However, to be fair, I mean, we will see where it comes from, because in Nigerian elections sometimes it will come from local governments—

Ms. BASS. Uh-huh.

Ambassador NAGY [continuing]. Not necessarily the national party structure, but from nefarious angles around the country.

Ms. BASS. And so we denounce it? We make a—

Ambassador NAGY. Absolutely.

Ms. BASS [continuing]. Statement denouncing it?

Ambassador NAGY. Absolutely.

Ms. BASS. Is that what they do as well?

Ambassador NAGY. Absolutely they will denounce it.

Ms. BASS. Maybe we could learn. This man went through an awful lot.

I am speaking about your election. You had to deal with that.

Ambassador NAGY. Representative Bass, may I also talk—you asked a question about the failure of the President to sign the new electoral law.

Ms. BASS. Yes.

Ambassador NAGY. The civil societies were very disappointed in that. The President mentioned that doing it this close to the elections might disrupt the elections. I am not giving that credibility or noncredibility; I am just telling you what he said.

The good news is that the electoral commission has been acting as if the new law has actually come into effect. So our Embassy's analysis is that not signing the law is not going to deleteriously affect the elections. So it will not have a negative effect on the election. It would have been nice if it had been signed.

Ms. BASS. Right. Right.

So what are your greatest concerns with respect to the upcoming elections?

Ambassador NAGY. I believe that the greatest concern is violence, number one. Number two is the use of security forces for one side or the other.

Ms. BASS. Uh-huh.

Ambassador NAGY. Not allowing voters to express their desire. As I mentioned in the first—

Ms. BASS. But do you think, though, that the infrastructure for the election is okay? I understand what you are just describing, but in terms of it being a credible election, assuming that you don't have that—

Ambassador NAGY. We believe the infrastructure is fine. It is the human actors; if there is going to be any problem, it is going to come from that side.

I mean, I have followed Nigerian election since 1993. There are always some angles which are out of what we would consider the

norm. The 2015 ones were considerably better than previous ones. Everybody is saying that, at a minimum, they would expect this round of elections to meet the standard set by 2015.

Ms. BASS. Uh-huh.

Ambassador NAGY. One of the considerations we need to think about is that in 2015 it was not as competitive as it is this year, because in 2015 there was the belief that there was such a negative reaction to President Jonathan that now President Buhari would win.

This time, when I was there—and I talked to a large number of people—there is absolutely no certainty. As we have seen, there have been defections from one party to the other, back to the other party, back again. And I think we can expect that to continue going into the electoral period.

Ms. BASS. So how would you describe that donors are coordinating their efforts to help Nigeria facilitate a free election?

And I am wondering about our support as well. Do we have enough support to NED, National Endowment for Democracy, that then supports NDI and IRI?

Mr. DAY. There is significant coordination at the grassroots level, of course, between the various partners of USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy.

In terms of supports to them, this is the largest electoral support program that USAID has on the continent for 2018. So it is—

Ms. BASS. For 2019?

Mr. DAY. For 2019. Excuse me. So this is a robust effort. And it has been going on—as I mentioned to the chairman, it has been going on for quite some time. So it is not just something that has just come up in the last few questions.

Ms. BASS. How do you compare it to what we are doing in DRC, which we talked about yesterday?

Mr. DAY. Depending on how you measure it, this is—

Ms. BASS. I mean, meaning our support.

Mr. DAY. In terms of our support? Depending on how you measure it, whether it is the size of the observation mission, the number of local observers, et cetera, or funding levels, it is comparable, but I do believe that the Nigeria support program is larger.

Ambassador NAGY. Because, Representative Bass, in Nigeria, we are talking about, I think, 85 million voters.

Ms. BASS. Yeah.

Ambassador NAGY. I mean, my gosh.

Ms. BASS. I know. But I just think of the—

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah. Wow.

Ms. BASS [continuing]. Instability in DRC. You know what I mean?

Ambassador NAGY. And you saw the news last night from DRC and the destruction of the voting machines and—

Ms. BASS. Yes. Not a good sign.

Ambassador, final question. I want to know what your reaction is to a major security partner using the words of our Commander in Chief to endorse violence against unarmed civilians. Do you know what I am talking about?

Ambassador NAGY. No, ma'am.

Ms. BASS. The statements that were made about the caravans coming over the border. Essentially, the President was saying that, if people threw rocks, then he would consider that like, you know, a gun and that our military could fire back. And then there was a direct response in Nigeria to that which was basically cosigning that.

And so, you know, the question is if you are concerned that such rhetoric will make it even harder to get our security partners to exercise restraint when dealing with unarmed civilians.

Ambassador NAGY. I am certain that that was not the intention.

Ms. BASS. No, I know it is not the intention. No, no, no. Of course it wasn't the intention.

Ambassador NAGY. Yes. I—

Ms. BASS. My question and concern is, when you are out there around the world and when comments or tweets or whatever are made in the United States, then how does that impact you trying to do your work or our Embassies trying to do their work calling for restraint?

Ambassador NAGY. Well, the Embassies will just not use that type of expressions or will say not to tie that to the two sides.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Again, I just want to make sure you are understanding me. I would not expect anybody—

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah.

Ms. BASS [continuing]. In the State Department to use that kind of rhetoric. My question is, when people hear that rhetoric being used here, that was clearly used as an excuse in Nigeria to then harm civilians.

Ambassador NAGY. Right. Our Embassies would in no way support that. Absolutely.

Ms. BASS. I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Garrett?

Mr. GARRETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am going to go off on a tangent for a moment, because it is my understanding—and this is totally unrelated—that Turkey has now bombed targets inside of Iraq. And I want them to know that somebody in this country is watching. Like, today, as we sit here, it is happening. And that is just intolerable. And I hope that they take notice of the fact that we have taken notice.

Back on the subject matter at hand, has any provision been made to ensure ballot access for displaced peoples in the upcoming election?

Ambassador NAGY. Representative, that is one of the things—I mentioned that was one of our concerns, was the ability to have elections amongst all the displaced people. So, yes, absolutely, that is a concern, and that is an issue that the Embassy is following.

Mr. GARRETT. But I believe your exact reference was to IDPs, correct?

Ambassador NAGY. Both—

Mr. GARRETT. And we are on the same team here, right? I mean, I think—

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah.

Mr. GARRETT [continuing]. I want to advance the same agenda you do, which is free and fair elections in Nigeria—

Ambassador NAGY. Absolutely.

Mr. GARRETT [continuing]. And a Nigeria where people are tolerant of one another.

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah.

Mr. GARRETT. So I am grateful that the answer is yes. But do you have any idea what percentage of the people who are refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean right now are Nigerian or from the Lake Chad region?

Ambassador NAGY. I am sorry, I don't. We can check on that and get back to you.

Mr. GARRETT. I don't want you to have to do that. But would you concede—and, again, we are on the same team here.

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah.

Mr. GARRETT. Would you concede that there is a significant number of displaced people from the Lake Chad region in Nigeria who are moving north and even trying to—

Ambassador NAGY. I would suspect yes.

Mr. GARRETT. And so these people, essentially—and, again, I am on your team here.

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah.

Mr. GARRETT. It is by training as a prosecutor, so I want you to know that this is not adversarial. But these people aren't going to have an opportunity to vote, right?

Ambassador NAGY. No.

Mr. GARRETT. They are voiceless. And if we want to create a Nigeria where people can live side by side regardless of ethnicity or religious differences, these people won't have a say in shaping a future if they ever choose to return, right? I mean, it is—

Ambassador NAGY. That would be problematic. I did want to say that, with some countries—and I am not sure if Nigeria is one of them—that they will allow voting at their Embassies for their expatriate populations. But like I said, I am not sure what the rules are in Nigeria.

Mr. GARRETT. Well, that might be something that I would ask you guys to look into, right? I think that is a great idea. We know, you know, the ports of debarkation of a lot of these refugees. And even if a handful of displaced Nigerians who were not internally displaced were able to go to an Embassy or consulate and vote, that would be awesome, right?

Do we know of any specific efforts by Fulani militants or Boko Haram to disrupt the election and the electoral process?

Ambassador NAGY. No specific information, but I am sure that that would be an aspirational goal of theirs.

Mr. GARRETT. Now I am going to walk the dog backwards a little bit. Do we know any nation-states or entities contained within definable nation-states that might be responsible for funding of Fulani militants or Boko Haram?

Ambassador NAGY. No. I don't.

Mr. GARRETT. Okay.

Ambassador NAGY. I absolutely do not.

Mr. GARRETT. Yeah. And, again, that is probably out beyond your purview, but you get it. I mean, all this stuff sort of lays on top of—

Ambassador NAGY. Not nation-states. Absolutely not.

Mr. GARRETT. So there are no Middle Eastern countries that you can speak to that we can track funding Boko Haram or Fulani?

Ambassador NAGY. No.

Mr. GARRETT. Okay.

And digging a little bit deeper down into stuff that matters to the election but not directly election-related, has Boko Haram pledged allegiance to ISIS?

Ambassador NAGY. There are two parts of Boko Haram. They have both pledged allegiance to ISIS, but when Boko Haram broke into two in 2016, ISIS went with the break-off unit that we now call ISIS West Africa. The original Boko Haram has been kind of pushed aside by ISIS, and they are the least effective of the two branches.

Mr. GARRETT. Right. And I want to tell you that I ask questions sometimes that I do know the answer to, not to make you look bad but to make sure that somewhere there is a video record of the fact that somebody in this country is tracking this.

And, tragically, the word "ISIS" tends to move U.S. foreign policy. And when you have things like Boko Haram acting as a bad actor, not just in interfering with elections but interfering with life itself, that if we can tag them with their ISIS allies, maybe the global community will feel more compelled to act.

Which dovetails with my next question, which is rather informal. But I believe it was about 4 years ago that President and Mrs. Obama took part in the Bring Back Our Girls hashtag campaign, right?

Ambassador NAGY. Uh-huh.

Mr. GARRETT. But this last April would have been 4 years. What happened to it? And I know it is not within your official responsibility. What is going on there?

Ambassador NAGY. I am not sure how many of the girls have been retrieved.

Do you know?

Mr. DAY. It is my understanding, but through just reading reports, that the majority, if not all, of those girls have been returned through various means. However, there have been other kidnappings. And so there are numerous issues throughout the northeast and Middle Belt, of course.

Mr. GARRETT. One of us is right, and one of us is wrong. And I am not saying this because I think you are wrong. I could be wrong. Right into the camera. But my understanding is that about half the girls have still not been retrieved. And I guess the global community has sort of moved on to the next big hashtag.

That is in no way, shape, or form to impugn anyone. I thank Mrs. and President Obama for their activity to that end. But I won't forget about these human beings who are living, in my understanding, in many cases in forced marriages, who have been subject to violence to include rape.

And, again, the reason sometimes I ask questions I know the answer to is if somebody hopefully can metaphorically weaponize this video to say the United States is still freaking watching and that we won't tolerate regimes that tolerate entities that do this to their subjects, to human beings.

Ambassador NAGY. Also, Representative, may I add, there was a second kidnapping from Dapchi. And all of those girls have been returned, with the sole exception of one.

Mr. GARRETT. Super. Thank you. And, again, I am on the same team as you guys. I am trying to work within my responsibilities in this branch of government while you do yours from yours.

The other thing that strikes me as sort of tragic is there is a debate in the global news community on the number of people killed in the herder-farmer violence and the Fulani militant movements, Boko Haram movements, and there is a debate as to the proportion of those killed. So I believe someone affiliated with the administration said 60,000 Christians have been killed by Muslim radicals.

Now, I know that the good guys and the bad guys weaponize information for propaganda purposes. Do we have a number on the people who have been killed? And do you have any idea as to the proportion of who has been killed? I know that both sides have lost people, and every human life has value. But what sort of numbers do you have on that?

Ambassador NAGY. The best number I can give you, this year, up to now, has been about 1,300 directly in the herder-farmer violence. I do not have the proportion breakout as to who was who.

Mr. GARRETT. I am sorry. This year, 1,500?

Ambassador NAGY. Thirteen hundred this year.

Mr. GARRETT. Okay.

Ambassador NAGY. But that is just the Middle Belt violence. That is not anything related to Boko Haram or anything like that. That is just that. And, again, those numbers, I also understand, are very problematic.

Mr. GARRETT. Right.

Ambassador NAGY. Because—

Mr. GARRETT. Well, I am asking you for your best guess, knowing that at least nobody that I can find knows the real answer.

Ambassador NAGY. Yeah. Exactly. That is the best I can give you. And like I said, we can get a breakout as to who is who. But my view of—

Mr. GARRETT. Has the violence and bloodshed disproportionately affected the Christians in the south? Because my understanding is it has, but there are literally arguments from AFP and other legitimate news outlets saying we don't really know who the dead people are. Has it been disproportionately levied against one community by another, to your knowledge?

Ambassador NAGY. To my knowledge, I am not certain. I would guess that disproportionately there have been more farmers killed than herders.

Mr. GARRETT. Okay.

Ambassador NAGY. That is from my experience.

Mr. GARRETT. Again, I am not—this isn't—

Ambassador NAGY. That is my experience, not my direct knowledge.

Mr. GARRETT. Right. Sure.

Mr. Day, anything to flesh that out?

And I know there are no wrong answers. I am trying to gather information, having already tried to gather information, and bounce what I have heard off of what you guys got.

Mr. DAY. My impressions are the same.

Mr. GARRETT. Okay.

When we shape policy—and, again, the vast bulk of American foreign policy is going to come out of the executive branch, rightly so. But when we shape policy, we have to shape it with the right information, right?

And this is not me finger-wagging at you guys.

And I get frustrated because this body, good Members like Ms. Bass, who has left now, and Mr. Smith, if we can't get the right information, we can't formulate the right legislative policy to support the executive implementation of foreign policy.

So we could do this all day long—and, again, I am on your team. This is not adversarial. We could do this all day long in Nigeria. We can work our way up into South Sudan and Sudan, and then we can move up across the Sinai into Syria and Iraq and go over to Burma, and it is just—so the ignorance is literally, if you live in Nigeria or any number of places, deadly. So, just venting.

I thank you guys immensely.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Garrett.

Let me just ask, if I could, Mr. Day, in the area of conflict mitigation and the money that we spend there, you know, I have counted up the number of tolerance projects, 18 of them, 4 building bridges, a number of engaging communities in peace in Nigeria, building bridges between farmers and herders.

And I am wondering if you could speak to the success of that. Again, how well-included are clergy, both Muslim and Christian, in those efforts? We know that in South Sudan the clergy is extraordinarily involved with conflict resolution and building bridges. And if you could just speak to that here.

And what is the impact this might have on this election? I mean, these have been going on for a while. It is a tremendous initiative. Is it having results? If you could speak to it.

I noticed one of the costs was \$4.8 million from 2012 to 2018. So, you know, you didn't just start doing it; it has been ongoing.

But if you could speak to its success and the impact on the election too.

Mr. DAY. Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, in certain states in Nigeria, particularly Borno state in northeast Nigeria, it is extremely difficult for USAID programs to operate. And so many of our programs in northeast Nigeria are going to be based on humanitarian assistance. There are acute humanitarian assistance needs, particularly in Borno state.

We have more activity, of course, in the Middle Belt. And we have seen, where we do have conflict mitigation and antiviolenence programs, we have seen a decrease in violence. So that has been encouraging.

So gaining access to the areas in which we need to be working is critical. In some places it is just very difficult to get in there.

We continue to see farmer-herder conflict. The timing of these elections are during a time in which we very well may see additional herder-farmer conflict because of the movement. So it is something that we are continuing to watch and monitor.

There is also intercommunal fighting as well. So that is another issue that is something that is incredibly important.

But we have a wide range of programs for dispute resolution and alternative dispute mechanisms. But where we have been able to operate, we have seen significant success.

Mr. SMITH. Generally speaking, are the clergy and imams being brought in for a united front, particularly in the final month of the election, the final 2 weeks to the election?

Ambassador NAGY. No, absolutely. And I wanted to point—there have been just a couple of extraordinary examples. For example, the imam who saved hundreds of Christian villagers when the village was attacked by Muslim Fulani.

The Embassy keeps just a constant outreach. Again, I would just like to underline that that is one mission that stays constantly on the ground. They are sending the Ambassador, the Deputy Chief of Mission to the area, and they engage with everybody, and especially motivating the clergy of both sides, because they are the key, they are the ones that people respect.

Mr. SMITH. Let me just ask very briefly, yesterday, the President signed the 5-year extension of PEPFAR. And for the record, I am the prime sponsor of that bill and was very happy to do so. I was here when Henry Hyde sat in this chair and led the effort to do the original President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which was, I think, an extraordinary global health initiative unmatched by anything that this country has ever done.

Sixteen million people have been saved, 2 million children who otherwise would have been HIV positive from their moms. That has not happened. And then the prevention side, the ARVs, for those with the positive test, have been extraordinarily effective. It even makes them less likely to transmit the disease because it reduces the viral loads.

But one of the things that this committee has done, we have had also hearings on Chemonics and, you know, the supply chain and lateness. And I am wondering if you—Nigeria is one of the few countries where the U.S. Government manages the entire health system supply chain for ARVs. And I am wondering how that is working in Nigeria.

We have been concerned in the past that if your ARV is late—or any other medicine, frankly, but that too—your chances of being sicker escalate.

Mr. DAY. Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the programs we have for combating HIV and AIDS in Nigeria are operating as planned. However—and I haven't been made aware of any major issues in Nigeria—it still remains a highly complex environment in which to operate. But we will look into any major issues, and we will certainly get back to you.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. I appreciate that.

Having just been with a good friend and colleague, Karen Bass, in South Sudan—we were just in Ethiopia, as well, on another trip—one of the things that was so appalling in South Sudan was the theft of food and medicine, but particularly food, intended for the most disadvantaged. And it was government troops and others that took it. And I know you know very well, both of you, how disappointing that is. And a lot of mechanisms have been put into

place to try to mitigate that thievery, which takes the food literally out of the hands of starving people.

Let me just ask, finally, if you could, maybe speak to, again, the launch today, some of the highlights, if you would like. Or you could get back to us for the record, you know. And, without objection, we will include, you know, major portions, if not the whole thing, into this record. Because I think, you know, today is a momentous day, when you make such a huge announcement.

And, Mr. Garrett, do you have anything else?

And would you like to speak to it or just submit it for the record?

Ambassador NAGY. I would like to go back to you for the record later. The one thing I did say this morning is that we had an engagement session afterwards, and I said that it is the type of policy that I have been waiting for for a long time. But I will be very happy to get back with the details, sir.

Mr. SMITH. That would be great.

I do have one final question. I was the House sponsor of the Global Magnitsky Act. We ended up putting it into the NDAA.

The actual idea came from a bill I did in 2004 called the Belarus Democracy Act, holding people to account by visa denial and disallowing their ability to be involved with financial transactions. That then became the Magnitsky Act. And Dr. Bill Browder, who has testified here several times before this committee, really championed that so effectively and then said it ought to be global. It is global.

And I am wondering, especially with this election coming up, if the word could at least be out there that if you commit violence—and that goes before or after any election—that you are not going to get a visa to come here, we are going to have names, and you are not going to be able to do business here. And our hope would be that the EU—the way they do it with the Belarus Democracy Act.

I have met with Lukashenko a number of times, the man that runs Belarus, and he is none too pleased with that act because he and so many people were affected—it is now waived because they have let out the political prisoners and there has been some reform. But it seems to me, until there is a penalty phase, there are some people who will never get it.

And so hopefully you will have that as something to try to, again, chill any violence that might be committed, atrocities and the like, against people in this upcoming election.

Ambassador NAGY. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, yes, that is one of our points in discussing these elections, is that we will not hesitate to apply that to those committing human rights violation, interfering with the democratic process, and a list of other things. And that is a very, very effective tool. Thank you very much, sir.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. And thank you for your willingness to use it, because if it is, obviously, a penalty that stays on the shelf and collects dust, then it is not only disrespected, it is laughed at. So my hope would be that there would be a robust use of it.

Again, thank you. We are looking forward to seeing you next year. And without any—Mr. Garrett, anything?

This hearing is adjourned, and I thank you.

[Whereupon, at 3:07 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X



MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128**

**Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), Chairman**

December 6, 2018

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov>):

DATE: Thursday, December 13, 2018
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
SUBJECT: Nigeria at a Crossroads: The Upcoming Elections
WITNESSES: The Honorable Tibor P. Nagy, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of African Affairs
U.S. Department of State

Mr. Ramsey Day
Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Africa
U.S. Agency for International Development

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.



COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations HEARING

Day Thursday Date December 13, 2018 Room 2172

Starting Time 2:00pm Ending Time 3:07pm

Recesses (___ to ___) (___ to ___)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Smith

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session

Electronically Recorded (taped)

Executive (closed) Session

Stenographic Record

Televised

TITLE OF HEARING:

Nigeria at a Crossroads: The Upcoming Elections

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ranking Member Bass, Rep. Garrett

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes No

(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

-Chairman Smith: Letter on human rights abuses in Nigeria

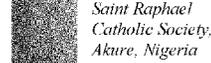
TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED _____


Subcommittee Staff Associate

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,
A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTER-
NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



December 13, 2018

The Honorable Christopher Smith
Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Karen Bass
Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
2059 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Smith and Bass:

We write to you today to raise concerns over the deepening crisis involving the safety and security of Nigeria's Christian community, and urge this Committee to recommend the U.S. Department of State consider classifying Nigeria as a "Country of Particular Concern" for religious freedom.

This week, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that several countries, along with terror groups like Boko Haram, would be designated as "entities or countries of particular concerns" under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. This is a positive and welcomed development. Boko Haram has terrorized Nigeria for far too long, and has left in its wake a trail of destruction and tears.

The rising tension in Nigeria's Middle Belt region has seen daily conflict with 24-hour curfews often imposed in an attempt to stem the violence. Between January and March of 2018, more than 1,078 people died from violence in eight different states across the country – a number that has only continued to grow. This year alone, more than double the amount of Nigerians have been killed than in 2017 and since 2009 more than 20,000 Nigerians have been murdered.

A recent *Wall Street Journal* op-ed titled, "Boko Haram Put a Bounty on My Head," by an Anglican priest characterized the situation clearly:

"Nigerian Christianity is under siege from radical Islam. The country's importance to Africa, and to Christianity as a whole, makes this siege particularly noteworthy... [Parishioners] hear powerful voices dismiss this as an ethnic clash, but they understand it is a strategic scorched-earth war, a jihad against Christianity."

The recent trip taken by Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of African Affairs Tibor Nagy, Jr. to Nigeria where he met with the country's leaders was a crucial opportunity to share the United States' concerns. His trip has opened a door to demanding from the Nigerian Government a strategy to end the conflict, and protect Christians.

In our view, the U.S. Government should seriously consider Nigeria for inclusion as a “Country of Particular Concern” due to the ongoing violence, persecution, intimidation, and assault on Christians and other people of faith. It is disappointing that Nigeria was not included in the Secretary’s announcement this week.

We urge you to use the levers and powers of American ideals and diplomacy to urge a solution to the crisis affecting Christians and demand that Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari move immediately to protect Nigerians, particularly Christians.

Sincerely,

Jon Schweppe, Director of Government Affairs
American Principles Project
Arlington, VA

Thompson Ayodele, Director
Initiative for Public Policy Analysis
Lagos, Nigeria

Adebayo Temidayo, General Secretary
Saint Raphael Catholic Society
Akure, Nigeria

CC:

U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo
Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for the Bureau of African Affairs, Tibor Nagy, Jr.
Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, Sam Brownback
Senior Coordinator on Boko Haram, Ambassador Dan W. Mozena
Members of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights,
and International Organizations