

**STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS AND RELATED
PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2019**

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 3:20 p.m., in room SD-192, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Lindsey Graham (Chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Graham, Leahy, Durbin, Hyde-Smith, Shaheen, Lankford, Coons, Van Hollen, and Merkley.

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GREEN, ADMINISTRATOR

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM

Senator GRAHAM. The subcommittee will come to order. Sorry we were late. We were at the lunch at the State Department for President Macron and we are Republicans, we should know how to run things. We are an hour and a half late. So we got to up our game.

Senator Leahy is on the way. He said go ahead and start. Thank you for coming, Mark.

We have a new Senator, Senator Hyde-Smith, on the subcommittee. I want to welcome her.

The 2019 budget proposal from the administration will not make it. We are going to kill it and replace it with something that makes more sense.

If you send a rescission package over here from the House that guts the State Department, we are going to kill that, too. So I just want everybody who knows about this account and cares about this account, that Senator Leahy and my colleagues on the subcommittee, Republican, Democrat, are going to protect this account. We will make it better. We will make it more efficient.

We are always in the market for trying to make things better. But it's 1 percent of our overall spending, foreign assistance in general. General Mattis said it better than anybody: if you cut the State Department's operational budget you need to buy me more ammo. He said that when he was head of CENTCOM.

So to the administration, we want to work with you where we can, but I reject the whole attitude that is being displayed about developmental assistance. Being a military pretty hawkish guy,

you can never hold and build without a presence of the private sector and a follow-up force that the leader of it will always be the State Department.

The USAID budget, we can always make it better. Really, I appreciate Mark's leadership over the years. Anything you can do to make the USAID portion of the State Department more efficient, please let us know.

But I want to let you know that all those who work on your behalf and all the people and the foreign nationals who help us, we appreciate it, and that you and those under your leadership serve in very dangerous places and I think some of your biggest fans come from the military itself.

So, with that, I'll go through the comparison, the 2018 budget. It's about a 30 percent cut, 26 percent over the 2018 enacted level, about 30 percent over the fiscal year 2017. I'm sure, Mark, you just got your marching orders.

But with that, do you want to say anything, Senator Durbin? Senator Leahy is on the way. When he comes he can make an opening statement. So I'll turn it over to Administrator Green.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GREEN

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Senator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ranking Member Leahy and Members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to summarize my written testimony, which you have.

I would like to begin by welcoming the nomination of Director Pompeo. We have had an opportunity to initially discuss how development and diplomacy go hand in hand, and I look forward to working with him closely should he be confirmed.

In the meantime, as you alluded to, Mr. Chairman, at USAID we have urgent work to do. From unprecedented humanitarian challenges, to exciting development opportunities, I believe our work has never been more important.

That's certainly been a clear take-away from my travels over these last 8 months. I have just returned from Peru and the Summit of the Americas. While there, Acting Secretary Sullivan and I had an opportunity to meet with courageous pro-democracy activists from Cuba. They shared with us that this is a critical moment in Cuba's history and urged us to support seeds of true liberty and democracy, not only for Cuba, but for Venezuela and elsewhere.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, much of the recent Summit focused on Venezuela. The Vice President and I announced \$16 million for our humanitarian response to the flight of Venezuelans from the despotic Maduro regime.

The displacement of families is unprecedented in Latin American history. What makes the tragedy even more painful is that it is entirely man-made. It is caused by the regime's continued mismanagement and corruption.

And similar forces are causing humanitarian crisis in nearly every corner of the globe. Near famines continue to rage in Nigeria, Yemen, Syria and Somalia. Again, all man-made. As I know you agree, in order to fully respond to these crises we must address their underlying causes.

Just as we lead the world in humanitarian assistance we should also lead in our commitment to democracy, human rights, and responsive governance.

Our fiscal year 2019 request includes funding for our democracy and governance programs in Venezuela that support civil society, a democratically elected legislature and the free flow of information.

Last month I addressed the U.N. Security Council on the humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I urged the Kabila Government to hold credible and inclusive elections by the end of the year. And I'm deeply concerned, as I know you are, over the reports of horrific human rights abuses in Burma's Northern Rakhine State. I will soon be traveling to Burma and Bangladesh myself to assess the situation firsthand.

Members of the subcommittee, I've had a chance to discuss with many of you the rising negative influence of Russia and China. Many of you have noted a disturbing global trend toward repression of basic liberties.

In response, our fiscal year 2019 request includes targeted investments in Europe, and in Eurasia that support democratic institutions and civil society while countering the Kremlin's influence. We also recognize that China's investments in developing countries are rarely aimed at actually helping those countries achieve economic independence. Often they come with strings attached. We must offer these countries a better choice. We should offer to help them on their journey to self-reliance, not burden them with unsustainable indebtedness.

Members of the subcommittee, the fiscal year 2019 request for USAID's fully and partially managed accounts is approximately \$16.8 billion. This represents \$1.3 billion more than requested last year, including \$1 billion for humanitarian assistance.

We acknowledge that this request will not provide enough resources to meet every humanitarian need or seize every development opportunity. Indeed, no budget in modern times has. This request attempts to balance fiscal needs at home with our leadership role on the world stage and our work has never been more important or dangerous.

In April alone, we have seen humanitarian workers killed in South Sudan and Yemen, simply for trying to ease the suffering that pervades both countries. We are committed to taking every step to extend the reach and effectiveness of our taxpayer resources and to protect our staff and partners.

We are also committed to working closely with this subcommittee to ensure that your ideas are reflected in our agency's transformation plan.

Finally, I would like to say a word about recent published reports of sexual abuse and misconduct by aid workers. Like you, I am deeply troubled by the allegations. Needless to say, exploitation, sexual exploitation violates everything that we stand for as an agency. I have met with our partner organizations to make absolutely clear that USAID will not tolerate sexual harassment or misconduct of any kind. We have taken numerous other steps and we will do whatever else it is that we need to do. And I assure you that this is an issue that I am personally tracking.

With your support and guidance, we will ensure that USAID remains the world's premiere international development agency. And with that, thank you for the opportunity to appear and to testify and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.
[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GREEN

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss USAID's fiscal year 2019 budget request.

The fiscal year 2019 request for USAID fully and partially managed accounts is approximately \$16.8 billion. This represents \$1.3 billion more than requested last year. It requests \$6.7 billion for global health and \$5.1 billion for economic support and development. In terms of USAID's humanitarian assistance, it requests over \$1 billion more than last fiscal year's request. In total, it requests approximately \$3.6 billion for International Disaster Assistance.

MEETING PRIORITIES

Since I arrived at USAID in August, I had a chance to meet with many of you. We discussed many of the challenges in the world today, and you shared with me your priorities. Since then, we've been hard at work at USAID to advance those shared priorities and position the Agency for its crucial role in U.S. foreign policy.

Our work has been informed by many of the travels I have undertaken, meeting our teams and partners around the world. I have traveled to Ethiopia, Sudan, and South Sudan, where I saw USAID leading the world's response to the continuing humanitarian need in East Africa. In Ethiopia, I also saw our efforts to foster resilience to help that country withstand the future crises that very likely will come.

I have traveled to Mexico and India, where I met with our partners from both the public and private sectors. It was there that I saw glimpses of an exciting future for international development, where programs are more private-enterprise driven and our role is increasingly to use our skills, experience, and innovative know-how to help countries chart their own journeys to self-reliance and prosperity.

In Iraq and Syria, I met with some of our military leaders. Together, we toured Raqqa, and I learned more about USAID's joint effort with the State Department and Defense Department to restore essential services to communities newly liberated from ISIS. In Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Germany, I met with international partners, including a senior leader from Israel's Foreign Ministry, to share some of the new innovations in programing and policy we are applying to our work in development and humanitarian assistance, and to discuss areas of future cooperation. I also took the opportunity to encourage our fellow donors to take on a greater role in helping to meet the world's growing needs.

In Germany, I met with our Mission Directors from the Middle East and Africa—as well as their counterparts from the State Department and DoD—to discuss how we can strengthen interagency cooperation. At the Munich Security Conference, I heard Vitali Klitschko, the Mayor of Kiev, speak about Ukraine's fight for freedom and democracy. I was reminded that we, too, were once a young nation inspired by the hope of a democratic future, but also confronted by numerous challenges as we strived to build our republic. As I listened to Klitschko, I was immensely proud of the work that USAID does to support people, all around the world, like him and the heads of the Euromaidan movement who aspire to freedom and citizen-responsive governance.

In February, we announced USAID's new Mission Statement. It includes an explicit commitment to strengthening democratic governance abroad—a priority that I know from our discussions you share. This commitment has informed USAID's work from our creation; and under my leadership, it will continue to do so. Our fiscal year 2019 request includes targeted investments in Europe and Eurasia that will support strong, democratic institutions and vibrant civil society, while countering the Kremlin's influence in the region. In Venezuela, we will support those who are working for a free and prosperous future. We have requested robust funding for our democracy and governance programs in Venezuela that support civil society, the democratically elected legislature, and a free flow of information there. And in fiscal year 2019, we have requested funds to explore and implement more effective approaches to promoting ethnic and religious tolerance in Burma, including in Rakhine and Kachin States, and to help meet the needs of minorities in Iraq ravaged by ISIS, including those targeted because of their faith.

I have also met with people from across these United States. I have been to New York, Texas, Delaware, Iowa, and even my home State of Wisconsin. I have met with the Chamber of Commerce Foundation and spoken with business leaders, CEOs of American firms. All of them are eager to find ways to align with and enhance USAID's work, as well as invest in the rapidly growing markets that are most often the targets of our programing. I have met with researchers from American universities who are helping us tackle devastating challenges like the Fall Armyworm in Africa. I have also met with American implementing partners—contractors and grantees, faith-based organizations and for-profits—to explore ways we can improve our operations.

On top of all that, I have been “traveling” internally, leading a broad agency Transformation effort through which we are re-examining nearly every aspect of our operations and structures in order to make sure we are as effective, efficient, and accountable to American taxpayers as possible.

OVERVIEW: A FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE BUDGET FOR CHALLENGING TIMES

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members, this is the first time I have had the honor of presenting the President's budget. However, it is not the first time we have met with your offices to review the needs we see in the humanitarian and development sectors. We have also reached out to you and your staff to discuss our growing work in conflict, post-conflict, and otherwise fragile zones. I note that this request would fund important efforts, such as the urgent work we are undertaking to help communities newly-liberated from ISIS's evil reign by restoring essential services to places like Raqqa.

We acknowledge that this budget request will not provide enough resources for us to meet every humanitarian need or seize every international development opportunity. In truth, no Federal budget in recent memory would be large enough to do so, and we would not suggest it wise to try to do so. We come to you with a budget request that aims to balance fiscal responsibility here at home with our leadership role and national security imperatives on the world stage.

OPTIMIZING RESOURCES AND RESULTS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members, we are committed to taking every prudent step to extend the reach and effectiveness of our taxpayer resources. We are working closely with the Department of State to encourage other donor nations and recipient countries themselves to increase their own contributions to the overall humanitarian and development effort. This includes efforts at strengthening domestic resource mobilization programs so that partners can more effectively finance their own development in the future. We are rethinking and streamlining our humanitarian assistance. We are taking steps to ensure our programs and procedures are more private enterprise-friendly so we can better leverage our resources, bring new ideas and partners to our work, and increase opportunities for American businesses. Through procurement reform, we are striving to become more flexible, and responsive and innovative in meeting humanitarian and development objectives, so our implementing partners can extend and improve the reach of USAID-supported initiatives. We are also striving to more closely align our resources with USG strategic needs, and are focused on measurement and evaluation to support that alignment. Finally, we are using the opportunity of our Transformation to ensure that our programs are of the highest quality and fully reflective of America's key foreign policy priorities.

ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO DO MORE

As the President has said, “America first does not mean America alone.” We can and do embrace opportunities to partner with others and we expect others to do their part in tackling challenges that affect us all. Working with the State Department, we are using every opportunity to push our donor partners to do more in helping to mobilize resources—including increasing their financial contributions.

To put things in context, in 2016, the U.S. provided nearly \$34.5 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA), almost one quarter of all ODA. In terms of humanitarian assistance, the U.S. continues to be the largest single donor. Our leadership role as a donor is a point of pride. It is part of our national character—our readiness to stand with other countries and peoples when crisis strikes. But leadership also means leading others to do more and setting the expectation that other donors will do their fair share to advance shared priorities, while also expecting improved performance by implementing partners, including the U.N., to maximize the benefit for recipients of assistance.

We've recently seen a number of key allies increase their ODA contributions. For example, the Republic of Korea has contributed significant amounts to shared priorities like Power Africa, global health security, and humanitarian assistance to Syria. It has increased its aid budget by 30 percent, a feat recently matched by the United Kingdom. Germany has become one of the world's leading humanitarian assistance donors, providing a record \$2 billion in 2017 to assist people from places like Syria, Yemen, the Sahel, and Burma. And India, which not so long ago was itself a major recipient of traditional assistance like food aid, is boosting its contributions to key initiatives. Under Prime Minister Modi, India has become the fifth-largest donor to development and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

DOMESTIC RESOURCE-MOBILIZATION

Another way in which we are working to make our resources go further is through our support for domestic resource-mobilization ("DRM") projects. Through DRM, we help strengthen the capacity of our partner nations to finance and lead their own development programs. The budget requests \$75 million for strategically-managed DRM assistance. From the date of my nomination hearing, and nearly every day since, I have said I believe the purpose of foreign assistance must be ending its need to exist. Our assistance should be designed to empower people, communities, and government leaders on their journey to self-reliance and prosperity. These initiatives can help our partners to cut down on fraud, corruption, and abuse. They will also ensure that our investments produce sustainable results; they will ensure that our partners' ability to respond to the needs of their citizens will not fade away as our formal government support recedes gradually.

Our DRM assistance in the nation of Georgia is a good example of what can be achieved. USAID provided DRM assistance of \$12 million to Georgia over 5 years. The result was an additional \$4 billion in tax revenue from 2005 to 2011. By 2017, revenue had increased by 800 percent. As part of this effort, we helped streamline Georgia's customs process and make it easier for new businesses to register. We supported efforts that created an electronic tax-filing system and fixed crippling flaws in the Georgian tax refund process. We also took steps to help them cut down on corruption—encouraging "zero tolerance" policies, harsher punishments for violators, and new training programs.

Georgia's investment in their own development also grew. Pension and social-welfare spending increased by 700 percent. Education investment grew by 1,700 percent. Their government even introduced a crop-insurance program. In other words, through our DRM assistance, we helped an important partner accelerate its own journey to self-reliance and prosperity.

STRENGTHENING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

In Yemen, 17.8 million people—the largest number in the world—are facing severe food insecurity. In January alone, USAID's partner the World Food Programme provided critical food assistance to more than 6.8 million people. In February, after sustained high-level diplomatic engagement by the Department of State, USAID-funded mobile cranes became operational in Yemen's biggest and most critical port. These cranes are cutting the average time it takes to unload ships by as much as half, allowing food, medicine, and other necessities to reach people in need more quickly.

Providing humanitarian assistance in places like Yemen is central to our Agency's Mission, and a clear display of American generosity. It is also dangerous work, as witnessed by the January terrorist attack on Save the Children's offices in Afghanistan, in which four of our partners were brutally murdered, or the 28 aid workers who were killed in South Sudan during 2017. Our commitment to this work is reflected by the inclusion of our international disaster assistance to help alleviate humanitarian crises in our new Mission Statement. For years, the responsibilities of the two offices leading the bulk of USAID's humanitarian assistance—Food for Peace and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)—have sharply increased. While they have often coordinated, they have worked in parallel, with separate budgets, separate oversight, and different strategies. When you would visit a camp in the field, they would be together on the ground, serving the same community shoulder-to-shoulder—one providing food, and the other tarps and blankets, often using the same partners.

Before I arrived at USAID, the Agency commissioned an assessment of our humanitarian programming, conducted by an outside firm, but led by career staff, which concluded, not surprisingly, there were better ways to ensure the nimble, effective, and efficient delivery of our humanitarian assistance. The request before you proposes to fund all of USAID's humanitarian assistance from one account, and

imagines a day when USAID's humanitarian food and non-food functions are consolidated into a single entity within the Agency. This will ensure a seamless blend of food and non-food humanitarian USAID assistance, better serving our foreign-policy interests and people in need. In the end, we will have a shared strategy, integrated programs, and joint monitoring-and-evaluation systems that will provide greater efficiency and accountability for the American people. As part of our effort to consolidate USAID's humanitarian functions, we will also consolidate our whole-of-Agency efforts to strengthen partner resilience for improved food security. This will help break the cycle of recurrent and protracted crises, and reduce our own future humanitarian liabilities.

STRENGTHENING OUR PRIVATE-SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Fulfilling our responsibility to taxpayers is about much more than asking other donors to increase their contributions, helping countries to finance their own development, or streamlining our humanitarian assistance. In our case, it also means strengthening private-sector engagement through true collaborations. At USAID, we are reaching beyond contracting and grant-making. We are exploring the possibilities for co-creating and co-financing programs, tools, and initiatives with private-sector partners. We're embracing the ingenuity and the entrepreneurship that private-enterprise offers, and harnessing the efficiencies and effectiveness that private-sector competition and market forces can unlock. And this is something private-enterprise is eager to do alongside us. Additionally, we will partner closely with the proposed new U.S. Development Finance Institution, which will only succeed through strong institutional linkages with USAID, to further these efforts with financing tools, and have a whole of government approach to private sector engagement.

For example, in February, I met with the CEO of a large multinational company, and he expressed his eagerness to work with us in countries like South Africa, which, in part because of our work, are becoming more suitable for American companies to invest. This firm and others are eager to invest corporate funds in USAID-led initiatives, as well as apply entrepreneurship and enterprise-driven techniques, such as impact investing and blended-finance mechanisms, to development challenges.

Another example is the new "Smart Communities Coalition" that we helped create alongside MasterCard to modernize assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons. Traditionally, when a displaced family first arrives at a camp or settlement, humanitarian workers do their best to see that they are immediately registered and provided modest food, water, and medical attention. Residents receive services from 20 or more different humanitarian aid groups, each of which uses their own unique method of tracking who received what service when. As you can imagine, this is a recipe for potential corruption and abuse.

Our partnership with the Smart Communities Coalition will transform this process for more than 600,000 people. Our implementing partners at the camps will harness the Internet and smart-card technology to do their jobs more efficiently, and at a lower cost. Displaced families will have better access to essential services, such as power. Just as important, in these "smart communities," we will be better able to track our assistance, decrease fraud and abuse, and provide services more quickly and cheaply. This is the power of private-enterprise making us better at meeting our core mission.

PROCUREMENT REFORM: ENCOURAGING NEW PARTNERS AND NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Yet another way in which we aim to make our precious funding go further is by using innovative procurement tools to increase competition among potential partners. In fiscal year 2017, around 60 percent of USAID funding went to just 25 organizations. We are exploring new ways to harness new partners and ideas, and lower the "cost" and barriers to entry for potential partners as they come forward. We are encouraging entrepreneurship and ingenuity in program design, building out technical expertise in areas such as small grants, and embracing approaches that allow us to move more quickly in crafting initiatives and considering submissions.

For example, last Fall, when the Vice President announced the U.S. Government's intent to support persecuted religious minorities and other communities in Iraq, USAID was able to move from "ideas to action" by using a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)—a tool you have supported that can reduce lead times, allowing us to launch a competitive and collaborative research and development process rapidly to solve a specific challenge. We immediately invited the public to submit their ideas for pilot projects that would support the resettlement of ethnic and religious minorities in their ancestral homes. Within 10 weeks, we reviewed more than 100 submissions, and invited those with the best ideas to join us at a co-creation workshop in

Baghdad earlier this month. Coming out of the workshop, we will fund the most promising ideas, and, if the pilots are successful, we will consider ways in which they can be scaled up.

As another example, last Fall, I announced the world's first Development Impact Bond (DIB) for maternal and child health—USAID's second overall DIB, and one of the world's largest. Under this new model, private capital funds the initial investment, and USAID pays if, and only if, the carefully defined development goal is achieved.

In this case, we are working to strengthen maternal and newborn healthcare facilities in Northern India. Our partners at the UBS Optimus Foundation are raising capital from private investors to finance improvements to over 400 private health facilities. Teams at these 400 facilities will help appropriately train staff, and make life-saving equipment and medicines available. Each facility will then undergo a rigorous review process to ensure it has met the appropriate accreditation standards. If the facilities meet those standards, USAID and our matching partner, Merck for Mothers, will pay the UBS Optimus Foundation. The DIB allows us to incentivize results, and lessen taxpayer risk.

I am also working to ensure that our partners operate with the highest level of integrity and accountability. Last month, I met with representatives from InterAction, the Professional Services Council, and United Nations agencies to make clear to our partners that USAID will not tolerate sexual harassment or misconduct of any kind. In addition, our Executive Diversity Council recently met to take up this important topic. Coming out of that meeting, I directed the Agency's senior leadership team to take mandatory sexual harassment training, and asked them to communicate to our partners the seriousness with which we take this issue. I also formed a new Action Alliance for Preventing Sexual Misconduct, chaired by General Counsel David Moore, which will undertake a thorough review of our existing policies and procedures to identify and close any potential gaps, while strengthening accountability and compliance, in consultation with our external partners.

TRANSFORMATION: BUILDING TOMORROW'S USAID

Being good stewards of taxpayer resources cannot be a one-time thing, or merely a set of steps aimed at a single budget. We need to undertake experience-informed, innovation-driven reforms to optimize our structures and procedures and maximize our effectiveness.

We are now working to roll out Agency-wide projects through the Transformation process that will help to institutionalize some of these ideas. This effort began in response to an Executive order from the President, but, even if that had never happened, I would still have argued for the reforms we are planning. Over the last 8 months, I and others at USAID have met with Congressional Committees and personal offices nearly 40 times to discuss our plans. Your input, and that of your staff, has been invaluable to our process, and I am deeply appreciative of your engagement and support.

Transformation includes many of the proposals I have shared today, including procurement reform, as well as streamlining our humanitarian assistance programming. It also includes working with the administration on cross-cutting government reorganization proposals, such as the new U.S. Development Finance Institution and the consolidation of small grants functions and expertise into USAID.

To prepare for our work on Transformation, on March 9, Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan wrote to inform me that USAID "should initiate its own hiring processes to accommodate the Agency's staffing needs." In line with that directive, we have officially lifted our hiring freeze. Moving forward, we will use our Hiring and Reassignment Review Board to seek to align our workforce-planning with the administration's priorities and our plans under the Transformation.

Another example of efforts we are undertaking through the Transformation are the metrics that we are developing. If the goal of our development assistance is to help partner countries create the commitment and capacity needed to take on their own development journey, we should focus our assistance on interventions that will best help them get there. We are working on metrics that will serve as mileposts to help us understand where our partners are going, and what role we might play in their journey.

These metrics are still a work in progress, and we will continue to consult with you as we develop them, but, if we are successful, they will make our programming more effective, and our foreign policy priorities better informed. The same is true for all of the work that is taking place through the Transformation effort. All of this is in service of helping our partners help themselves. All of it is to provide the proverbial "hand-up." And all of it points towards a world where foreign assistance is

no longer needed—a world where people are self-reliant, prosperous, and capable of crafting their own bright future.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the subcommittee, I believe we are shaping an Agency that is capable of leveraging our influence, authority, and available resources to advance U.S. interests, transform the way we provide humanitarian and development assistance, and, alongside the rest of the world, help meet the daunting challenges we all see today. With your support and guidance, we will ensure USAID remains the world's premier international development Agency and continues the important work we do, each day, to protect America's future security and prosperity. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today, and I welcome your questions.

CLERK'S NOTE: The USAID Inspector General's statement was requested by the subcommittee for inclusion in the hearing.

[The statement follows:]



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. Agency for International Development

USAID's Actions on Top Management Challenges and OIG's Continuing Oversight

**Statement of the Honorable Ann Calvaresi Barr
Before the United States Senate Committee on
Appropriations, Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations, and Related Programs**

For Release on Delivery. Expected at 10:00 a.m. EDT, Monday, April 23, 2018

Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Leahy, and Members of the Subcommittee:

In fiscal year 2017, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) managed nearly \$30 billion in budgetary resources to provide humanitarian assistance and advance economic growth and democracy around the world. This statement for the record provides a high-level overview of the top management challenges facing USAID that we identified and reported on, and actions it has taken to address these challenges (attachment I), as well as related oversight work that we are currently conducting.

TOP MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES CONFRONTING USAID

OIG identified and reported on four strategic challenges confronting USAID in fiscal year 2018. These longstanding challenges are based on our audits and investigations—which we have reoriented in recent years to get at the crosscutting, systemic causes underlying observed issues—and our experience examining foreign assistance programs.

- Reconciling Interagency Priorities and Functions To More Efficiently and Effectively Advance International Development.** Implementing foreign assistance programs, projects, and operations that involve multiple U.S. Government agencies has presented significant challenges for USAID in achieving its core development mission. In particular, coordination with the Department of State has complicated USAID's project planning and execution. This was the case with the implementation of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act (EPPA) of 2009, which authorized \$7.5 billion over 5 years for civilian assistance. Before USAID identified its long-term development goals for EPPA, the Secretary of State announced a series of infrastructure projects for USAID, the implementation of which ultimately took precedence over other development priorities, such as health, education, and economic growth. Despite broad interagency guidance on the Department of State's role in politically sensitive environments, USAID employees are sometimes unclear how best to manage additional layers of review, nimbly respond to changing priorities, address both U.S. diplomatic and development goals, and balance short- and long-term priorities.

In the global health sector—where USAID coordinates with other U.S. Government agencies like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—the Agency has not fully capitalized on its experience with Ebola and other major outbreaks to establish a framework for mobilizing a coordinated response that would help secure needed resources and reduce delays in responding to these health crises.

- Strengthening Country Ownership and Local Capacity To Promote Sustainability of U.S.-Funded Development.** To sustain development after U.S. assistance ends, USAID calls for investing in communities that have a stake in continuing activities and services, building the skills of local stakeholders, and ensuring public- or private-sector participation and financial backing. However, sustaining benefits beyond a project's completion presents many challenges, including

weak corporate governance in some local implementers. For example, USAID completed significant components of the Gomal Zam Multipurpose Dam in Pakistan, but after it was completed and handed over to the Government of Pakistan in June 2013, Pakistani Government officials reported that the operation of the hydroelectric component was sporadic. In October 2016, system failures and damages altogether shut down electricity generation, which has yet to be restored.

- **Improving Program Planning and Monitoring.** Successful foreign assistance programs rely on rigorous planning and monitoring to help ensure programs have the resources needed to achieve objectives and identify and address fraud and other risks that prevent programs from achieving desired results. However, putting these concepts into practice continues to be a challenge for USAID, particularly in overseas contingency operations and nonpermissive environments. For example, USAID did not define or measure performance to assess overall progress in meeting key U.S. objectives for the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF)—despite U.S. contributions totaling \$2.9 billion. Instead, the Agency’s reported results were limited to one activity between 2013 and 2015, which accounted for just 9 percent of U.S. ARTF contributions. This lack of accountability was due in large part to the absence of a monitoring and evaluation plan that aligned activities and performance indicators with the mission’s strategy and objectives.
- **Meeting Governmentwide Financial and Information Management and Security Requirements.** OIG continues to report significant deficiencies in USAID’s internal control over financial reporting, as well as other challenges in meeting strict Federal financial and information management requirements. New financial management and reporting requirements under the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act and the Grants Oversight and New Efficiency Act could further challenge USAID.

USAID has taken multiple actions in response to our observations and recommendations, including working with the Department of State and other U.S. Government agencies to reconcile priorities, developing indicators to track local ownership for sustained results, and updating its planning and monitoring policy. It has also reported strengthening award conditions to build in more controls.

ONGOING OVERSIGHT OF USAID PROGRAMS AND REFORMS

We continue to focus our work on several key assistance areas where more attention is needed to reconcile interagency priorities and functions, strengthen country ownership and capacity, and improve program planning and monitoring. This is the case, for example, with USAID’s humanitarian assistance and global health programs, its engagement with public international organizations such as U.N. agencies, and its efforts to mitigate risks related to terrorism and sexual exploitation and abuse.

- USAID's humanitarian assistance operations have been the target of large-scale, widespread criminal activity where vendors swapped vital beneficiary supplies with lesser goods, and implementers billed USAID for goods and services that were not delivered to beneficiaries. Given the extent of the criminal activity we uncovered, we launched an audit to assess implementers' internal controls and USAID's monitoring.
- In June 2017, we issued an advisory to USAID on vulnerabilities in the global health supply chain that exposed it to criminal exploitation. We are assessing USAID's efforts to mitigate risks in supply chain activities and effectively manage commodities and supply chains, while continuing to closely monitor activities to curb fraud, waste, and abuse.
- USAID relies on public international organizations to implement development and humanitarian assistance activities on its behalf in many settings, but particularly in nonpermissive, long-term crisis environments such as Syria and Iraq. Because our past work has shown that the Agency has taken a hands-off approach to overseeing awards to public international organizations, we are reviewing USAID's efforts to assess risks before awarding funds to these organizations, and its policies, processes, and guidance for managing these awards once made.
- Our work has uncovered diversions of USAID supplies and funds by militant and terrorist groups, as well as failures to disclose connections with such groups. We will continue to push for stronger controls and work aggressively to deter and root out activities that divert U.S. assistance.
- We are looking into recent disclosures from implementers related to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in USAID programs. We are keeping a close eye on this issue and fully pursuing related matters that come to our attention, while continuing to aggressively educate stakeholders on indicators of abuse.

We have also focused attention on USAID's reform efforts, which may have significant implications for how well the Agency is able to execute its mission going forward. Last September, USAID submitted an independent reform plan to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), as well as a joint redesign plan with the Department of State. Our recent point-in-time review of USAID and Department of State redesign efforts highlighted uncertainty about the direction and end goals of the joint effort. It further noted that disagreement and limited transparency on decisions related to the consolidation of functions and services raised questions about what had been achieved. USAID staff also voiced concerns related to the Agency's approach for developing its independent reform plan, including a lack of transparency and inclusivity in the process.

Implementation of the joint reform plan appears to have been set aside for the time being. However, USAID continues to refine its independent plan and is moving into what it has described as a "transformation" phase, which aims to operationalize the objectives in its independent reform plan. As part of our oversight, we plan to assess USAID's ongoing reform and related efforts.

As Congress evaluates these plans, it may be productive to look back on key considerations we raised at the start of the process. Anticipating the challenges USAID would face in responding to OMB guidance calling on agencies to rethink their businesses models,¹ we issued an advisory that posed a number of questions for the Agency to consider as it developed its reform framework and plan (attachment 2). Many of these questions were associated with the top management challenges we identified. While reform efforts cannot be expected to fully address all the difficulties facing the Agency, they represent an important opportunity to make strides in responding to the most significant challenges.

The following table highlights some of the questions we posed as USAID undertook its reform efforts.

Area of Consideration	OIG Questions
Reconciling Interagency Priorities and Functions To More Efficiently and Effectively Advance International Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can USAID work with other U.S. agencies to outline and deliberate on the comparative advantages of doing similar work abroad? • What partnerships can USAID forge with other U.S. agencies to implement projects that are outside USAID's core development activities? • How can USAID further capitalize on shared agency support services, whether as a user or a provider?
Strengthening Country Ownership and Local Capacity To Promote Sustainability of U.S.-Funded Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sustainability and risk criteria could USAID use in determining whether to take on or continue with a development program? • What tools would allow USAID to identify and adjust programs that require a transition from a short-term to a long-term approach, particularly in complex, ongoing crises? • How can USAID identify and mitigate risks associated with local partners and with government-to-government funding?

¹ OMB guidance required certain executive branch departments and agencies to develop a comprehensive reform plan that includes an analytical framework that considers how to eliminate, restructure, or merge activities; increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness; and improve workforce management.

Area of Consideration	OIG Questions
Improving Program Planning and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="659 556 1221 709">• How can USAID facilitate dialogue between headquarters bureaus (regional and functional) and missions so that field program designs align with the Agency’s strategic priorities, and implementation remains on track? <li data-bbox="659 737 1221 890">• How can USAID identify and target sectors or functions, regions, countries, implementers, and missions that have the most difficulty providing reliable data or exhibit other egregious data weaknesses? <li data-bbox="659 917 1221 1071">• How can USAID collaborate with implementers and other donors to share information and lessons learned, provide guidance and support, and create incentives to help them effectively carry out risk management activities? <li data-bbox="659 1098 1221 1199">• How can USAID assess the likelihood and impact of fraud risks in sectoral, regional, and country programming and help mitigate those risks when designing projects?

In closing, I want to thank the Subcommittee for its interest in our work and views on the effectiveness and impact of USAID’s programs and operations. I equally appreciate Administrator Green’s support of our role and mandate—as evidenced by his message to USAID employees directing cooperation with our office, the Agency’s renewed focus on responsiveness to our recommendations, and its commitment to ensure effectiveness and accountability to the American taxpayer as a goal in its new strategic plan. I look forward to our continued constructive engagement.

I am happy to provide additional perspectives on the challenges USAID faces, our work going forward, and any other areas of interest that the Subcommittee may have regarding our oversight and effectiveness.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Senator LEAHY. Mr. Chairman, because of delays I will place my statement in the record. I join you in welcoming the Administrator.

I have to remember not to call him Congressman, but instead to call him Administrator Green. Both of us have known him a long time. I think it's great that he's leading the U.S. Agency for International Development. I think there's a lot that has to be done to improve the agency's budget request, but we will have further discussions on that topic shortly.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR PATRICK J. LEAHY

I join Chairman Graham in welcoming Administrator Green.

President Trump's fiscal year 2019 budget repeats most of the cuts in his budget request last year, which was widely criticized by military leaders, foreign policy experts, the international development and U.S. business communities, and was overwhelmingly rejected by the Congress.

The President's request for fiscal year 2019 is not the budget the United States needs to protect and promote our interests and influence abroad. Nor do I believe it provides Administrator Green with the resources he needs to effectively carry out USAID's mission.

In fact, this budget would erode decades of progress, including in increasing life expectancy and lifting people out of poverty in developing countries, and promoting democratic values and human rights around the world.

During the more than 40 years that I have served in this body, there have been times when our Government failed to defend the values and rights we stand for.

But I have also been encouraged by the many positive changes that our Government has had a key role in around the world, that have contributed to increasingly open societies, greater respect for human rights, and greater accountability and transparency in government.

Unfortunately, those positive trends have been eclipsed by a rise in authoritarianism. Freedom House's recent report notes that twice as many countries suffered declines in political rights and civil liberties last year than those that made gains. This is the twelfth consecutive year of decline in global freedom according to their report. We see it in the following:

- We see it in the rise of xenophobia in Europe;
- In President Erdogan's [AIR DOH ON's] power grab in Turkey;
- In President al-Sisi's crackdown on civil society and political opponents in Egypt;
- In President Putin's subversion of democracy and his foreign policies of aggression;
- In the jailing of political opponents in Venezuela and Cambodia;
- In the assassinations of journalists and activists in Mexico, Honduras, and many other countries; and
- In the expansion of China's influence far beyond its borders.

And what has been the U.S. response? Not a day passes without President Trump using social media to vilify the press, undermine the independence of our justice system, and slander his opponents.

While the Obama administration could have done more to counter this global trend, President Trump has actively encouraged it by repeatedly praising dictators and abdicating our country's traditional role as a leader in defense of democratic values, judicial independence, and free expression.

I hope this Committee will stay united, as it was in fiscal year 2018, in opposing a return to isolationism and the abandonment of our country's reputation as a global leader for democratic values. But we need support in the executive branch.

Administrator Green, you are being asked to justify a budget that falls far short of what is necessary to address the many challenges we face. USAID cannot do everything everywhere, but it must, at the very least, fight to sustain the progress we have made and to respond to new challenges and opportunities.

As someone who supports what you are trying to do under difficult circumstances, I look forward to hearing how USAID is working to ensure that the United States continues to set the example the world expects of us.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, thank you. Thank you very much, Mark, for coming. You are a great choice. I want to compliment the President for selecting you. I think you'll do a good job.

PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS

But the numbers don't lie. Compared to the fiscal year 2018 enacted levels, the fiscal year 2019 budget request cuts 36.2 percent from economic development assistance. Does that make sense to you?

Mr. GREEN. Well, I'll say, Mr. Chairman, that I know the President had to balance American—

Senator GRAHAM. That wasn't the question. Does that make sense to you having been involved in this arena for a very long time?

Mr. GREEN. Well, as I said, Mr. Chairman, this will not, and we don't pretend it will, meet every humanitarian need.

Senator GRAHAM. So we cut by 39.6 percent International Disaster Assistance. I think you just talked about more need. Twenty-three percent cut from the global health program. Seventeen point 3 percent cut from operating expenses.

Do you think you can make it more efficient? Do you think you can save money on the operating side?

Mr. GREEN. I certainly can.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you know where the 17.3 percent came from? Did anybody ask you, is this a good number on save?

Mr. GREEN. No, I was not asked.

Senator GRAHAM. So somebody made it up. Let's see. Complex Crisis Fund, which is vital for the needs of fragile states, we cut it 100 percent. We cut 5 percent the USAID's Inspector General's budget.

Regionally, cuts to Economic Development Assistance for East Asia and the Pacific, 49.9 percent. Listen to this one, Africa, 52.6 percent. Have things gotten better in Africa and I just missed it?

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman, there are great challenges in Africa.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. So I'm setting the foundation for that the people who did these cuts clearly don't know what they are talking about. They spent zero time looking at Africa. They are just making up numbers to balance the budget. And I support them a hundred percent on military funding increases, but I just want the subcommittee to know that, as a Republican, I believe that soft power, for lack of a better term, is the key to winning the war as much as hard power.

Mark, we are going to give you more money. It's going to be closer to last year's numbers and we expect you to do a good job with that money.

CHALLENGES USAID FACES

What is your biggest challenge as we go forward when you look at the world, can you give us some indication what you think the two or three biggest challenges are and how could this subcommittee help you meet those challenges?

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman, great question. I think in an overarching way, the most significant challenge that we face is the dis-

placement of communities and displacement of people around the world. Everywhere we look it seems from what's happening—

Senator GRAHAM. I have been told there are more displaced people than any time since World War II.

Mr. GREEN. That's what I understand. And in South America we now see with Venezuelan migrants the largest out-migration in Latin America history.

Our ability to reach out to those families where we have children being born in camps and settlements, provide them with basic nutrition, some semblance of education and civic education, to me that's a great challenge that we have to meet. If we fail to meet it I fear that 10 years from now and 20 years from now we will be seeing these challenges reoccur.

SYRIA

Senator GRAHAM. To hold Syria, somebody has to get in on the ground and make sure the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) doesn't come back, do you agree with that?

Mr. GREEN. Well, when you say, "somebody", so, as you know, Mr. Chairman, we are providing humanitarian assistance around the country and we have—

Senator GRAHAM. So to make sure that ISIS doesn't come back in the area that they used to occupy you are going to need not only security, you are going to need a police force and army, right? Or they will come back. Does that make sense to you?

Mr. GREEN. I do believe that—

Senator GRAHAM. The answer is yes. Okay.

Yes. But they can't do their job without people like you. So there are \$210 million that was pledged by our country to help reconstruct this area. That money has been taken off the table.

Tell the subcommittee, in your view, how important it is for people like yourself, the USAID component, to be present when you take an area that has been completely ravaged by radical Islam and you are trying to hold it, what are some of the functions that need to happen and should we be there on the ground?

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman, I was in Raqqa maybe 2 months ago and had a chance to see the defined work that we were doing there restoring essential services, clean water, basic electricity, some meds, some semblance of education and I know that our partners in the military, CENTCOM, believed that was important work to solidifying victory. We enjoyed the opportunity of doing the work because it was, we felt, important and the fact that our role was carefully defined was also important to me. So that's work that I saw on the ground.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, I just want to say that the Arab coalition, the Arab neighbors need to pay more, the world needs to do more. President Trump is right to ask them to do more financially and other countries to commit troops. If there's no presence, there's no substitute for us on the ground on the security side and on the development side.

So you are the right guy at the right time and I look forward to working with you and I appreciate you coming to the subcommittee.

Senator Leahy.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you very much. It is good to see you again, Administrator Green. I share many of the same concerns as Chairman Graham.

PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS

There is a glaring disconnect between this administration's policy documents and its budget. In your testimony you said that no budget can meet every need in the world, and nobody is going to disagree with that, but that is a false comparison.

This budget, if enacted, would degrade USAID's ability to carry out its mission. We see the growing spread of extremism, China's expanding influence, and the scale of human displacement and misery today.

There are also a number of countries, particularly fragile states, where USAID has a very small or no presence, while the State Department and DoD are making big investments.

Congress has restored funding from cuts the President proposed in fiscal year 2018. Furthermore, it is not a legitimate argument to say we cannot support foreign assistance because we have domestic needs here at home. Some ask how can we spend 20 percent or 30 percent of our budget on foreign aid. However, foreign assistance actually accounts for only a fraction of 1 percent of the Federal budget, as you know. It's not 20 or 30 percent.

And, if all goes to hell in a hand basket in any number of these countries, we are going to spend a great deal more as American taxpayers to try to put it back together. We have seen this in the Middle East. We have seen it in parts of Africa.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO BUDGET REQUEST

So let me ask you this: Are there changes you would recommend to the fiscal year 2019 budget request? As you begin to implement your reorganization plans, do you need changes to the 2019 budget request?

Mr. GREEN. We have been briefing the staff of this subcommittee, and others, on some of the changes that we are looking to make through the redesign process and the Members of the subcommittee have been more than helpful in feedback and offering ideas and suggestions. I think there are things that we can do.

For example, we are very interested in elevating the role of humanitarian assistance and we have talked to your staffs about that. Combining Food for Peace and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and elevating it to be led by an Associate Administrator. It is a way of ensuring that we have a strong hand, the interagency process. So that's certainly one thing.

Secondly, we are strong believers in our domestic resource mobilization work and that's something that Members of the subcommittee have been very supportive of. We believe it's crucial, as we help countries on their journey to self-reliance that, A, they have skin in the game. And, B, that we can help them build their own capacity in revenue collection and budgeting and the transparency that goes along with that.

That's certainly a change that we think would be helpful. But, to be honest, your staff has been very helpful to us in the process.

Senator LEAHY. We all agree with helping our partners become more self-reliant. But we also have a role.

LOCAL WORKS

We have also had many very talented USAID administrators who wanted to transform how the Agency does business, and USAID has a lot of bright, talented, and motivated people who continue to achieve good in the world. But you are also weighted down by bureaucracy that sometimes lumbers along working with large contractors and NGOs in ways that are costly and not sustainable, or working with governments that are corrupt and unaccountable.

I created Local Works to target funds in a sustainable way at the local level. I did so because despite a lot of rhetoric, it was not happening. Small NGOs and contractors could not effectively compete for USAID funds. How will your reorganization build upon Local Works?

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Senator. I'm a big fan of Local Works and the motivation and the philosophy behind it. Our 2017 funds, 60 percent went to the largest 25 contractors. We want to make sure that we continue to reach out, work with small partners, indigenous partners, and fresh partners. And so we are undertaking a procurement reform as part of the redesign effort.

But, most importantly, the motivations and work of Local Works will continue to be a key part of the way we approach our work. To me the journey towards self-reliance is building the capacity of our partners, not just governing partners, but civil society, NGOs, so they can eventually lead this journey themselves. And Local Works is certainly a key part of that. We think it's a good program and we want to enshrine its principles in our redesign effort.

DIOXIN REMEDIATION IN VIETNAM AND FAMILY PLANNING

Senator LEAHY. I also heard you looked into the Bien Hoa Airbase and the dioxin remediation project we are now embarking on. The Secretary of Defense agrees with this effort and he's worked hard to be supportive.

I'll close with one final question because time has run out. I'll put the rest of my questions in the record.

I heard that at a recent meeting at the United Nations, a senior USAID advisor for gender equality and women's empowerment, at an event talking about women's health and child mortality, she said the U.S. is a pro-life nation. Is that correct? What was the context of that statement?

Mr. GREEN. Senator—

Senator LEAHY. Because the administration is requesting \$302 million for USAID family planning programs in fiscal year 2019. That's a drop of 50 percent below the fiscal year 2018 Omnibus level. Is that what she meant, that we are going to reduce funding for family planning?

Mr. GREEN. First, Senator, I believe you are referencing a BuzzFeed article that I've heard about. I wasn't in the meeting. I understand that it was an off the record session. So I really can't comment on it.

What I can say is that USAID supports a wide range of voluntary family planning methods and the budget request does re-

quest \$302 million for such programs. And so, you know, in terms of actions speak louder than words, that's our approach.

Senator LEAHY. Actions speaking louder than words is a cut of 50 percent. Which action are you speaking of?

Mr. GREEN. Last year no money was requested for these programs and this year we have seen \$302 million requested.

And so we do support a wide range of family planning methods. We believe that voluntary family planning is an important part of maternal health and women's empowerment.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Durbin.

Senator DURBIN. Administrator Green, thanks for being here. I particularly want to thank the Chairman of the subcommittee. I want to make sure he hears this, because when I say something nice about him, I want him to be tuned in.

But I want to thank the Chairman of the subcommittee as well as the Ranking Member for basically saying we are not going to pay a lot of attention to the budget sent to us by the administration. We have a job to do. And we are going to do the best we can with the resources at our disposal.

And I thank you for being here. Because as I read your background and get to know a little bit more about you I can see why you're in this job and I'm glad you are.

VENEZUELA

So let me give you a challenge. Two or three weeks ago I was in Caracas, Venezuela for 4 days. Met with the President and spent the whole time trying to get an idea of what was happening in that country and it is a disaster. It is an economic disaster where the people of Venezuela stand in line, each one of them, each day, at ATM machines for an hour to withdraw the maximum amount of currency they can take out. The maximum amount of currency is equal to 20 cents. They need currency to ride the bus to their job back and forth. It is a disaster.

In addition to that, it is a public health disaster. They are now facing epidemics in diphtheria, measles and malaria. Malnutrition is everywhere. You can see it on the street and particularly in the spindly legs and arms of the children that are there.

From the governmental viewpoint it is awful. They are banning political parties and candidates and, unfortunately, determined to have a sham election on May 20.

What can we do in the United States to deal with this humanitarian crisis where we know a million or more streaming out through Colombia if they can.

Mr. GREEN. Senator, first, if I may, your remarks the other day on the floor, I thought, were very eloquent about the overlapping crises that we see facing the Venezuelan people and there are about 5,000 per day leaving the country. The system has entirely collapsed.

What we have been doing is to provide some humanitarian assistance for Venezuelans who have fled. So in Colombia and Brazil in particular. But this is a just a drop in the bucket of what needs to happen, needs to occur. I was at the Summit and listened to some of the Caribbean nations who are also now starting to feel the

effects, if you will, of the out-migration and it's going to overload their systems as well.

So we support civil society in Venezuela. The challenge, as you know, in trying to provide humanitarian assistance in the country is the opposition of the government itself to doing so.

So at this point, while we are able to provide assistance to those who have fled, and continue to support civil society, there are many challenges with being able to work there. But it is a crisis that is no longer Venezuela's alone. It is affecting the entire region and I agree with your prioritizing it. Very, very important.

WORLD BICYCLE RELIEF

Senator DURBIN. It is a dilemma. Let me ask you, are you familiar with a program known as World Bicycle Relief?

Mr. GREEN. I am not.

Senator DURBIN. I thought you might have run across it in your service in Africa. But it is sponsored by a company in Chicago and if you ever—

Mr. GREEN. Actually, I have heard of World Bicycle Relief, come to think of it.

Senator DURBIN. Well, this SRAM company, which is a leading American manufacturer of bicycles, has now distributed 400,000 bicycles to underdeveloped countries. And I visit this company and it just lights me up what they have been able to achieve.

And I'm going to commend this to all my colleagues here. Because we talk about the basics in underdeveloped countries. This is a transformative act to give a young girl a bicycle. She now can go to school and get back home and the family wants her to go to school because they want to keep the bicycle.

They train mechanics to repair them and it makes a big difference in agriculture, in public health, in so many different areas. It's a modest investment in mobility. Right now we invest in mobility, as we should, for the disabled people around the world, a limited investment but we do. But I would like to commend to you and USAID to take a look at this. We will give you plenty to read. And I hope someday you can come to Chicago and meet the people who put it together. It's a remarkable program.

Mr. GREEN. Senator, that's great. You know, it's interesting, I think we often times get caught up in the high end and high tech. But what you are talking about is a real difference in real families' lives and real opportunities. So I think that's great.

ROHINGYA CRISIS

Senator DURBIN. I also went to the Rakhine State, I understand you are maybe headed there yourself. And Myanmar and into Bangladesh—

Mr. GREEN. Yes.

Senator DURBIN [continuing]. Taking a look at what's happening there and what one of the NGO workers told me, sadly, I asked, are the Rohingya the most hated people on earth? He said, I'm afraid they are. To be in the midst of a conversation with someone from Burma, use the word, Rohingya, and they stop you and say there's no such thing as a Rohingya. It is something I have never run into in my life.

And now with a million of them in Bangladesh living in basic shelters, what are we doing and what more can we do?

Mr. GREEN. Well, first off, Senator, as you point out, I do plan on going and eye-balling it and seeing it for myself. I have been to Burma before, but before the crisis emerged.

So, as you know, we are providing humanitarian relief, as you might imagine, as we do in both Burma and in Bangladesh. Look, we are making it very clear to the government of Burma that we demand unfettered access from the outside, for the U.N. and others, but it is a deeply, deeply troubling situation.

The State Department has declared ethnic cleansing at this point. They have not gone further. It is under review. But it is a very troubling situation. And it clearly is having an impact, not just in Burma, not just in Bangladesh, but in Sri Lanka and other places.

And the monsoon season is upon us, which makes it particularly dangerous and these poor people are particularly vulnerable. And so we are doing what we can working with our partners.

I know that the U.N. Security Council is soon to go there itself and is looking to have access to Rakhine State, but it is deeply troubling. And, sadly, I have seen data that bears out what you are saying in terms of the attitudes towards the Rohingya.

Senator DURBIN. They literally have concentration camps. I visited one in Sittwe, in Myanmar, where some before 4,000 Rohingya have been kept behind barbed wire for 5 years. They cannot go out. They are guarded by soldiers with guns. It is unthinkable in 21st Century, but that is a fact.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. I want to welcome Senator Hyde-Smith to the subcommittee and it is your turn.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

And I'm just honored to be here today, just grateful for this opportunity to serve on this important subcommittee and I look forward to working with everyone.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

I was at Mississippi State University over the weekend and I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight and congratulate my good friend Mississippi State President Mark Keenum on his recent appointment as Chairman of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

Dr. Keenum has worked diligently throughout his career to help enhance global agricultural development and humanitarian needs and under his guidance Mississippi State has committed to working with the Federal Government and in the private sector to solve international problems.

And I'm confident that this work will continue to serve our Nation as well. So I look forward to hearing from you about the agency's fiscal year 2019 budget request and, again, honored to be here.

Thank you for allowing me to serve on the subcommittee. Appreciate you.

Mr. GREEN. Senator, it's an honor to have someone with your background also on the subcommittee and as we go through our work on food security and food security reform, we look forward to

working closely with you. And the professor you mentioned is a valued member of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD), an important part of our work.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you very much, Administrator Green, for being here and for the work that you and everyone at USAID does on a daily basis. It is much appreciated.

And I will echo the comments of Senator Durbin about Senators Graham and Leahy's leadership on this subcommittee and the commitment to support those budget for USAID that will further our humanitarian and development efforts around the world.

FAMILY PLANNING

I want to ask you about the question that was raised by Senator Leahy relative to the comments during the annual United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in March. And I know you said you haven't read that BuzzFeed article. And I would urge you to read it because I think the comments there were outrageous.

One of the representatives, Valerie Huber, from the Department of Health and Human Services, spoke of trying to get women to make better choices in the future, which is she was talking about the idea that women make bad sexual choices and that what happens to them is their fault.

Before joining HHS, she was the president of Ascend, an association that promotes abstinence until marriage is the best way to prevent teen pregnancy. And she has been involved in stripping funding from HHS's teen pregnancy prevention program.

Now, I think this is significant, because one of the things we know now is that we have the lowest teen pregnancy rate ever in United States history because we have provided access for young women and men to family planning and to health care. And I just want to point out, notwithstanding what you had to say about support for family planning—for family and women's programs, that a recent analysis by the Guttmacher Institute found that for each decrease of \$10 million in U.S. funding 416,000 fewer women and girls around the world have access to the full range of family planning services.

A 124,000 more women and girls carry unintended pregnancies resulting in 54,000 more unplanned births. Fifty-three thousand more abortions would take place and 240 more maternal deaths would occur.

The consequences of our outmoded policies with respect to how we treat women and girls and the importance of access to family planning information is just really seems to be something that this administration is unaware of.

I would hope that we are making decisions about how to support women and girls around the world based on scientific information, not based on someone's outmoded ideas about what works and what doesn't work. So I wonder if you can tell me what we are doing to address support for women and families and girls around the world when it comes to access to information about family planning.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

As I mentioned in my testimony, this budget request, fiscal year 2019 request does include \$302 million for voluntary family planning programs with linkages to programs involving AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. And, of course, as you know, we continue to be the largest donor when it comes to maternal health, and women's health in the world and those are programs that are very important to us.

With the protecting life and global health assistance policies in place, we feel that these monies will go forward and can be well spent and we will make sure that we get sound information out there to women around the world where we are working.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I appreciate that. And I would hope that anyone who believes we should be reducing abortions in the world would understand the connection between access to that kind of information and a lower rate of abortions and a lower rate of number of women who die in childbirth and number of babies who die because they are born in an unplanned pregnancy. So this is—that policy is pro-life as far as I'm concerned.

RUSSIA, UKRAINE, AND THE BALKANS

Can I ask you about Russia and Ukraine? Because USAID is a key partner in executing U.S. programs to help our allies on Russia's periphery and, particularly, in Ukraine and the western Balkans and other European nations that are vulnerable to Russia's influence. Can you talk a little bit about what we are doing in some of those countries?

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

And they are closely linked in my opinion. I am often asked about the best way to push back on Kremlin influence and my answer is success on its borders.

So helping Ukraine and the Balkans to continue to succeed, Ukraine and its plans to fully integrate in the Euro-Atlantic Alliance. In Ukraine we are helping to do capacity building and governance. I had a chance to meet with the head of Ukraine's National Bank last week as part of the World Bank meetings.

And we are helping to strengthen their capacity, increase transparency and accountability. We think that's obviously very important.

The key thing in the Balkans and in the Ukraine is strengthening their capacity and their tools in the fight against corruption. In my opinion, as much support as we all have for that part of the world for Ukraine and the Balkans, the window is narrow.

They need to take on corruption. We will walk at their side, help them with tools and capacity building. But they need to make tough choices and they need strong leadership that is willing to be accountable and transparent to their people.

As strong as the exuberant protestors were at the Euromaidan for change, if these countries don't take on corruption, they will see a similar exuberance and protests antigovernment. So it's in their interest and certainly as friends and supporters of a democratic Balkans and Ukraine, it's in our interest to help them in that journey.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Lankford.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mark, it's good to see you again. Let me talk through a couple of things we need to be able to cover. I appreciate what you are doing to be able to take some of these things on.

CENTRAL AMERICA/NORTHERN TRIANGLE

In the last appropriations bill, we included language that was Central America, in particular the Northern Triangle; Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador setting 3, 5 and 10 years benchmarks for success. The focus there was we don't just spend money and say, look, we spend money, we don't just say, here are the program names that we have, but actually asking the question how are we measuring success and how are we partnering with the local governments to be able to accomplish this.

And that, in the Northern Triangle area in specific, it's dealing with areas of corruption, it's dealing with economic development there, it's dealing with drug trafficking and trying to reduce the flow. The basic things that are not only are national security issues, but also are important to them as well.

How are you going to implement this 3, 5 year, 10 year metrics plan to be able to start putting this into place and how does that compliment what you are doing worldwide to be able to set metrics for what you are doing?

Mr. GREEN. Thanks, Senator. And I did enjoy our conversation very much because I think we think in similar terms. We should not measure our dedication by how much money we put in, but instead the results that we get. And those results should include an honest analysis of each country's capacity and commitment.

If a partner country doesn't have skin in the game and they aren't willing to make tough choices, all the money in the world isn't going to get us very far. So as we develop our metrics, the journey to self-reliance metrics as we call them, we are trying to analyze both commitment and capacity. And then what we hope to do is align our investments in those terms.

Specifically with respect to the Northern Triangle, I've had a chance to see some of our programs firsthand. I've had a chance to see some of our citizens' security programs in which we work with local mayors and police chiefs to create safe places for families and to enhance their tools to fight back against gangs and crime in particular.

And the numbers are quite striking. We have seen a drop in out-migration. We have seen an improvement by most crime measures. So the investments are paying off. And it's something that's in their interest and certainly in our interest as well. So we support them very much.

I'll go a little bit south of that to Peru, but I think there's some linkages. One of the things I did in the margins of the Summit of the Americas was go to take a look at some of our eradication and alternative livelihoods programs. And so we went into the jungles in Peru and, first off, I had the chance to actually pull out coca plants, which was an interesting experience in and of itself.

I watched was how we are encouraging farmers to plant alternative crops; cacao, chocolate, and coffee. And also helping to build the capacity of local communities to create opportunities, educational, and economic for their young people. And it's a very successful program by a number of measures. In those places where we do both the eradication and the economic livelihoods, we have seen a reduction of something like 90 percent.

More significantly, I think, in some ways is the program that we have in Peru. While a few years ago it was almost entirely U.S. funded, we are now the minority funder. It's two-thirds funded by the government of Peru, which is the right answer as we show them these programs work and build out their capacity, they are taking over the funding side of it, which is also a great measure of success. And that is very much in line with the kinds of programming we'd like to do in Central America and elsewhere.

Senator LANKFORD. Okay. I would encourage you to continue to be able to press that worldwide. Those are metrics that are harder to be able to think through at the beginning and it always lends towards evaluation at the end, but it helps everyone and it certainly shows to the American people we didn't just have a title and a name and a dollar that we committed, but here's the result of that from that aid.

PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Let me switch continents with you for a moment. The issue about Palestinian-Israeli peace has been a longstanding issue, obviously 70 years at this point.

One of the areas that we have not engaged in a lot is economic activity between Israelis and Palestinians where that is already occurring. As you know, there are multiple business ventures that are joint business ventures where there are Israelis and Palestinians working together. The Judea Samaria Chamber of Commerce, for instance, and multiple other areas where there is cooperation.

Are there ways that we can continue to be able to partner where we see success happening rather than trying to create something and say, let's try this? To be able to find areas that's already working and be able to help encourage that and it's already functioning?

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

We have programs that we are supporting that facilitate cooperation and inclusion in the areas of information technology, agriculture, sports and arts, civic education. I'd like to follow-up with you and talk more specifically about business creation, small business creation and building on some of the natural entrepreneurship that is there.

I agree with you that those sorts of programs break down a lot of barriers, break down a lot of stereotypes and obviously link people by their common interest, their pocketbook.

Senator LANKFORD. Right.

Mr. GREEN. So I think they are sound programs.

Senator LANKFORD. There are a lot of people here that think that Palestinians and Israelis are always separate and they never, ever talk to each other. When you actually go there and you meet them and they are in a shop working right next to each other every sin-

gle day in a manufacturing location or a sales or whatever it may be and you find there is a lot of business cooperation.

There have been some rails that have been put around the U.S. Government for a long time to say well we would only engage in that. My concern is we need to be able to bless what is actually working and creating more cooperation, rather than continue to assume that there is division.

I'll follow up with you in the days ahead. I want to talk more about that and then also about how DoD and USAID in the same areas work together to be able to cooperate together, rather than compete and be able to continue to build that cooperation together.

Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Graham.

And thank you, Administrator Green, for testifying today and for your continued service to our Nation over so many years and so many roles. I think you have made a genuine contribution to our country and to the world.

Although you did not craft it, I just have to begin by saying it is deeply frustrating to me that yet again the Trump administration has ignored the will of Congress and submitted a budget request nearly identical to last year's request which was rejected robustly through a bipartisan and bicameral effort by Congress. Proposed cuts overall of more than 30 percent and in some accounts 50 percent or even a 100 percent threaten to reverse bipartisan progress on development and diplomacy, weaken our global standing and threaten our national security.

I am grateful to Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy, to Paul Grove and Tim Rieser of this subcommittee for their determined and bipartisan work to reverse these proposed cuts and to instead find solid footing with which we can move forward. So I will continue to work with my colleagues to support a bipartisan and robust development and diplomacy budget, which I think is critical for our international leadership and to meet the complex and multiple crises, Mr. Administrator, which you have already spoken to.

DRIVERS OF EXTREMISM

A record number of displaced people around the world, a record number of man-made conflicts, a lot of fragile states and a lot of just appalling humanitarian crises.

So I want to speak about a specific area of the world and my concern about overreliance on security assistance and military operations in fragile contexts, coupled with these proposed significant or even devastating cuts to democracy and development programs that address the root causes of extremism.

As I think you know, I just returned from leading a bipartisan Congressional delegation to Niger, Burkina Faso, South Africa and Zimbabwe. On October 4 of last year four U.S. soldiers were killed in Niger, which may have been the first time most Americans were conscious that we have hundreds of troops in Niger.

But we are also doing important development work and work to support multi-party democracy in both Niger and Burkina Faso.

Now, what do you think are the real drivers of extremism in the Sahel and how do you think the President's proposed budget for USAID and the State Department will either succeed or fail in addressing these root causes?

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

With respect to the Sahel, I think there are a number of drivers of extremism. This is an area that is prone to acute, climatic shocks as we've known. Recurring drought has been a challenge. Weak governance has been a challenge.

What we have started to do at USAID and with the inter-agencies is begin to take a new look at how we might approach the Sahel. So step number one that we have undertaken is to map out where we do have existing programs. We have programs, particularly in the area of global health, in many parts of the region and some of our food security programs.

We have also had conversations, just last week, with our French counterparts. The French have a deep interest and long history in much of the Sahel. So we are exploring ways to work with them so that we don't duplicate, but can complement each other's work. Because I think our interests are largely aligned.

And the same thing is true, in conversations that we have had with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). We had a strategic dialogue with DFID not so long ago. But I think we are looking at programs, regional programs that promote economic growth, that build the capacity of local governments.

But also going country by country and doing a deep dive analysis of what those drivers of extremism are. As you and I have talked about before, they are often localized factors. And so we want to take a smart, careful approach and try to address those head on.

Senator COONS. Thank you. Let me just ask one more question, if I might, in the 2 minutes I have left.

Mr. GREEN. Sure.

G5 SAHEL JOINT FORCE

Senator COONS. To bear down on that just a little bit more, given the significant increase in terrorist activity, particularly in Burkina Faso and Niger, but over the last 5 years in Mali as well, the administration pledged \$60 million to support a five-country G5 Sahel "joint force" initiative on top of other security assistance, and a number of our other security partners you just referenced are also going to be engaged.

What plans do you have for the development side of the G5 Sahel initiative and how do we better coordinate between the defense side and the diplomacy and the development side, particularly in countries where I think the key towards making progress is sustaining fragile democracies and sustaining development progress, particularly in the north of these countries that tend to be isolated from the majority south of these countries?

Mr. GREEN. I think we need to take on, as you point to, questions of governance, particularly youth engagement in governance. In many of these countries the youth bulge is significant. The median age is young.

Young people see a lack of economic opportunity, but just as importantly, a disillusionment with governing structures and so I think part of the approach that we need to take is helping governments to engage with and listen to young people. We also are trying to address some of the recurring costs of climate shocks.

So in a place like Ethiopia, for example, we have seen a lot of success in building the resilience of communities to withstand recurring drought. Same sorts of challenges are appearing throughout the region. That's an area where we are seeking to foster our work and strengthen it. And then, of course, as we have been talking about, strengthening the area of global health as well.

Senator COONS. Well, I will just close by saying, I think there are good development stories in the region. I was struck that Burtina Faso has made a greater path of progress towards reducing HIV/AIDS prevalence than any other country on the continent and is sharing the burden with the United States.

MCC Millennium Challenge Compacts have had real, positive impacts in these two countries and we continue to have, as you mentioned, both public health and power partnerships, as well as development partnerships with now democratically-elected presidents of both countries. My hope is that we will have a tightly articulated, developed diplomacy and development component to this as well as the defense side to it.

Thank you for your testimony and for your work. And I very much look forward to working with Chairman Graham in making sure we are investing these funds wisely this coming year. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Van Hollen.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Administrator Green, as I told you when we met, I'm pleased to see you in this position. We served together in the House and you made our country proud when you were Ambassador to Tanzania. So I'm glad to see you at the helm here.

I do want to second the comments made by both the Chairman and the Ranking Member that the proposed budget for AID and the State Department is irresponsible. It represents a total retreat from American leadership in many parts of the world, in fact all parts of the world.

SYRIA

And I do want to ask you about the situation in Syria, especially in Raqqa. United States air power combined with the Syrian democratic forces lead primarily by the Syrian Kurds spent a lot of treasure and lives liberating Raqqa, did we not?

Mr. GREEN. Yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. We did. And would you agree that now that we have succeeded in liberating Raqqa we have some responsibility to help stabilize the situation in Raqqa?

Mr. GREEN. What I can say, Senator, is that the role that USAID has been playing in the stabilization front, we think, has been a constructive role.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. Well, let me say it's important to win the war and we are still fighting, as the Chairman said. There's a real possibility that if we don't start winning the peace,

at least in the place that used to be the capital before ISIS, that the militants will come back and we will lose in the long run.

I was very disturbed to see a major piece in the Washington Post recently. Headline, How American Neglect Imperils the Victory over ISIS. I don't know if you had a chance to see that. Did you?

Mr. GREEN. I have not.

[The article follows:]

[From the Washington Post, April 19, 2018]

DESTRUCTION OF RAQQA: HOW AMERICAN NEGLECT IMPERILS THE
VICTORY OVER ISIS

Six months after the militants' capital was liberated, new risks are emerging from Raqqa's rubble.

Story by Tamer El-Ghobashy

Photos by Alice Martins



Every 3 or 4 days, Fatima Mahmoud hitchhikes 37 miles across a hilly expanse of northeastern Syria to her home town of Raqqa. She comes to visit her husband's final resting place, beneath a large mound of concrete that once was their home.

She knows he is still there because of the unmistakable odor of his corpse.

Mahmoud digs through the rubble with her hands, seeking artifacts of her life with him and anything of value she can sell to pay for food and her temporary shelter elsewhere in the province.

"My city has been liberated, but I can't live in it," she said, her face collapsing into sobs.



Six months after U.S.-allied forces backed by American airstrikes evicted the Islamic State from its self-proclaimed capital, Raqqa is a city sown with rubble, explosives and an uneasy mixture of despair and determination to rebuild.

It is easier to count the buildings that are still standing than the ones that have been reduced to shattered concrete and twisted reinforced steel. Once home to about 400,000 people, many in high-rise apartments, Raqqa has become nearly unrecognizable to those who try to return and navigate its streets. Public squares are hidden underneath debris, and the tallest residential towers are mere rubble.

The city has no running water or electricity, and there aren't enough public employees to defuse the hundreds of explosives planted by the militants as they desperately clung to the city. People often encounter human remains as they take stock of what's left of homes and businesses.

The destruction of Raqqa and its slow recovery are contributing to a growing sentiment here that the United States wrecked the city but is unwilling to take responsibility for putting it back together.

More than 11,000 buildings in Raqqa were destroyed, severely damaged or moderately damaged between February and October 2017, during months of U.S.-led airstrikes.

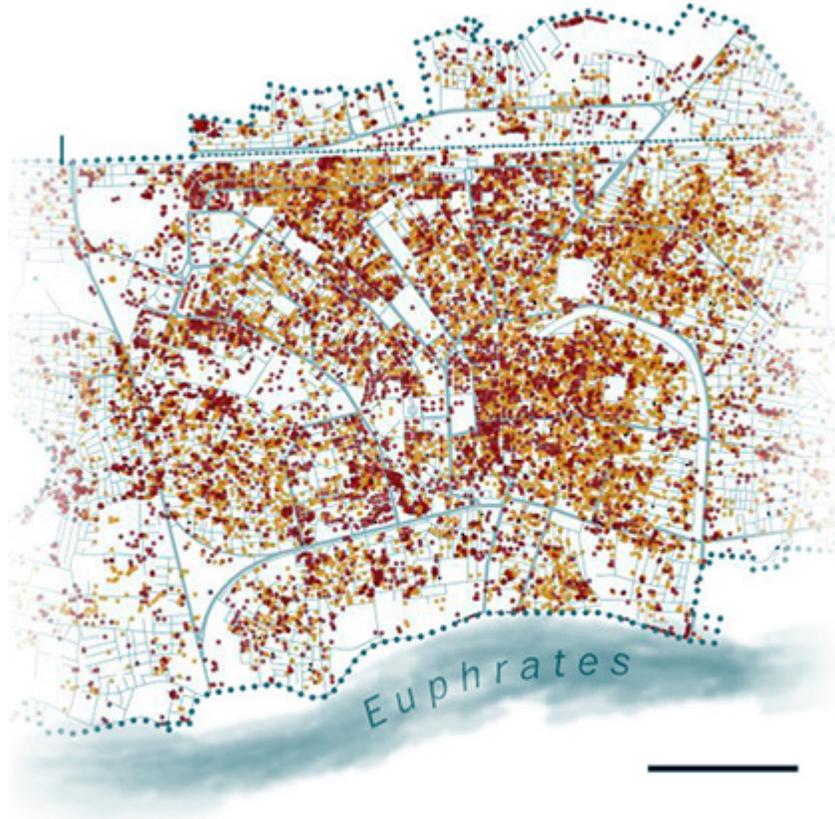
FEBRUARY 2017

Analysis
extent
Source: UNOSAT



OCTOBER 2017

Analysis
extent
Source: UNOSAT



The Trump administration has signaled its waning interest in Syria's future, with the President urging this month that U.S. troops be withdrawn as soon as possible. After U.S.-led airstrikes against Syria this month in retaliation for an alleged poison-gas attack, American concerns seem largely limited to the issue of chemical weapons.

In late March, the White House called for a freeze on spending for stabilization in areas of Syria where American forces helped evict the Islamic State, putting on hold about \$200 million pledged for the effort. State Department officials are scrambling to figure out which of their programs in northeastern Syria would be affected, said a senior American official who was not authorized to speak publicly about the issue.

"We continually review and reevaluate our international assistance," said Stewart Wight, a State Department spokesman. "We continue to encourage our international partners to share the burden of providing stabilization assistance in liberated areas of Syria, as many U.S. allies already are."

Local officials warn that the U.S. objective of ridding Syria of the militants is being undermined by a lack of engagement in how Raqqa is rebuilt and governed, making it possible for another insurgency to emerge. And they caution that local frustration could open the door for the Syrian Government to return and fill the

void, benefiting President Bashar al-Assad's main backers—Russia and Iran—and weakening American influence in the region.

“Was this devastation and death worth it?” asked a 66-year-old man who lost seven family members to airstrikes. “The more I break my back to rebuild, the more I think it wasn’t. We suffered under [the Islamic State], but we’re suffering more from this American liberation.”

The man, a longtime restaurateur who declined to give his name because he was speaking critically of the city’s new authorities, said he had already sold all the family’s gold and borrowed heavily to rebuild his home and business. As he mixed cement outside the remains of his restaurant, he noted that as long as he kept his beard at the right length and didn’t smoke in public, Islamic State militants had left him alone.

The war against ISIS nearly leveled this city. Months later, crews are still digging bodies out.

The Post’s Tamer El-Ghobashy visited Raqqa, Syria, several months after U.S.-backed forces ousted Islamic State militants from their self-proclaimed capital. (Tamer El-Ghobashy, Joyce Lee/The Washington Post)

As a launchpad for Islamic State attacks in the West, Raqqa until recently was practically an obsession for the United States and Europe. Today, the city’s residents and caretakers fear they are being abandoned as the world’s attention shifts.

The U.S.-backed Kurdish authorities who control Raqqa are now focused on an escalating conflict with Turkey along Syria’s northern border. U.S. forces are preoccupied with defeating the remaining pockets of Islamic State forces farther to the east along the Iraqi border. And the United Nations and international relief groups have put a priority on addressing the horrific violence in the suburbs of Damascus, where the Syrian Government has recaptured the long-contested Eastern Ghouta enclave, site of the alleged chemical attack.

U.S. officials involved in stabilization efforts in Raqqa say work to restore basic services and strengthen local government is in motion but faces unique obstacles. Syria’s central government objects to the activities of the Pentagon and State Department in territory beyond the regime’s control, and that presents a host of problems that have slowed the delivery of aid.

Much of the responsibility for Raqqa now falls to its 29-year-old acting mayor, Ahmed Ibrahim.

The Islamic State, he recalled, “was extremely organized, extremely responsive when it came to governing. This puts us under tremendous pressure. We have to do better than them. This is our challenge: How do we convince our public that we are better?”

Dressed in a checkered, hooded lumberjack shirt that emphasized his youth, Ibrahim reflected on that task in his third-floor office in the former postal headquarters, which serves as a makeshift city hall. The large windows give him a panoramic view of the nearly wholesale destruction of the city.

“There is a huge risk of failing,” he said.



The view from the mayor's office in Raqqa shows heavily damaged buildings and resurgent traffic as civilians return to begin reconstruction.

'More and more bodies'

U.S. commanders have described the battle for Raqqa last year as some of the most intense urban combat since World War II.

Unlike in the earlier assault on Mosul, the Islamic State's premier city in Iraq, U.S. forces in Syria were not fighting in support of allied government troops. Instead, the U.S. military set up the Syrian Democratic Forces as a proxy ground force. The 50,000-strong SDF was led by Syrian Kurdish commanders atop a rank-and-file force of Arabs from northeastern Syria.

With mostly U.S. air power overhead and U.S. Special Operations troops embedded on the ground, the SDF launched the ground campaign in June. It took until October for the city to be cleared of militants.

According to Airwars, an independent research group that tracks American and Russian airstrikes in Syria, U.S. aircraft and artillery bombarded Raqqa with an estimated 20,000 munitions during the 5-month operation—more than in Afghanistan during all of last year and more on average per month than in Mosul, a much larger city whose capture took nearly twice as long.

The U.S. military has been investigating dozens of claims of civilian casualties in Raqqa that were caused by airstrikes and artillery fire and so far has confirmed 24 deaths. An Airwars analysis puts the number closer to 1,400.

The Pentagon has repeatedly said that the Islamic State purposely put civilians in the line of fire and often tried to draw American fire on heavily populated areas, resulting in unintended civilian casualties.

Raqqa's civil defense unit, a team of 37 firefighters and other first responders, has recovered more than 300 bodies since the end of the campaign, the vast majority of which they believe to be noncombatants. There are currently 6,000 open reports of human remains in rubble.

"People want to settle back into their neighborhoods and begin to rebuild," said Yasser al-Khamis, the civil defense chief. "But everywhere we go, people are reporting more and more bodies."



A young boy watches as members of Raqqa's civil defense force place a decomposed body in a bag.



Raqqa civil defense workers carry a body bag.



Civil defense workers in Raqqa unload bodies from a truck at their headquarters on March 8. On that day, they retrieved 11 bodies from the rubble, eight of them unidentified.

Not the help they needed

On a recent afternoon at their bullet-pocked headquarters, Khamis and his team were visited by bushy-bearded U.S. Special Forces soldiers. About 10 of them spilled out of several armored Toyota Land Cruisers wearing tactical vests with rifles slung over their shoulders. They had come to deliver good news: They would be providing two brand-new ambulances in a couple of days.

Khamis's men were unimpressed. They told the Americans they didn't need ambulances; they needed firetrucks, heavy construction equipment to move rubble, and power tools to pry bodies out of the contorted wreckage.

A Special Forces soldier with a "Make Army Baseball Great Again" cap said he understood the challenges, but added that they had only six ambulances to distribute across a large swath of Syria that the United States is essentially administering, reaching from Raqqa in the north to Deir al-Zour in the south.

"That's all we have for now. I'm sorry," he told the rescuers. "We're doing our best, and we thank you for the important work you do."

As he spoke, a small pickup truck arrived hauling a dozen white body bags containing freshly recovered remains of airstrike victims. As family members gathered to try to identify their kin, the Special Forces soldiers got into their vehicles and left hastily.

The al-Issa brothers glared at the American convoy. They had just looked into two body bags, identifying their father, Hussein, 66, and mother, Jamila, 55, by shards of distinctive clothing stuck to the nearly skeletal remains.

One of the brothers launched into an angry commentary about American airstrikes.

Amar al-Issa, 36, told him to shut up, that it wasn't the time for politics.

The bodies had been retrieved from the wreckage of their apartment, destroyed in an Aug. 15 airstrike. Another brother, Mohammed, 20, was still missing in the rubble. Their sister Nahla, 21, was thrown into the street by the blast and died immediately, Amar said.

"Daesh had a financial office on the ground floor and my family lived above it," Amar said, using the Arabic acronym for the Islamic State. "I don't know why the Americans needed a bomb to hit a financial office."



Salim al-Hussein, 56, gestures as he describes what happened to his home, which he found destroyed upon returning to Raqqa after the military operation to oust Islamic State militants.

A key political operator

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington has delivered an estimated \$60 million across northeastern Syria for stabilization efforts, defined as mine clearance, rubble removal, repair of essential services such as water and electricity systems, and the reopening of schools.

A small group of State Department officials is in Raqqa, but they cannot move easily because of security and diplomatic concerns, officials said. So U.S. Special Forces soldiers act as liaisons between U.S. officials and the Raqqa Civil Council, made up of Syrian Kurds and Arabs.

The most recognizable member of that council has been Omar Alloush, an avuncular man with gray hair and a round face that belie his record as an energetic political operator. He has been a senior council member responsible for coordinating with outside agencies and governments.

Asked in an interview what the United States has done to restore Raqqa since fighting ended in October, Alloush broke off speaking Kurdish and said in English, “Nothing,” underlining the word with his fingers.



Omar Alloush, a member of the Raqqa Civil Council responsible for coordinating with outside governments, warned that U.S. inaction could leave an opening for the Syrian regime. “The people will choose the person that will fix their house for them,” he said. (Alice Martins/For The Washington Post)

“Well, practically nothing,” he said, revising himself.

Alloush complained that American funds were slow to arrive and that projects proposed by USAID, such as repainting curbs, were out of step with local needs.

“I told them, give me pavements first, then we’ll worry about the curbs,” he said. “If we’re not able to convince people in Raqqa that we are helping them, we are in big trouble.”

Alloush warned that the longer the rehabilitation of the city takes, the greater the opening for Assad to return. “The people will choose the person that will fix their house for them,” he said.

Few figures in northeastern Syria have been as well acquainted with the power politics of the country. An independent thinker, Alloush sought in recent months to engage with the Syrian Government in addition to his backers at the Pentagon and the State Department.

But in a dramatic setback to efforts at reviving Raqqa, Alloush was found shot to death in his home, days after his interview with a Post reporter.

SDF officials are investigating his slaying but have not identified any suspects.



Graffiti marks a building that has been cleared of unexploded ordnance in Raqqa. Most of the city is strewn with ordnance left by U.S.-allied forces and improvised explosive devices left by fleeing Islamic State militants.

Risking a people's trust

Mohammed Obeid has 16 heavy construction vehicles at his disposal to clear streets of detritus and eventually begin repairing water networks and electricity and sewage lines. A field director of the Early Recovery Team, a private group of Syrians funded by USAID, Obeid said the work had moved at a quick pace in the immediate aftermath of the battle.

But lately, he said, the efforts have slowed because he must submit proposals to USAID for each project and wait for approval.

The White House suspension of stabilization aid will have an immediate impact on operations to clear mines and explosives, the senior U.S. official said. De-mining buildings and streets is considered essential before other services can be restored and is particularly costly. "If that stops, a lot of other stuff stops," the official said.

Melissa Dalton, a Syria expert with the Center for Strategic and International Studies who accompanied American military and diplomatic officials on a trip to Raqqa in January, said the Islamic State or a similar militant group could take advantage if conditions do not improve.

"Any sort of goodwill on the part of the local people of Raqqa for the SDF and more broadly the U.S. and its allies in clearing ISIS out of these areas could dwindle over the next few months if there isn't a translation into real change," she said, using an acronym for the Islamic State.

There is also a danger that the Kurdish authorities who took control of Raqqa with U.S. backing may not be fully engaged in the mammoth task of rebuilding the largely Arab city. As Jaafar Ahmed, a senior Kurdish military police official, explained, the Kurds' top priority at the moment is not Raqqa but rather resisting the push by Turkey and allied Syrian militias to oust Kurdish forces from northern border areas.

People like Mahmoud, the widow whose husband's remains are still buried in the rubble of their home, are in the meantime feeling alone.

Like many in Raqqa, Mahmoud lived a fairly prosperous life under Islamic State occupation as long as she did not run afoul of the group's rules. Her husband's auto-trading business provided for the family.

The battle to liberate the city upended that life. Mahmoud and her four adult daughters paid a smuggler \$2,000 to help them escape the city. Her husband, Abdelaziz, had promised to follow but was caught by Islamic State militants and forced to stay behind.

Mahmoud doesn't know how she will survive.
 "I've already sold all my jewelry and my daughters' jewelry," she said. "I have nothing. I need help."

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I recommend it to all the Members of the subcommittee. Subheading, 6 months after the militant's capital was liberated new risks are emerging from Raqqa's rubble. And the reporter talked to a lot of people on the ground and the take away was, and I quote, the destruction of Raqqa and its slow recovery are contributing to a growing sentiment here that the United States wrecked the city but is unwilling to take responsibility for putting it back together. And he quotes a lot of local leaders.

Now, I know you were in Raqqa in January; is that right?

Mr. GREEN. Yes. January, February.

STABILIZATION ASSISTANCE REVIEW

Senator VAN HOLLEN. January, February. Now, my understanding, and tell me if this has changed, that in March the White House called for a freeze on spending for stabilization areas of Syria where American forces helped evict the Islamic State that we put on hold \$200 million pledged for the effort and that State Department officials are scrambling to figure out which of their programs in northeastern Syria would be affected.

Are you familiar with the freeze?

Mr. GREEN. Well, Senator, right now the administration is undergoing a review on stabilization assistance with respect to Syria, but it's important to realize this does not affect humanitarian assistance. We continue to provide humanitarian assistance in every region in the country and not only for the 4 million Syrians inside the country, but 5½ million Syrians outside the country. And so we are continuing to work throughout the country on the humanitarian side.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. I would just urge you, because to the Chairman's earlier comments, they are quoting a lot of leaders on the ground in Raqqa and the comment they make with respect to U.S. aid is it's been, the first one was it's been virtually invisible. And the second comment, well, barely visible.

And I really worry that if we do not engage there after succeeding with the liberation phase that the militants would come back. Now, of course, our success was due to our air power, but also to our allies, the Syrian Democratic Forces lead by the Syrian Kurds, right?

Mr. GREEN. I can't speak to the military operations that are there. I can tell you that we have had a close partnership with CENTCOM and the boots on the ground and our work has been confined to, on the stabilization side, the area in and around Raqqa.

TURKEY

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I would just say while you were there, I believe, Turkey was engaged in offensive operations against the Kurds in freeing a different part of Syria, right?

Mr. GREEN. That's true.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Is your assessment that the Turkish role today is helping our efforts or hindering our efforts?

Mr. GREEN. I can't speak to the military consequences. I can say it's a very complicated situation.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Has it hindered your efforts in providing relief?

Mr. GREEN. On the humanitarian side, we provide humanitarian assistance on the basis of need. So we provide assistance throughout the country, but certainly any time the security situation is uncertain, that makes it more difficult to do our work.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I think the reality is that Turkish actions have essentially required the Syrian Kurds to focus on defending themselves from the Turks instead of finishing the job against ISIS and getting about the job of rebuilding there. And I hope this subcommittee will look carefully at that.

REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Let me ask you about refugees and internally displaced peoples. Because, as you know, under this administration, we dramatically reduced the number of refugees admitted to the United States, even though the U.N. Refugee Agency estimates there are about 65 million people that have been made refugees around the world.

We talked about that yesterday. And you expressed concern, which I share, that you've got millions of people who are festering in camps around the world, including lots of kids. Half of these refugees are kids.

Now, what we have heard from the administration is, well, we want to focus on internally displaced people and keep them in those countries, which is a goal I share. My question to you is, how do we further that goal by cutting by \$700 million the AID budget that's focused on internally displaced people?

Mr. GREEN. Senator, as you might imagine, part of what we need to do is ask others to do more and I think other countries are doing more. We are seeing Japan, Germany, South Korea increasing their contributions.

I think we also have to—I have to do a better job of making our dollars go farther and our programs as effective as they can possibly be.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So you are okay if we cut the internally displaced budget at AID by \$700 million?

Mr. GREEN. Well, Senator, as I said, my job is to make this money go as far as it possibly can and as effective as it possibly can.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I understand we want to stretch every dollar to its full potential.

But, Mr. Chairman, I agree with your statements that cutting this account by \$700 million, along with the others, is a real retreat.

Senator GRAHAM. Let me ask you this, if we gave you more money do you think you could use it wisely? The answer is yes.

Mr. GREEN. Every dollar that you provide I will squeeze and make it go as far as it possibly can to serve our interests.

Senator GRAHAM. I appreciate efficiency. But it's ridiculous to cut these accounts this much given the threats we face.

Senator Merkley.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you.

Thank you, Administrator Green. Good to have you here.

ROHINGYA CRISIS

I wanted to explore a little bit the situation in Burma and Bangladesh with the Rohingya. As you're well aware 700,000 refugees in Bangladesh. Bangladesh deserves accolades for having opened their border. But everybody is in a tight spot now.

One idea is to, that they are pursuing pretty actively in Bangladesh, is to put 100,000 people on an island and say you basically you can't leave, it will be patrolled. Will that be—is that an appropriate strategy?

Mr. GREEN. Senator, you know I'll be heading into the district myself. And I look forward to meeting with Bangladeshi officials to learn more about the challenges that they face, but clearly, as you are pointing to, they need assistance to help meet the costs and demands of the Rohingya population that is there and we certainly have been supportive.

But we are deeply concerned, as you are, about the plight of the Rohingya, both certainly in Burma, but also in Bangladesh.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you. And I think it's important that America has put in a \$180 million in 2017, 2018 which has been enormously helpful. And I'm glad you're going because it's really a difficult problem to solve. The sandy Cox's Bazar hills that they are on right now are going to be a complete mess as the monsoon hits. We have been working with other groups to administer kits to make the homes, the shelters stronger. But still a big challenge.

And, meanwhile, the idea of repatriation is extremely difficult. In part, the military in Burma wants no part of it. Other ethnic groups that have been led in hatred against the Rohingya want no part of it. So safety for return is extremely difficult.

It's going to involve international organizations having to be intimately involved. Is the U.S. pushing for the refugees to be able to return to their same villages, rebuild those same villages and get the protection of a government that, so far, has been unwilling to provide such protection?

Mr. GREEN. Senator, I won't get out ahead of the State Department. But I think what you have seen consistently from both the State Department and USAID is that we support the voluntary, safe return of Rohingya to Burma and demand that the conditions be safe before they do return.

Senator MERKLEY. I think everyone has concluded this will not happen without an extremely coordinated international response.

When is our own President going to speak to the issue of this ethnic cleansing and bring the world together to help address it?

Mr. GREEN. Well, I think the administration has been clear that we have concluded this does constitute ethnic cleansing.

Senator MERKLEY. I'm asking when is our President going to speak to it. We have never had one word from him on this topic.

Mr. GREEN. I can't speak as to what the President has said. I'm not aware of whether or not he has commented on the topic.

Senator MERKLEY. Well, I'll make you aware then. Since you are not aware. That disappoints me that you are not aware because everyone in the State Department is aware that our President has not weighed in on this and that it's a huge missing factor.

And that it's not just weighing in, it's rallying the world to address it. And I would just request, as I've asked other folks, please weigh in with the President to take a stand on this and help lead the world. This is not going to resolve itself and maybe after you've come back and have studied the situation that would be a good time to be able to brief the President, encourage him to take a new initiative on this.

Mr. GREEN. In fairness, Secretary Tillerson has visited Burma. I think we have seen strong statements at the U.N. and I think the State Department has been very clear, again, its conclusion is that this constitutes ethnic cleansing. I plan on going myself and certainly will come back and brief the interagency.

Senator MERKLEY. Great.

Mr. GREEN. Look forward to meeting with you and to—

Senator MERKLEY. And you have probably seen the reports by Nicholas Kristof, who went into that area. But the leader of Burma invited the world to come and see. And a group, five Members of Congress, went to see and then were denied access.

Nicholas Kristof, from the New York Times, got in through subterfuge. But I hope maybe you can get permission to visit inside Burma these areas.

This is what Nikki Haley had to say: Even before the violence started, malnutrition was a serious problem in Rakhine State but now there are reports from Rohingya that the military's actions are leading to a campaign of purposeful starvation forcing more families out of the country. Homes are being looted.

Farmers are being denied the ability to harvest their crops. Girls and women are being abducted into sexual slavery.

I'm glad that our Ambassador of the U.N. has spoken out. Again, it's such a horrific situation that it's important that the U.S. rally the world to respond.

We all had a lot of respect for Aung San Suu Kyi in the past. But now she needs, really, the clarity of the world that this is unacceptable and it's going to take U.S. leadership.

So I wanted to turn to the food budget. I'll echo the point my colleagues have made. I just returned from northern Africa on a four famines tour. I was only able to get two of the famines, plus refugee camps in Kenya, and internally displaced persons [IDPs] and slash refugee camps in Eastern Congo. Twenty million people at risk of dying.

Are the numbers you are presenting us today your best judgment or are these OMB numbers on Food for Peace, zeroing out this program?

Mr. GREEN. Senator, as I've said, we don't pretend that this budget will meet every single need that's out there. It's an effort by the administration to balance needs here at home with American leadership overseas.

Again, we recognize that this does not either seize every development opportunity or meet every humanitarian consideration.

Senator MERKLEY. Would you like to see this subcommittee give additional aid beyond the President's budget?

Mr. GREEN. Well, Senator, as I've said, my obligation is to make sure our programs are as effective as they possibly can be, produce

the outcomes that this subcommittee wants to see and that's my obligation to all of you.

FOOD AID AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Senator MERKLEY. North of Goma, the Kitchanga camp, eastern edge of the Congo, it's the rape capital of the world. When I went in by helicopter, and you have to have U.N. blue helmet troops providing security because there are gangs rampaging through Eastern Congo through the villages, a ton of young men being abducted into the—these—into these gangs after their families are slaughtered.

As I was there, there was a major distribution of food and they said they are doing this every month. And when I really pushed them, they hadn't done it in February, because they didn't have enough food. They hadn't done it in January, because there hadn't been enough food.

Maybe if we could get a Member of Congress to go every month there would be monthly distributions of food. My point is that food was American food. That food was Public Law 480 food. Zeroing out that budget means putting millions of people at risk of starvation and I hope that we can work with you so that doesn't happen.

Mr. GREEN. Senator, as you know, the International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account is a way that we can provide food assistance. But, again, I readily admit that this will not meet every need that is out there and we don't pretend that it will.

But what you are pointing to in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to me the great tragedy of the DRC is the fact that this is a country, very much like Venezuela, that should be a donor. That should be a country, because of its vast natural resources, it should be assisting others and yet because of poor governance, bad leadership, authoritarian leadership and human rights violations, it is what it is. And it's a terrible blight on the world in so many ways.

Senator MERKLEY. Your point is taken. The government is really a vast criminal enterprise. Hard to change but we are pressing for elections. And, hopefully, that will give a new opportunity for someone to be elected who shares the desires of the people.

SOMALIA

I was impressed, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to mention that I was impressed by the new President of Somalia, who is a dual citizen with the U.S., who is a technocrat who seems completely engaged in the day-to-day challenges of taking on the issues.

And if I can indulge—can I indulge in one more minute? I know I'm over time.

Senator GRAHAM. Go ahead.

Senator MERKLEY. One of the issues that we saw, that I saw on this trip in Somalia was Somalia has lost 80 percent of its forest in the last 30 years. And as I talked with the new President about this, he also noted that it's causing a microclimate problem. That is, the evaporation from the missing forest was the evaporation that provided additional rains. And so without the forest it's accentuating the climate chaos.

What was the term you used? Climate shocks, the climate shocks. He also noted that the reason the forest is disappearing is because of the sale of charcoal, cutting down the forest for the sale of charcoal. This is funding al-Shabaab. It's also funding everybody else who can make money off this.

The ability to provide an alternative strategy for cooking fires could be a very significant factor in cutting off funding for al-Shabaab and cutting, slowing or stopping the deforestation. And this seems right up USAID's alley. They did have a significant program in cook stoves, efficient cook stoves. I think that ran its course and was retired. But I wanted to encourage you to take another look at it. But also to brainstorm more widely about how we could completely substitute some other strategy from cutting down trees for fuel and charcoal.

Going to get trees, by the way, for the village, also submitting them when they leave the camps, they are submitted to a daily risk of assault. That is an additional piece of that fuel heating problem that could be addressed if there was an alternative strategy.

Mr. GREEN. Senator, as you and I spoke briefly, in my days as ambassador I got a chance to see some of the USAID supported alternatives to charcoal programs that are out there. Jane Goodall, in fact, is a partner in Tanzania. We look to replace the weed trees that are often planted to provide the charcoal with revenue-producing coffee trees and other trees that do less damage to the soil.

I also agree with you that Somalia is a country and a government that is starting to make some progress. And so I think we have in the government there a better partner in some ways. It's a young government. But I was impressed in the meeting that I had with the government's representatives last year.

And so we are hopeful that as their capacity grows we will be able to partner with them in more areas to provide some opportunities in the areas that have now been liberated from al-Shabaab.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Appreciate, Senator Merkley, you traveling and all the Members of this subcommittee that try to get informed about the world. It's hard to do it here. Have to get out and about.

Regarding the Rohingya crisis, the subcommittee provided resources for investigation and documentation of abuse against the Rohingya in the fiscal year 2018 bill. I look forward to that report.

Thanks again to Mark for coming, you were very helpful. I appreciate your service to our country. You're the right guy at the right time.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

If there are any questions for the record they need to be submitted no later than this Friday, April 27, 2:00 p.m. I ask that USAID submit testimony on their fiscal year 2019 request which will be made part of the record.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Agency for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO HON. MARK GREEN

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR LINDSAY GRAHAM

Question. The Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018 (division K of Public Law 115–141) provided robust funding for USAID to restart hiring.

What is the status of the hiring freeze at USAID? Has it been fully rescinded, and is USAID moving forward with respect to external hires?

Answer. In March 2018, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) transitioned from Secretary Tillerson’s hiring freeze to a new strategic hiring approach that aligns our workforce-planning with the administration’s foreign-policy and budgetary priorities. USAID manages its workforce strategically through the Hiring and Reassignment Review Board (HRRB) to accommodate the Agency’s staffing needs, including external hires. The HRRB monitors attrition levels, identifies gaps in the competencies of our workforce, and prioritizes the essential positions to fill. This corporate view ensures we remain within our funding levels; support our priorities; and recruit, retain, and deploy the talent we need.

Question. The Fiscal Year 2018 Act directed both the Department of State and USAID to maintain personnel levels at not less than the end of 2017 level. Does USAID plan to comply with this directive?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is complying with the requirements provided in the Fiscal Year 2018 Appropriations Act. By closely tracking onboard and attrition levels, USAID’s Hiring and Reassignment Review Board (HRRB) prioritizes hiring consistent with our appropriated levels of funding and hiring needs. The HRRB has already approved external hiring to maintain our numbers of Foreign Service and Civil Service employees consistent with the December 2017 personnel levels, funding, and needs.

Question. USAID has budgeted for approximately 1,650 FSOs in fiscal year 2019, not including Foreign Service Limited appointments (temporary hire). The Fiscal Year 2018 Act provided OE for at least 1,757 FSOs in fiscal year 2018. What is USAID doing to ensure the USAID hires to, and maintains, the 1,757 Foreign Service personnel required by the Act? As USAID is a Foreign Service and national security agency, SFOPS is not interested in short-term hiring mechanisms but growing a workforce of trained FSOs to execute the USAID mission and support USAID’s role in promoting U.S. national security.

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to strengthening our workforce, including the recruitment of new career Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) with the necessary skills to advance our mission. USAID has initiated the hiring process for bringing on a new cadre of 21 career candidate FSOs and two FSO reappointments in Calendar Year 2018. Based on the critical needs of the Agency, USAID is reviewing a roster of applicants to determine the makeup of a class of career candidates that will help strengthen the expertise across our FSO workforce.

Question. What are the baseline personnel levels (including the intended mix of Foreign Service, Civil Service, and Foreign Service Limited positions) around which USAID is planning to execute its development mission in fiscal year 2019 and beyond?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) relies on its comprehensive workforce-planning to identify our anticipated personnel needs in fiscal year 2019 for Foreign Service, Civil Service, and Foreign Service Limited (FSL) positions. At present, the Agency plans to hire to attrition and maintain the onboard levels as of December 31, 2017. At that time, we had 1,973 Foreign Service Officers (which includes 199 FSL employees) and 1,394 Civil Service paid for by both Program Funds and Operating Expenses (OE). Within this total, the Agency used OE to fund 1,757 Foreign Service Offices, 44 FSL appointments, and 1,302 Civil Servants. The Agency is committed to sustaining and supporting a strong career workforce in both the Foreign Service and Civil Service at the available, appropriated levels. If warranted to meet critical staffing needs, USAID will deploy all the available hiring authorities, including hiring up to the statutory cap of \$93 million and up to 175 additional FSL hires per year.

Question. USAID’s comparative advantages are the Agency’s FSOs in host nations who build relationships with the national, sub-national and local governments in which they serve. Given USAID’s focus on self-reliance and traditional role of getting countries to sustainability, how does USAID intend to achieve the buy-in from other nations to take on their own ‘development’ and end reliance on foreign assistance if key specialties, such as Crisis, Stabilization, and Governance Officers (Back-

stop 76), are not being recruited to create the very structures and institutions, laws and policies that enable countries to achieve sustainability or self-reliance?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to helping partner countries on their own development journey to self-reliance, by looking at ways to help lift lives, build communities, and establish self-sufficiency. Our Foreign Service Officers (FSO) and Foreign Service National (FSN) colleagues are instrumental in advancing our mission. USAID will continue to hire FSOs who have the necessary skills to help our counterparts in civil society and national, sub-national, and local governments achieve our shared goals for development and self-reliance. As part of our comprehensive workforce-planning, the Agency's Hiring and Reassignment Review Board (HRRB) will prioritize the necessary skills. We seek to anticipate gaps in our core competencies, and regularly assess priority areas for hiring, including by identifying key FSO specialties for targeted recruitment. In addition, as part of comprehensive workforce-planning, we will make sure that we are recruiting, retaining, and empowering our FSNs, who provide crucial expertise and institutional memory in so many Missions around the world.

Question. USAID recently went through a very thorough examination and vetting of 94 FSOs last year. What is the status of those hires, several of whom are veterans?

Answer. In fiscal year 2018, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) intends to make career candidate Foreign Service Officer (FSO) employment offers to applicants, including veterans, who were evaluated and vetted in previous years. Based on the critical needs of the Agency and the appropriated levels of funding, USAID reviews our roster of applicants to determine the makeup of a career candidate class that will help strengthen the expertise across our FSO workforce. The Agency has initiated the hiring process for a new cadre of 21 career candidate FSOs in addition to two FSO reappointments, and will always seek to hire the necessary career staff within our appropriated levels of funding, hiring needs, and national-security priorities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN BOOZMAN

Question. Administrator Green, in your testimony you referenced, "the consolidation of small grants function and expertise into USAID." In the President's budget request, he recommended the closure of the Inter-American Foundation and the African Development Foundation, among others, and that their functions be consolidated within USAID. These independent agencies were specifically created by Congress to provide a level of flexibility and responsiveness via grants that are much smaller than the average USAID grant. Would the closure of agencies like these not represent a reduction in U.S. capabilities abroad?

Answer. To improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and alignment of the U.S. Government's international development efforts, the administration proposes integrating the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) and African Development Foundation (USADF) into the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The consolidation of the small-grants functions currently undertaken by IAF and USADF would take place over a 2-year transition period, which would allow for a proper merger of their staff and skills into USAID.

USAID would use the existing expertise, capacity, and tools that USADF and IAF provide, including their regional and market-segment emphasis and grant-making expertise as the Agency seeks to diversify its partner base and invest in more local organizations. Ensuring that the core principles of IAF and USADF remain intact is critical to this proposal. Specifically, USAID would ensure these small-grant tools provide continuity with the current portfolios and branding of IAF and USADF, while working to integrate them into our operations and practices.

Question. Administrator Green, you have said, ". . . [W]e'll work relentlessly to ensure that we deliver assistance in the most effective, efficient manner possible—meeting their needs and also building resilience against future crises." As we pass a year into USAID's redesign, how do you ensure any such structural changes will strengthen humanitarian assistance? How will the reorganization at the agency enable it to better respond to, and prevent, today's greatest humanitarian challenges?

Answer. The proposed merging of the Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP) into a new Bureau would eliminate the artificial distinction between food and non-food humanitarian assistance, create a strong platform for the humanitarian leadership and policy voice of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and optimize resources towards on effective and fully accountable humanitarian programs and leadership. It would enhance the provision of the full spectrum of humanitarian-assistance activities to include preven-

tion, mitigation and the reduction of disaster risks, which thereby enable communities to recover from, and respond to, emergencies on their own, and over time reduce the need for humanitarian assistance, particularly in areas of recurrent crises. Additionally, by combining, and therefore optimizing, resources, the proposed new Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance would significantly increase USAID's operational capabilities for managing supply chains, procurement, and logistics, and mobilizing our rapid, field-based response platforms.

The new Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) would elevate the agency's focus on building resilience to recurrent humanitarian crisis. Data show resilience programs can reduce the need for humanitarian assistance in regions subject to recurrent crises and better equip communities and countries to manage shocks like drought when they do occur. RFS would strengthen linkages among investments in resilience, agriculture, nutrition, and water and sanitation to accelerate and protect development gains.

Both Bureaus would reside in the same "family" under a new Associate Administrator. These proposed redesign actions will harmonize and elevate USAID's ability to present and respond to humanitarian crisis.

Question. Mr. Green, as you know and have said, our foreign assistance funds are precious as they come from "hard-working families all across this great country." We are hearing that USAID continues to experience staffing challenges as well as unusual program and funding delays. How is USAID ensuring that the funds appropriated by Congress are moving quickly to the missions to help deliver assistance to those in need?

Answer. I agree that it is critical that U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Missions have timely access to the resources they need to carry out our critical work on the ground, and to help advance the foreign-policy objectives of the United States. The Secretary of State and I are deeply committed to ensuring that our internal processes for allocating and obligating funding are as efficient as possible. We will continue to work together to identify opportunities to improve the timeliness of our awards, while ensuring our compliance with applicable Congressional procedures and other legal requirements.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR STEVE DAINES

Question. As you have referenced before and notwithstanding natural disasters and unforeseeable contingencies, the goal of foreign aid should be to assist countries in attaining the humanitarian and institutional conditions under which aid is no longer required. One of the ways to map a country's progress toward assistance independence is through Country Development Cooperation Strategies.

Does each Country Development Cooperation Strategy include a plan to transition the country to independence from USAID assistance?

What are the conditions under which a country would no longer be an eligible contender to receive U.S. assistance?

Are there any countries receiving U.S. assistance now where independence from U.S. aid is within the five-year horizon?

Answer. Yes, in conformance with Section 7018 of the Fiscal Year 2016 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, every U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Country Development Cooperation Strategy drafted after January 1, 2016, includes a section on planning for a transition away from U.S. assistance.

Nevertheless, USAID is moving beyond that requirement to re-define all of our partnerships around the concept of "self-reliance," that is, the ability of a country to plan, finance, and implement solutions to solve its own development challenges. For some countries, self-reliance remains far in the future, while for others, it is somewhat closer. USAID is beginning to explore how best to assess a country's level of self-reliance, with the aim of redefining our partnerships at the individual country level so we are sure we are doing the best we can to support an individual country to strengthen its self-reliance and work towards that day when assistance is no longer required.

A country that is highly self-reliant—that is, one that is able to plan, finance, and implement solutions to solve its own development challenges—would be one where we would want to think hard about the nature of the partnerships we fund, and assess if traditional foreign assistance still makes the most sense. We will impose no hard-and-fast rule to determine whether a country is an appropriate recipient for receiving traditional development assistance. By developing an objective set of quantitative metrics and combining these with informed country-level analyses and inter-agency discussions, we expect to be able to assess each country's level of self-reli-

ance, and subsequently determine whether a traditional assistance approach still makes sense for countries in which self-reliance is high. In such cases, this will likely imply changing the nature of our relationship with these countries over time. We would reflect these changes in our staffing and resource levels, and in the types of programming we fund, but rather than simply exiting a country, we would seek to design a way for our relationship to continue in a different form.

At this point, we are still developing our approach for measuring self-reliance. Once we are able to do so, the next step will be to formulate an approach to identify what level of self-reliance is appropriate for considering whether or not a traditional assistance partnership still makes sense, and the process for identifying what the most effective type of new partnership might look like.

Question. I just recently returned from leading a congressional delegation to China where the long term strategic challenges and opportunities that country presents to the United States is very clear. USAID is currently engaged in Vietnam, the Philippines, and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. What role can USAID play in countering China's influence in the region?

Answer. U.S. assistance supports a path to greater self-reliance so people across Asia are better-equipped to determine their own futures and improve their lives. With the Chinese increasingly exerting their influence, it is important to remain engaged and help countries access private foreign investment without falling into the debt-trap that is one of the hallmarks of the Chinese development-assistance model. Our work in citizen-responsible governance, which emphasizes transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption; our efforts to bolster trade and investment to accelerate inclusive growth; and our emphasis on environmentally and socially responsible development contribute to a strong foundation for host countries' self-reliance and resilience. Specifically, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provides assistance to our partner countries that helps build their capacity to create the enabling environment to attract, and increase returns on, private investments in infrastructure. This includes addressing the binding constraints to investments such as a weak regulatory environments and rule of law, constrained fiscal space, corruption, and inadequate human capacity, to give countries choices vis-à-vis China, which tends to provide loans that create unsustainable debt for recipient countries. USAID will also continue our support for activities that strengthen regional bodies such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) to contribute to this balanced approach to development.

Question. An entire generation of Syrian children are at risk of losing their lives to conflict, malnutrition, and lack of education. If not handled properly, the environment in the region could increase the population of susceptible to recruitment by ISIS or other terrorist organizations. We know that the future legacy of Syria as a nation—as with any nation—depends on the education and protection of our children. What is being done to ensure humanitarian assistance intended for displaced populations in Syria reaches its target?

Answer. Diversion is never an acceptable cost of doing business. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) takes the loss, diversion, and theft of assistance—no matter the modality—very seriously. In increasingly non-permissive environments, such as Syria, USAID has developed approaches that enable us to reduce the risk of diversion.

For example, USAID uses a variety of approaches to verify aid is reaching its intended beneficiaries, including third-party monitoring, geo-tagged photos and videos of distributions, and feedback hotlines for beneficiaries. We also work closely with our implementing partners and other donors, and cooperate with USAID's Inspector General to identify risks and take steps to mitigate the potential for the theft or diversion of U.S. taxpayer dollars. USAID also uses a third-party monitoring mechanism to increase our oversight of humanitarian-assistance programs inside Syria. This enables the Agency to verify activities independently and confirm that assistance reaches the intended individuals. USAID is in constant communication with our partners to ensure our programs are reaching intended beneficiaries, and we remain flexible in case we need to modify our methods or activities to minimize safety and security concerns or the risk of diversion.

Question. From your perspective, what is the most effective way to invest American taxpayer dollars to ensure that there is not a "lost generation" in Syria?

Answer. The Syrian conflict is the largest and most-complex humanitarian emergency of our time, and is driving record levels of displacement. More than 11 million people are displaced within Syria, or have fled to neighboring countries as refugees, and 13.1 million people in Syria—more than 80 percent of the current population—are in need of humanitarian assistance. The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) exacerbated an already-protracted crisis in Syria, caused by the

Assad regime's unrelenting campaign of bloodshed and violence against its own people for more than 7 years.

The United States is the leading donor of humanitarian assistance for the Syria response, having provided nearly \$8.1 billion in aid throughout Syria and the region since the start of the crisis. This assistance is reaching 5 million Syrians every month, including four million people across all 14 Governorates inside Syria.

One of the most-effective ways to invest American taxpayer dollars to avoid a "lost generation" in Syria is to facilitate humanitarian and educational programming. USAID and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at the U.S. Department of State (State/PRM) both fund the multi-stakeholder "No Lost Generation" initiative, spearheaded by the United Nations Children's Fund, to help displaced children inside Syria and throughout the region access quality education, and to provide counseling, psychological support, and protection from violence and abuse. The U.S. Government funds humanitarian protection programs that provide learning and recreational opportunities for children in Syria and neighboring, refugee-hosting countries and case-management, referral services, and safe spaces for women and girls, including the survivors of gender-based violence. State/PRM funds child-protection and education programs for Syrian refugee children, which help them to enroll and stay in school instead of working or marrying early, and strengthens national and community-based systems to protect children.

Additionally, the U.S. Government finances education in communities throughout the region that host refugees. In Jordan, for example, USAID funded the enrollment of 126,097 Syrian children in formal education, and 1,262 previously out-of-school students in a "catch-up" program. USAID also established and equipped 28 non-formal education centers for out-of-school Jordanian and Syrian youth. USAID funds early-grade reading and math instruction through teacher guides and training, community reading groups, and social-media competitions to encourage parents and teachers to read to children.

In Lebanon, USAID programs improve the quality of, and access to, basic education to improve reading outcomes for Lebanese and Syrian students by providing educational materials, classroom libraries and equipment, and teacher-training. USAID has also covered public-school fees to allow for the enrollment of 160,225 vulnerable students, including Syrian refugee children, and helped 17,000 vulnerable students with remedial and homework-support activities.

Inside Syria, USAID funds the refurbishment of facilities, training, workshops, capacity-building for community-based organizations, and assessments. The Department of State has established child centers throughout Raqqa to provide psychosocial support and remedial literacy and numeracy to vulnerable children; is working with grassroots organizations and the Raqqa Civil Council Education Committee to provide light rehabilitation to schools; provides psychosocial-support training to teachers; builds the capacity of education committees and local education providers; and conducts educational surveys to understand the academic needs of refugee children with more precision.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR PATRICK J. LEAHY

Question. I know your job is to defend the administration's budget, but putting that aside, given China's expanding influence, the spread of extremism, and the scale of human displacement and misery today, how can we be sure that USAID is meeting these challenges as effectively as possible?

Answer. The President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 provides the necessary resources to advance peace and security, expand American influence, and address global crises, while making efficient use of taxpayer resources. For example, the budget includes significant support to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and other transnational terrorist and criminal groups, advance global health, and provide humanitarian assistance. The budget also promotes the advancement of more stable, resilient, and democratic societies that are self-reliant, lead their own development, and contribute to a more secure and prosperous world, a priority for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The request upholds U.S. commitments to key partners and allies through strategic, selective investments that enable the United States to retain its position as a global leader; at the same time, it relies on other nations to make greater, proportionate contributions toward shared objectives.

Our Transformation also aims to increase the effectiveness of USAID's programs. For example, the new Self-Reliance Metrics will help ensure our partnerships are supporting a country to move along in its journey toward the day when foreign assistance will no longer be necessary. For some countries, that journey could take

decades; for others, it could take place sooner. In either case, through our focus on self-reliance, we will have a much clearer perspective on what investments we must make to create the right partnership models in the right places at the right time.

With regard to Asia, USAID focuses on fostering inclusive and equitable growth, promoting and strengthening democratic institutions, and improving resilience and the management of natural resources. Across all of our work, we prioritize building local ownership, engaging private enterprise, and mobilizing additional resources from domestic and international sources. By helping people in the region be better-equipped to determine their own futures and improve their own lives, we are helping them deal with China's expanding influence, while addressing poverty and the threat of violent extremism. We can help the countries of Asia access foreign investment without falling into the debt-trap, which is one of the hallmarks of the Chinese assistance model. Our work on citizen-responsive governance, which promotes transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption; our efforts to bolster trade and private investment to accelerate inclusive growth; and our emphasis on environmentally and socially responsible development, are equally as important, because they contribute to a strong foundation for host countries' self-reliance and resilience. USAID will continue our support for activities that strengthen regional bodies, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), to contribute to this balanced approach to development.

USAID is committed to promoting and strengthening the underpinnings of democracy in Asia, including judicial, legislative, civil-society, and independent media institutions. We focus on improving political processes, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and promoting social inclusion and tolerance—measures that help prevent extremism, political violence, discrimination, and other drivers of conflict. For example, in Indonesia we are helping increase the resilience of key institutions and segments of society against the rise of violent extremism. In the Philippines, we are assisting local governments and host communities in Mindanao to expand services to meet the needs of persons internally displaced by last year's siege of the city of Marawi.

The President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 supports our continued efforts to help Pacific island nations tap into expanded pools of international financing for projects that will strengthen their preparedness against natural disasters. These investments reduce the cost of future disaster-relief throughout the Pacific islands, including in the three Freely Associated States. In Papua New Guinea, USAID has enhanced the national government's ability to tap into new financing for projects that strengthen the country's environmental resilience. We are also helping prepare businesses across the Pacific island countries with planning to maintain the continuity of their operations during and after a natural disaster.

If Asia is to realize its full potential, much depends on the development journey it charts today. USAID plays a vital role in working with people across Asia to ensure the development decisions they make will help achieve the region's long-term success by moving them forward on their journeys to self-reliance.

Question. Now that Congress has enacted a fiscal year 2018 appropriations bill that provides substantial funding for USAID, do you intend to review USAID's global presence to determine where additional staffing and programs may be appropriate? What if any changes do you anticipate making?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) greatly appreciates Congress' generous support for our programs and operations. Yes, we will review our global presence to determine where might need to make changes to our staffing and programs. USAID regularly assesses our overseas programming and staffing levels to ensure we are adapting to changing circumstances, deploying our staff optimally, and addressing administration and Congressional priorities.

USAID is committed to strengthening our workforce, including through the recruitment of new career Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), civil servants, and other employees with the necessary skills to advance our mission. USAID has initiated the hiring process to bring on a new cadre of 30 career candidate FSOs in fiscal year 2018. Based on the critical needs of the Agency, USAID is reviewing a roster of applicants to determine the markup of a career candidate class that will help strengthen the expertise across our FSO workforce. The Agency always seeks to hire the necessary career staff within our appropriated levels of funding, hiring needs, and national-security priorities.

Question. USAID's new Mission Statement calls for the promotion of democratic values abroad. How will your reorganization and your vision for "ending the need for foreign assistance" respond to this?

Answer. The ultimate goal of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is to work towards the day when development assistance is no longer nec-

essary. To achieve this vision, one of the primary purposes of our ongoing Transformation is to reorient our strategies and programs towards the kinds of interventions that can create the conditions whereby our partner countries can plan, resource, and implement solutions to their own development challenges. My team at USAID and I agree that the promotion of democratic values abroad is a critical priority, and that the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights, and good governance are key foundations for the journey to self-reliance. This vision prioritizes programs that, at their core, incentivize the promotion of democratic values, including citizen-responsive governance and economic reforms and support for the enabling environment and systems needed to increase domestic revenue and private investment, while ensuring governments expend resources transparently to support locally sustained, inclusive development.

We all know that democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) underpins sustainable development, and, without it, self-reliance is unattainable. However, in our current organizational structure, crisis and conflict too often overshadow DRG, and our many of our DRG specialists are dispersed throughout the Agency. As someone with a background in democracy work, I have given this careful thought, and have also consulted extensively with external experts, including from the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the National Endowment for Democracy, and the International Republican Institute (IRI). The proposed new structure for the Agency would move the DRG Center into the proposed Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI,) which would be a customer-service entity to provide technical advice and expertise to USAID Missions in the field. Including the DRG Center in the DDI would provide better, field-focused support for USAID's programming, as well as technical and policy leadership in DRG. The redesigned DRG Center would also lead the Agency's learning, evidence, and research in DRG programming, and serve as the home for our Democracy and Governance Foreign Service Officers. The Center's placement within DDI would promote integration across sectors, as well as cross-Bureau and cross-Agency coordination, as it would have a strong, formal relationship to the Bureaus for Conflict-Prevention and Stabilization (CPS) and Humanitarian Assistance (HA), to ensure long-term DRG programming and objectives inform interventions when crisis strikes, and that long-term programming likewise reflect changes that result from those situations. I believe the creation of the proposed Bureau for DDI will elevate DRG not only in our structure, but also in our program-design and country strategies.

Another reform we are undertaking to strengthen our DRG programming is the introduction of our new USAID Self-Reliance Metrics. The Metrics include numerous democracy and governance indicators, such as the Varieties of Democracy Project's "Liberal Democracy Index," the World Justice Project's "Open Government Index," and civil-society capacity measures, which are all important tools for measuring open and accountable governance and the environment that faces civil society in each country. DRG's inclusion in these Self-Reliance Metrics will ensure all of USAID's strategies and programming consider democracy and governance.

Our overall foreign-assistance sectoral priorities will remain largely the same under the Transformation. USAID is as committed as always to DRG, food security, global health, economic growth, conflict-prevention, and women's equality. Within these sectors, we will strive to focus our programs, to the maximum extent possible, on how we support our partners—in government, civil society, the private sector, and other elements of society—to have the capabilities and tools needed to address, fund and manage their own development challenges. In this way, the results we help achieve will be sustainable long beyond the period of USAID's assistance.

Question. You testified that you support Local Works. However, it currently comprises only \$47 million of USAID's budget. What steps will you take to make more of USAID function like Local Works?

Answer. Locally led development is essential for sustainability, and I want to thank you for your continued leadership and support in pushing the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to invest more with local organizations around the world. I have made it clear that I prioritize working directly with local actors to enhance countries' path to self-reliance, and Local Works is at the center of the Agency's objectives in locally led development.

As you point out, at only \$47 million per year, Local Works is a small portion of USAID's entire portfolio. Nevertheless, we believe Local Works can influence the rest of the Agency by testing new approaches that can enhance USAID's overall ability to carry out programming with local implementers. Local Works offers support to USAID Missions that otherwise lack the resources or capacity to make diversifying our partner base and moving more of our agreements into the hands of local actors the priorities we expect them to be throughout the Agency. At its core, Local Works invests in the capacity of USAID's staff to work directly with local actors,

and allows us to experiment and learn from the process to change the culture throughout the Agency, while enhancing the operations and procurements that allow USAID to conclude grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts directly with local organizations.

At the moment, Local Works supports 16 USAID Missions. Part of this approach is ensuring the Missions and our staff have the knowledge, skills, tools, and resources to align assistance with the priorities of local actors; include marginalized populations; leverage local capacities and resources; and engage with local public- and private-sector institutions in ways that build upon and strengthen local leadership, capacity, and self-reliance to sustain development over time. For example, USAID/Morocco has worked with five Moroccan organizations that are able to influence the civic-engagement capacities of broad networks of local partners. Local Works is also investing in the Mission's own ability to use local systems and ethnographic listening tools to inform all its investment decisions, from priority-setting to the design and implementation of programs. We hope to extend the approaches pioneered by Local Works to more Missions in the coming year, especially in Latin America, where Paraguay (the only country in which 100 percent of USAID's programs are in the hands of local implementers) can serve as a model, and in the implementation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

If Congress approves the USAID Transformation, locally led development would be housed under the proposed Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation to enhance and promote USAID's capacity and operations to invest directly with local intermediary groups, civil-society organizations, and citizen-centered non-profits so local actors manage, implement, and sustain their countries' own development. The Local Works and Cooperatives programs would be the main instruments to carry out this approach.

Question. I have greatly appreciated the work USAID has done to implement the dioxin remediation project at the Da Nang Airport in Vietnam, which I visited. We are now embarking on a larger project to deal with the contamination at the Bien Hoa Airbase.

Do you agree with me that the Bien Hoa project, like Da Nang, which involves an important war legacy issue that affects the health and safety of people in these areas today, will contribute to real advancements in U.S.-Vietnamese relations, including our security relations?

Answer. Yes. In addition to benefiting those affected by dioxin, addressing war legacies, including remediating the contamination at Da Nang and Bien Hoa, is important to advancing relations and understanding between the United States and Vietnam. The Government of Vietnam, and its military leaders, continually point to addressing the legacy of war, especially dioxin-remediation, as a top priority for improving bilateral relations. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will remediate Agent Orange/dioxin at the Bien Hoa Airbase, and continue to provide assistance to those with disabilities, many of which are a consequence of the Vietnam War.

Question. Are there any funds in your budget to help countries adapt to, or mitigate the effects of, climate change—whether rising sea levels, temperature changes that affect crop production, or the use of polluting fossil fuels? If we think USAID should address these problems, do we need to specify funds for it ourselves?

Answer. The President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 does not propose funding at the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for bilateral activities with partner countries that are specifically intended to address climate change. However, the President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 does include \$199.917 million for international environmental programs that support the administration's broader foreign-policy goals.

USAID's Sustainable Landscapes program, which promotes the proper, long-term management of forests and other land in 14 countries and five regions, is continuing. In fiscal year 2017, Congress appropriated \$123.5 million for Sustainable Landscapes programming, of which USAID received \$109 million. In fiscal year 2018, Congress also appropriated \$123.5 million for Sustainable Landscapes, of which USAID expects to receive a similar proportion as we did the year before. Sustainable Landscapes programs build local livelihoods; teach community-based forestry, agroforestry and other forest-friendly agricultural practices; generate economic growth; open opportunities for investment; and develop private-sector partnerships that create sustainable supply-chains for agricultural commodities while also reducing the emission of greenhouse gases from deforestation and land-degradation. These programs are helping our partners protect well over 750,000 square miles of forests and other landscapes, avoiding more than 90 million tons of emissions in 2017 alone—the equivalent of taking 19 million cars off the road for a year. Healthier forests and landscapes enhance sustainable development, generate invest-

ment and local livelihood opportunities, and protect biodiversity and water resources.

Question. In fiscal year 2018, the Senate included \$893 million for environment and clean-energy programs, of which \$725 million was for USAID. How does that compare to your budget request for fiscal year 2019?

Answer. The President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 includes \$199.917 million for international environmental programs, of which \$134.017 million is planned for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The Request would fund diplomatic and development activities in support of the President's broader foreign-policy goals and strategic objectives as outlined in the National Security Strategy and the State Department/USAID Joint Strategic Plan.

Question. Family Planning: The Administration is requesting \$302 million for USAID family planning programs in fiscal year 2019, which is more than 50 percent below the fiscal year 2018 Omnibus level.

What would the effects of that be on women's health, child mortality, and the number of unwanted pregnancies and abortions—including unsafe abortions?

Has USAID's funding for modern contraceptives decreased under this administration?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is deeply committed to helping women and their children thrive. With the implementation plan in place for the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, the President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 includes investments in voluntary family planning and reproductive health, consistent with the administration's support for programs to empower women and girls.

Further, while the United States remains the largest donor of bilateral, voluntary family-planning assistance, other donors and countries need to assume more of the responsibility for funding these efforts. For example, at the 2017 London Summit on Family Planning, 14 donors pledged \$2.6 billion up to fiscal year 2020, of which we estimate \$1.25 billion is new funding. Seventeen countries made domestic financing commitments, which total approximately \$3.8 billion—a growing demonstration of countries' willingness to fund their own programs. New partners from the private sector also made financial commitments to Family Planning 2020, which total almost \$19 million.

WATER AND SANITATION

Question. It is difficult to think of anything that more directly affects people's health and quality of life than potable water and the safe disposal of waste. Yet billions of people lack one or the other or both. In fiscal year 2018 we included \$400 million for these purposes—not very much for the whole world—and the administration is proposing to cut that to \$306 million in fiscal year 2019.

Of all programs to cut, this seems inexplicable. Shouldn't these be among our highest priorities? How can people escape from poverty without them?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will continue to prioritize investments in water and sanitation to implement the Agency's Water and Development Plan under the new U.S. Global Water Strategy. The Plan seeks to help partner countries increase the availability of safe drinking water and sanitation for the underserved and most vulnerable, in alignment with U.S. national-security and foreign-policy objectives. USAID's programs in water and sanitation have grown, and the administration's recent budget request for the sector, at \$306 million, is the highest since 2008. Consistent with the needs and opportunity criteria in the Act and USAID's Water and Development Plan under the U.S. Global Water Strategy, the Agency is committed to focusing on the countries and regions of greatest need and leveraging investments by other donors and the private sector to maximize impact.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Administrator Green, you are responsible for implementing the administration's expanded Global Gag policy, which has been named the "Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance" policy. Could you describe for the subcommittee how this policy is meant to "protect life" when we know from the past times when the Global Gag Rule was in effect that it failed to reduce the number of abortions in countries where USAID is active?

Answer. The United States is the world's largest bilateral donor to global health programs, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) remains committed to helping women and their children thrive. With the implementation plan in place for the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) policy,

the President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 includes investments in voluntary family planning and reproductive health, consistent with the administration's support for programs to empower women and girls.

The Department of State, working with USAID and the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Defense (DoD), conducted a review of the effectiveness and impact of the policy's application after 6 months of implementation, released to Congress and the public earlier this year. The Department of State has worked closely with USAID, HHS, and DoD to implement the policy consistently, examine progress in carrying it out, and monitor its effects. In general, at the time of our review, it was too early to assess the full range of benefits and challenges of the policy for global health assistance. As a result, the Department of State will lead another interagency review, with USAID's full participation, to assess the implementation of the policy over the calendar year.

Question. Administrator Green, I know that both you and I have had an opportunity to meet with Malala Yousafzai to discuss the U.S.'s role in championing girls' education around the world. I also understand that USAID is close to finalizing its new 5-year strategy for basic education programming. Given that, is USAID planning in its strategy to emphasize that 12 years of safe, free, quality education is instrumental in improving health and economic outcomes for school-aged girls?

Answer. Investments by the American people in high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education around the world can have far-reaching effects. They can create pathways for greater economic growth, improved health outcomes, sustained democratic governance, and more peaceful and resilient societies. Strengthening educational institutions, both public and private, in developing countries advances U.S. foreign-policy goals, promotes U.S. and international security, and helps accelerate economic growth at home and abroad.

Girls are still especially disadvantaged in education. Hundred and thirty million girls are not in school worldwide, and millions more face barriers to staying in school. Yet we know that when girls receive an education, they and their families are healthier, and they have more opportunities to generate income.

The Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act presents an opportunity to continue the global momentum on the importance of education. As mandated by the READ Act, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is coordinating the development of a five-year, whole-of-Government Comprehensive Integrated United States Strategy to Promote Basic Education, in consultation with nine other Federal Agencies and Departments. This Strategy will build on the spirit of the legislation to address the education needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable populations—including girls; children affected by, or emerging from, armed conflict or humanitarian crises; married adolescents; and victims of trafficking. The READ Act defines "basic education" to include programs and activities designed to improve in a measurable way the results of early-childhood, pre-primary, primary, and secondary education, delivered in formal or non-formal settings, as well as learning for out-of-school youth and adults. USAID will further define its priorities and objectives within these areas in consultation with multiple groups of stakeholders, including Congress, in advance of the deadline for the delivery of the Strategy, on September, 2018.

Over the past 7 years of implementing our current Strategy, USAID has captured and analyzed lessons learned from scaling programs and strengthening educational institutions. USAID's implementation of the READ Act will build on these lessons, while recognizing that we have an opportunity to be more-responsive to each country's context, to support public and non-public education, and to encourage partner countries to increase their own investments in education with domestic resources. We will continue to engage with Congress as we move forward in the finalization of the Strategy.

Question. Administrator Green, I understand that one of the USAID reorganization proposals under consideration is to merge the offices that handle development assistance in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Do you anticipate that this merger will affect the allocation of resources for each of these countries, particularly programming to support women and girls?

Answer. The proposed integration of the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs into the Bureau for Asia is meant to be resource-neutral for the Program budgets for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and should not affect funding for existing activities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER A. COONS

Question. In 2014 an independent group of experts, the Award Cost-Efficiency Study (ACES) Blue Ribbon Panel, released a series of recommendations to increase the impact of USAID maternal and child health investments based on an extensive analysis of current global health awards. What is the status of the implementation of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations?

Answer. In 2014, the Award Cost-Efficiency Study (ACES) Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel (the Panel) issued a set of recommendations for how the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) could streamline and make more efficient our efforts to end preventable child and maternal deaths. In 2014, USAID released the first USAID Acting on the Call report, which responded to a key recommendation of the Panel and provides an update on the Agency's investments and progress. The report sets out a roadmap for ending preventable child and maternal deaths in 24 priority countries, and identifies the highest-impact interventions in each country, measured by their ability to save lives. Since the launch of this initial report, USAID Missions have targeted investments around these high-impact interventions, with programs also informed by subsequent analyses focused on equity considerations and system-wide reforms. The 2018 edition of the Acting on the Call report provides a strong affirmation of several of the Panel's recommendations as it charts where countries are on their journey to self-reliance, with specific focus on finance, collaboration and transparency, while also calculating the return on USAID's investments.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

Question. The administration's fiscal year 2019 request for PEPFAR cuts over a billion dollars from U.S. efforts to combat HIV and AIDS around the globe. This could have an enormous impact on people living with HIV and AIDS worldwide, including members of the LGBTQ community. What are you doing to ensure the U.S. continues to serve as a leader on combating HIV and AIDS around the globe?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) serves as a key implementing agency under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), managed by the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) at the U.S. Department of State. PEPFAR will continue to identify efficiencies in its direct bilateral and regional programs to prevent, treat, and care for HIV/AIDS, including by making use of lower-cost drug regimens to maintain the number of patients who are currently on anti-retroviral therapy (ART), and in partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

The President's budget request for fiscal year 2019 will allow the United States to maintain all patients who are currently on anti-retroviral treatment through PEPFAR, and will support the continuation of U.S. HIV/AIDS-relief efforts in more than 50 countries through direct bilateral and regional programs. Further, PEPFAR will continue to work toward achieving sustained control of the epidemic in 13 priority countries with the highest burden of HIV/AIDS, which follows the new PEPFAR Strategy for 2017–2020.

As of September 2017, PEPFAR—with support from USAID, the U.S. Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services, and other implementing partners—has funded life-saving ART for more than 13.3 million people; ensured pregnant women who are living with HIV have given birth to 2.2 million HIV-free babies, while keeping their mothers healthy and alive to protect and nurture them; and provided assistance to more than 6.4 million orphans, vulnerable children, and their caregivers. We refer you to OGAC for more information.

Question. Two hundred and sixty-four million children and youth are still not in school and millions more are failing to acquire even basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills. Despite the global need for education assistance, the President's fiscal year 2019 budget request proposes a 51 percent cut to international basic education programs. We'll never progress to country self-reliance unless all children are in school and learning. What are you doing as the Administrator of USAID to ensure that staff at USAID have the manpower and resources necessary to address what has been called the global learning crisis?

Answer. Education is a foundation for, and driver of, development and the creation of resilient societies. Literate, skilled populations are needed to create a stronger workforce and a diversified economy, and to realize the long-term impact of development across all sectors.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has experienced first-hand the challenges of addressing the learning crisis by supporting large-scale change and improvements in educational institutions. USAID's current Education

Strategy sets out three ambitious goals: improving the reading skills of students in the primary grades, increasing equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments, and improving workforce-development and higher education in host countries. From 2011 to 2017, USAID-funded education programs directly benefited more than 83.4 million children and youth in nearly 50 countries. During that time, USAID education assistance resulted in the following:

- 69.8 million children reached with reading programs that employ international best practices in instruction and evaluation;
- New or improved education in safe learning environments for 22.6 million children and youth, including increased access to education for 4.1 million who were previously out-of-school; and
- 736,000 individuals—360,000 females and 376,000 males—gained new or better employment following participation in USAID-financed workforce-development programs.

These are promising results and achievements, and we will continue our work in this regard. Looking forward, our goals remain to ensure that crisis-affected children and youth are receiving high-quality education that is safe, relevant, and promotes social cohesion; children are reading and gaining basic skills that are foundational to future learning and success; young people are learning the skills they need to gain employment and contribute to society; and higher-education institutions are supporting development progress across sectors. Finally, USAID will increasingly look to invest in programs that can leverage additional donor and partner resources, which is a priority of the administration.

USAID will also lead the implementation within the U.S. Government of the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act, including the legislation's mandate to create a Comprehensive Integrated United States Strategy to Promote Basic Education that will help to equitably expand access to basic education for marginalized children and vulnerable groups, expand partnerships with both public and non-public educational institutions, and improve measurably the quality of basic education and learning outcomes. After a months-long process of consultations, we are on track to deliver the new Strategy by September, 2018, as required by the READ Act.

Question. When we fail to support girls in their transition from primary to secondary school, they become vulnerable to sexual trafficking, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, and gender-based violence. We know that keeping girls enrolled in school through the crucial transition to secondary education drastically improves their future prospects. As USAID embarks on a new international education strategy, please describe what you intend to do to ensure that girls in vulnerable settings are encouraged and supported to make the transition to secondary school.

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) takes a comprehensive approach to improve life outcomes for adolescent girls, which encompasses the interconnected events across their lives from birth to adulthood. The Obama administration launched the first-ever U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls in 2016, which brought together four U.S. Government Departments and Agencies to tackle barriers that keep adolescent girls from achieving their full potential. As part of the Strategy, the State Department, USAID, the Peace Corps, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation each has its own implementation plan.

USAID's 2011 Education Strategy, extended through 2018, focuses on primary-grade reading, workforce-development, higher education, and increasing access to education for children and youth in conflict and crisis areas, with equality for women as a cross-cutting priority. USAID promotes gender-responsive education programs that reduce disparities between boys and girls; discourage gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects; and ensure all learners, especially girls, have access to safe, high-quality education programs and services.

The Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act, passed by Congress in 2017, requires the development of a Comprehensive Integrated United States Strategy to Promote Basic Education by September 2018, which USAID and our interagency colleagues are on track to produce. The READ Act highlights the importance of reaching the most marginalized and vulnerable populations, including girls, children affected by or emerging from armed conflict or humanitarian crises, married adolescents, and the victims of trafficking. The legislation also stresses the importance of parity between girls and boys in learning and breaking down the specific barriers women and girls face to gaining a quality education. USAID is finishing a series of extensive consultations to develop the new Strategy, and is committed to ensuring the education programs we fund continue to meet the unique needs of girls.

Question. There is significant room to improve engagement between Congress and the administration on USAID's redesign. One important area is in deciding the appropriate relationship between the lead diplomatic agency—State—and the lead development agency—USAID. The recent fiscal year 2019 budget request sets a goal of optimizing the relationship between State and USAID regarding policy, budgets, and the interagency.

A number of think tanks, coalitions, and an independent bipartisan task force have called for the alignment of agency mission with budget resources. Specifically, these proposals call for USAID to control its budget and programming—thereby establishing clear accountability for development results and ending duplication with the State Department's Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources (F).

What would having greater policy and budget authorities mean for USAID as our nation's lead development agency? What options are under consideration?

What is the timeline for implementation of your redesign plan and how are you ensuring that such a reorganization is not disruptive to the important day-to-day work and mission of USAID?

Answer. One of the objectives of the Transformation at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is to create a stronger, more-coordinated voice to promote our development-policy and budget priorities, internally and in the interagency. USAID currently divides the responsibility for policy, budget, and performance among five different Bureaus and Independent Offices. By consolidating oversight for development policy, the Program and Operational Expenses budgets, and program-performance in the proposed Bureau for Policy, Resources, and Performance (PRP), USAID will be better-equipped to align our resources to our strategic priorities, improve accountability, promote evidence-based programming, and assess the Agency's progress towards becoming a true learning organization. It would also enable the Agency to more strategically and comprehensively advocate for development and humanitarian objectives with the U.S. Department of State and Congress.

Under this proposal, the USAID Senior Coordinator at the Department of State's Bureau for Foreign Assistance (F) would report to the Assistant to the Administrator for PRP, to increase collaboration between staff in PRP and State/F who are performing similar functions and improve processes that better support our shared objectives in the design and execution of the foreign-assistance budget. The Secretary of State would continue to serve as the Executive Branch's overall point of coordination for all foreign assistance.

After Congressional approval, USAID would implement the restructuring proposed in the Transformation over a period of approximately 24 months, in phases, according to the following sequence:

1. Restructuring the Office of the Administrator;
2. Merging the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs into a restructured Bureau for Asia;
3. Restructuring the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs;
4. Merging and restructuring the Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and Food for Peace into the new Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance;
5. Merger and restructuring the Bureau for Food Security and the Office of Water into the new Bureau for Resilience and Food Security;
6. Merger and restructuring the Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation, Office of Transition Initiatives, and Office of Conflict-Management and Mitigation into the new Bureau for Conflict-Prevention and Stabilization;
7. Merger and restructuring the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning; the Office of Budget Resource Management; the Budget Division in the Bureau for Management; and the Office of Evaluation-Impact Assessment in the Global Development Lab into the new Bureau for Policy, Resources, and Performance;
8. Merger and restructuring the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment; the Global Development Lab; the Office of Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance; and the Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad into the new Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation; and
9. Merger the Independent Offices of Security, and Human Capital and Talent-Management into a restructured Bureau for Management.

While the Agency undergoes this large restructuring, managers will receive guidance about how to manage their staff, resources, and programs by using best practices in change-management.

Question. You have stated that the purpose of foreign assistance is to end its need to exist. I agree that U.S. development assistance should foster long-term self-reliance and ultimately support partner countries transitioning from development aid. For the last several years, Congress has approved appropriations bills with an im-

portant provision requiring all country development strategies to include a plan for transitioning over time away from foreign assistance.

How are you working with Congress to approach strategic transition planning?

What do you believe is the appropriate way for the U.S. Government to help countries move responsibly along a continuum of partnership with the United States?

USAID reported recently to GAO (GAO-15-377, Pgs. 64 and 69) that it would develop additional metrics to assess partner-country capacity, ownership, and sustainability. This Committee encouraged the adoption of such metrics in our fiscal year 2018 SFOPS bill. Can you discuss your own commitment to this issue and when we can expect to see these new metrics finalized and incorporated into USAID's reporting and evaluations?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking to reorient its strategies and programs to prioritize interventions that will create the conditions for self-reliance in partner countries—which means they can plan, fund, and implement solutions to their own development challenges. To this end, consistent with Section 7081 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2016, every USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy drafted after January 1, 2016, includes a section on country transition planning. An important aspect of this vision is the acknowledgement that, when countries have achieved advanced levels of self-reliance, traditional forms of assistance, and even USAID's traditional presence model, might no longer be appropriate. In such cases, USAID—in close coordination with Congress, the U.S. Government interagency, the national government, internal USAID stakeholders, and other development partners—could determine that a strategic transition to a new relationship, commensurate with that country's development progress, is needed. The Agency will introduce a clear and strategic process for making decisions on, and carrying out, transitions in these countries. In each case, the Agency will consult with Congress, and comply with any notification requirements for these transitions.

USAID will develop targeted post-transition programs aimed at supporting the shift away from traditional bilateral assistance, which will simultaneously reflect the United States' ongoing commitment to partner countries as they advance towards long-term development and prosperity. These programs will build on, and sustain, development gains; amplify a country's strengths; target remaining challenges; leverage new partnerships and forms of assistance that are more appropriately suited to the country's level of self-reliance; and employ resources strategically to avoid and respond effectively to backsliding. Depending on the priorities and needs of partner countries, these programs might seek to expand access to finance; mobilize private capital; deepen trade relationships and access to international markets; elevate partnerships in science, technology, and innovation; and/or increase technical and educational exchanges.

Strategic transitions represent only a small part of the overall journey to self-reliance. The ongoing USAID Transformation is seeking to reorient how we work with countries to engage in programming that will strengthen their ability to plan, finance, and manage their own development, with the ultimate goal of moving them towards an eventual strategic transition, even if that day is many years in the future. To support self-reliance in partner countries, USAID is prioritizing programs that: incentivize governance and economic reforms; strengthen in-country capacity; support market-based solutions to catalyze sustained investment; and help countries to create the enabling environment and systems needed to increase domestic revenue and attract private investment, while ensuring the transparent expenditure of resources to support inclusive development.

We acknowledge that each country is at different stages, and that USAID's partnership approach and programmatic tools should evolve as countries move along the self-reliance journey. To introduce a more data-informed approach to tailoring our assistance for each country, USAID will apply objective metrics to track progress towards self-reliance. These metrics will be our first step in better understanding where a partner country is on its journey to self-reliance, as well as in identifying its relative strengths and weaknesses. This information will help inform strategic planning, the mix of programmatic approaches and tools we could apply based on where a country is on its journey, and discussions related to possible strategic transitions from traditional forms of assistance in countries that have achieved advanced levels of self-reliance. USAID is making significant progress towards creating this tool and integrating it into our operations. After an 8-month consultative process, which involved both internal and external stakeholders and conversations with Congress, USAID recently finalized the identification of an initial set of primary Self-Reliance Metrics—17 high-level indicators that will chart a country's commitment and capacity to plan, finance, and manage its own development.

Question. I have heard that USAID continues to experience unusual program and funding delays. Confusion caused by the President's budget request and bureaucratic delays at the State Department risk rendering aid less effective and causing increased suffering for people on the ground. What are the challenges you face in ensuring that the funds appropriated by Congress are moving quickly to USAID missions?

Answer. I am deeply committed to ensuring the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) can use the funding generously appropriated by Congress in a timely manner that best advances our national interests. I will continue to look for opportunities to improve the Agency's internal processes, and to work with the Secretary of State on our joint processes, to ensure USAID Missions have timely access to the resources they need to advance the Agency's objectives, while ensuring compliance with applicable legal requirements.

Question. The U.S. has been a leader in advancing nutrition for women and children around the world, both through our efforts on prevention of maternal and child deaths and through Feed the Future. Over the last decade, the U.S. has been a part of global efforts to recognize nutrition as a standalone development and health issue.

How do you foresee the nutrition work to continue to be elevated within the proposed new structure for the Bureau for Resilience, Response and Recovery?

Who will be leading the implementation of USAID's multi sectoral nutrition strategy?

How will nutrition in global health and in other parts of USAID coordinate at headquarters and at the field level?

Answer. The United States will always be a leader in advancing nutrition for women and children around the world, both through our efforts to prevent maternal and child deaths and through Feed the Future. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will continue to implement effective nutrition programs to prevent the long-term effects of malnutrition, such as stunting. USAID programs will support evidence-based approaches to nutrition and innovations that will improve outcomes for the most-vulnerable populations.

Within the new organizational structure proposed under the Transformation, a new Nutrition Leadership Council (NLC) and Center for Nutrition would elevate nutrition and strengthen nutrition results across USAID's development-focused multi-sectoral programming. This will include oversight and coordination in the areas of budget, strategy, technical policy and guidance and geographic targeting. While the NLC will not have oversight on emergency nutrition programming, it will support synergy and effective coordination between emergency and development nutrition programs as applicable.

The NLC will be chaired by the Deputy Assistant to the Administrator (DAA) responsible for the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) Center for Nutrition, and co-chaired by a DAA from the Bureau for Global Health, and the DAA from the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (HA) as the third lead council member. This new high-level, regular convening of DAAs across the Agency will help ensure nutrition continues to be an Agency-wide development priority and that our approach maximizes impact. The Nutrition Technical Working Group with representatives from RFS, GH, HA and regional bureaus will support the operations and decisionmaking of the NLC.

The NLC will oversee the implementation of the USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy by BFS, GH, and HA. Nutrition staff from all relevant bureaus will continue to provide coordinated technical assistance to the Nutrition Points of Contact in the Missions and to establish or strengthen existing coordination to enhance multi-sectoral nutrition programming in the field.

As USAID works to achieve our global nutrition goals, we will review programs strategically to better align with our priorities, while also engaging our development and host-country partners, as well as the private sector, to share the burden of this immense challenge. In addition, we will continue to support host-country stewardship of these nutrition priorities, both through strengthening the capacity of local organizations and leveraging their investments in nutrition, with the goal of one day transitioning these countries from their need for development assistance.

Question. The fiscal year 2019 Congressional Budget Justification for State and Foreign Operations proposes several reforms to U.S. humanitarian assistance. One such proposal is to "develop a multiyear, coordinated donor outreach strategy leveraging our diplomatic resources to target both traditional and non-traditional donors to increase their funding for humanitarian assistance and lessen the burden on U.S. taxpayers to respond, with the objective that the United States provide one quarter of international humanitarian assistance worldwide."

Can you comment in further detail on this proposal? For instance, do you anticipate that this will involve a significant decrease of U.S. funding for humanitarian assistance in the near future?

How will the U.S. persuade and hold other donors accountable to contribute more funding?

Answer. In an effort to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the U.S. Government's responses to global humanitarian needs, the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are developing a strategy for using humanitarian assistance and diplomatic resources to leverage other donors' contributions, maximize the performance of our humanitarian operations, and invest in resilience to reduce or prevent humanitarian needs in the future.

The goal of this donor-outreach strategy is to leverage our diplomatic and financial resources to limit U.S. assistance to one-quarter of worldwide international humanitarian resources. The strategy is a means for getting other governments and donors to increase their contributions to meet the persistent and vast humanitarian needs.

This strategy, still under development, will likely include accountability plans, and rely on analysis of the data on the current donor landscape. It also will put a concerted emphasis on working with a set of donor states based on their unique profiles, to identify the best methods for increasing contributions from others.

The U.S. Government's current strategies on increasing humanitarian financing have focused on other humanitarian donors at pledging conferences and, on occasion, through demarches by U.S. Ambassadors and Embassy staff. The White House, the Department of State, and USAID are committed to addressing the gaps in humanitarian financing by using higher-level engagement to complement our current work. We have seen demonstrated results from these efforts over the past year. For example, from July to December 2017, Australia made \$30 million in commitments to respond to the Rohingya crisis in Burma and Bangladesh (one of the largest per capita commitments). At the 2017 Brussels Conference on Syria, donors made €5.6 billion (\$6 billion) worth of pledges, of which two thirds, or €3.7 billion (\$4 billion), came from the European Commission (EC) and the Member States of the European Union. The EC also pledged an additional €560 million (\$601 million) for 2018 for inside Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Japan has also made numerous significant commitments in the last year. In December 2017, Japan announced additional humanitarian assistance of \$21 million for Syria and its neighboring countries, and in March 2018, Japan made a \$72.3 million contribution to the World Food Programme to provide vital food and nutrition assistance in 23 countries across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. At the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Geneva in April, 2017, the Republic of Korea announced its plan to provide \$4 million in humanitarian aid to Yemen.

Question. Humanitarian organizations implementing programs with USAID funding face a very challenging and insecure operating environment in Yemen. Because of Saudi-led coalition airstrikes, ground fighting, and bureaucratic impediments by both the Saudis and the Houthis, many NGOs have begun rerouting shipments of aid south to the port at Aden, rather than using Hodeidah port. Rerouting aid shipments in this way not only increases aid delivery time, thus prolonging the suffering of millions of people, but it also increases costs to humanitarian organizations implementing programs on the ground, often with U.S. taxpayer funding.

What is the administration's strategy for remedying these access issues, to ensure USAID dollars go as far and reach as many vulnerable people as possible?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through both funding and public outreach, supports efforts to ensure free and unfettered access to Yemen's Red Sea ports, including the critical port of Hodeidah, which has historically processed up to 90 percent of humanitarian and commercial imports into the country. At every opportunity, the administration continues to raise with all parties to the conflict the imperative of unfettered humanitarian access into, and within Yemen. Access through Red Sea ports remains the most-efficient, most-effective, and safest route for delivering assistance, and USAID is working to improve inspections and clearances of cargo, while advocating for all parties to the conflict to allow the unhindered entry and distribution to people on need of food, medicine, fuel, supplies, staff, and life-saving services.

USAID helps to fund the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM), which provides a neutral, transparent clearance-and-inspection process for vessels that arrive in ports not controlled by the legitimate Yemeni Government, and helps facilitate the flow of commercial goods essential to meeting the basic needs of the Yemeni people. USAID has urged UNVIM and the Saudi-led Coalition (SLC) to coordinate their efforts, to reduce overlapping inspections of incoming cargo, and speed the issuance of clearances. USAID has also encouraged the SLC

and UNVIM to reassure commercial shippers that Red Sea ports are open to both commercial and humanitarian cargo, and the SLC issued a public announcement on April 16, 2018, to emphasize that all ports were open.

Additionally, USAID's humanitarian partners continually explore the use of all access points into Yemen to ensure critical supplies reach those in need as efficiently as possible; however, using these alternatives creates significant challenges, including increased costs and the need to navigate ongoing conflict lines along transportation routes and blocked or damaged roads. USAID maintains its position that a political solution to the conflict is the only means to relieving the suffering of the Yemeni people, and continues to call on all parties to ensure unimpeded access for commercial and humanitarian goods into, and throughout, the country.

Question. While the government of Bangladesh has been generous in receiving the huge influx of Rohingya refugees coming from Burma since January, we hear of significant bureaucratic constraints that are impeding the delivery of aid by U.S. and other international NGOs.

How will the U.S. use its influence to ensure American NGOs are able to operate effectively to meet the needs of Rohingya refugees?

Answer. Delays in issuing permits and visas for humanitarian staff are an operational challenge that affects all sectors of the response to the influx of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The U.S. Government and the international donor community continue to press the Government of Bangladesh to approve permits, registrations, and visas rapidly, and allow unimpeded access for humanitarian staff that are responding to the Rohingya crisis.

Recently, several relief agencies reported receiving approvals for projects from the Government of Bangladesh within a few weeks, an improvement from the previous processing time of several months. The Government of Bangladesh is working on a longer-term effort to approve visas, and Foreign Secretary Haque personally pledged that the Foreign Ministry will take over the issuance of visas from the Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Affairs and work to clear up 2,000 pending cases to ensure access for NGO workers to Cox's Bazar and the refugee camps.

SUBCOMMITTEE RECESS

The subcommittee stands in recess.

[Whereupon, at 4:33 p.m., Tuesday, April 24, the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]